

UAL LEVEL 3 EXTENDED DIPLOMA IN ACTING

WELCOME!

Hello and a very warm welcome to you all!

Some of you will have already auditioned and some have yet to do so. I know the current world health pandemic has prevented a number of you from attending open evenings and auditioning in person but, rest assured, you will be provided with all the information you need. This pack is designed to give you a good glimpse into the UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma in Acting course at Buckinghamshire College Group and provide you with some summer activities to exercise your acting muscles and keep your passion for storytelling alive and burning bright!



Outdoor rehearsals for Ancient Greek theatre: The Murders at Argos by David Foley

Entry Requirements:

Acceptance on the course is subject to a successful audition (learn a two minute speech of your choice, off by heart) and 4 GCSEs at grade 4 or above, including English Language and Maths. If you haven't auditioned yet, all you need to do is apply online and the admissions team will guide you every step of the way. If you already have an offer, congratulations! We'll be thrilled to have you join our acting family!

Enrolment:

This takes place in late August after GCSE results day. You will be sent full details of how to enrol nearer the time.

Course content:

The Level 3 Acting Course is a practice-based course designed to push all the students to work hard from the outset and to understand how much discipline, commitment and technical skill the craft of storytelling requires. Over the two years, you will develop your performance, movement and vocal skills through a comprehensive programme of practical and theoretical study, with a strong emphasis on the ancient craft of storytelling. The first year is dedicated to building strong technical and creative foundations, with voice, improvisation and storytelling classes underpinning all your work. Greek Theatre and Shakespeare, 'the Olympics of acting', are both introduced in the second year of training in order to push your boundaries and develop not only your technical skills, but also your emotional and imaginative range as actors. Challenging plays and texts are studied and performed throughout the two years and critical thinking skills are developed through peer feedback and reflective practice.

You will have plenty of performance opportunities in our fully equipped main theatre, Theatre on the Hill and our studio theatres. Each year you will also be involved in an outdoor production, often Shakespeare or Greek theatre. Examples of our outdoor shows are a mud-drenched, gritty site-specific production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* set in the middle of a wood and Timberlake Wertenbaker's *Our Country's Good* in a field which we shared with three horses!



The Crucible by Arthur Miller

In addition, you will be able to engage with the local community by performing plays, scenes and pieces of Children's Theatre at local primary and secondary schools,



retirement homes, and undertaking role play for the local Fire Brigade's training events.

You will also have the opportunity to collaborate with talented young creatives from other departments, such as Backstage Theatre, Fashion, Music Performance and Media. They will provide amazing sets and lighting, costume, music for your productions and film some projects. Graduates return regularly to run workshops and assist in class which is a huge inspiration for the students.

Classes include:

- **Storytelling**
The essence of acting – you are all storytellers!
- **Principles of Acting**
The fundamentals of acting, including techniques inspired by Stanislavski, Michael Chekhov, Meisner and Brecht
- **Voice**
Training your voice to be a sensitive and powerful storytelling tool. From breathing technique and projection to articulation. We never use microphones in our performances – you have all the power you need within you!
- **Movement**
Understanding your body as a storytelling tool. Body conditioning for strength, flexibility and stamina, storytelling through movement, partner work to improve energy flow and connection.
- **Improvisation**
Learning how to be fully present and truthful in every moment with group improvisations.
- **TV & Film**
Performing scenes from films which are filmed in a professional TV studio by Level 3 Media students
- **Contemporary Theatre**
*Performing powerful plays, such as *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, *Our Country's Good* by Timberlake Wertenbaker and *The Skin of Our Teeth* by Thornton Wilder.*

- **Adapting for the Stage**

Adapting classic stories for the stage, as an ensemble. Recent examples are Great Expectations by Charles Dickens (shown below) and Victor Hugo's novel Les Misérables.



- **Classical Theatre**

Understanding and performing Shakespeare and other complex texts such as Restoration and Ancient Greek Theatre.

- **Children's Theatre**

Devising and performing pieces of Children's Theatre for a local primary school – fantastic experience for anyone interested in TIE (Theatre in Education).

- **Research into Rehearsal/Historical Context**

Valuing the importance of research when developing a character and using it to inform rehearsals.

Assessment:

Assessment is project-based and is continuous throughout the two years - a mixture of practical and written work. All the practical skills you learn in class are put into practice each term in performances on stage or screen. Written work underpins every project and follows a similar format: context, research, practical and evaluation with planning and production, problem solving and presentation skills added to your second year work. The bulk of your written work consists of a logbook that you complete, ideally every day, where you detail and analyse what you have learnt in

class. In essence, you are creating your own methodology as an actor. Most professional actors have a notebook they fill with ideas, research, exercises and their journey for each production. By the end of the two year course you will be perfectly prepared for the real thing!



Outdoor production of Something Unspoken by Tennessee Williams

Progression:

This list will, hopefully, inspire you and show that the UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma in Acting, which is equivalent to three A Levels is recognized as a robust and rigorous vocational and academic qualification by renowned and respected universities and drama schools. Buckinghamshire College Group Level 3 Acting students who applied for higher education courses have received offers from top drama schools and universities, which include:

- Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA): BA (Hons) Acting
- Drama Centre London: BA (Hons) Acting
- Rose Bruford College of Theatre & Performance: BA (Hons) Acting
- Rose Bruford College of Theatre & Performance: BA (Hons) European Theatre Arts
- Rose Bruford College of Theatre & Performance: BA (Hons) American Theatre Arts
- Manchester Metropolitan University: BA (Hons) Acting
- Guilford School of Acting (GSA): BA (Hons) Theatre Studies
- East 15 Acting School: BA (Hons) Acting
- East 15 Acting School: BA (Hons) World Performance
- East 15 Acting School: BA (Hons) Acting and Community Theatre
- Royal Central School of Speech & Drama: BA (Hons) Acting (Collaborative and Devised Theatre)
- Royal Central School of Speech & Drama: BA (Hons) Drama, Applied Theatre & Education

- Royal Holloway, University of London: BA (Hons) Drama & English
- Brunel University: BA (Hons) Creative Writing
- Goldsmiths University: BA (Hons) Drama & Theatre Studies
- Newman University: BA (Hons) Drama & Education Studies
- St Mary's University: BA (Hons) Drama & Theatre Arts
- Manchester Metropolitan University: BA (Hons) Drama & Education Studies
- University of Leeds: BA (Hons) Theatre and Performance
- University of Leeds: BA (Hons) Criminal Justice and Criminology
- University of Sussex: BA (Hons) Drama Studies and Film Studies
- Oxford Brookes University: BA (Hons) Drama/Film Studies
- Chichester University: BA (Hons) Performing Arts
- Loughborough University: BA (Hons) Drama
- Edge Hill University: BA (Hons) Drama
- St Mary's University College: BA (Hons) Drama
- St.Mary's University College: BA (Hons) Drama and Applied Theatre
- Arts University Bournemouth: BA (Hons) Acting
- Bath Spa University: BA (Hons) Acting
- University of Sheffield: BA (Hons) Theatre & Performance
- Court Theatre Training Company: BA (Hons) Acting
- Regent's School of Drama: Film & Media, Regent's University London: BA (Hons) Acting & Global Theatre
- East 15 Acting School: Certificate of Higher Education in Theatre Arts
- The Bridge Theatre Training Company: 2 year Professional Acting Course
- Oxford School of Drama: One year acting course



Outdoor production of The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde

Graduates who are now working in the industry have appeared in prime time TV shows such as Casualty and EastEnders, feature films such as Last Christmas and performed in West End productions and the Edinburgh Fringe where Tayla Kenyon won Best Individual Performance 2019.

Further information:

Please don't hesitate to email me with any questions at irambota@buckscollegigroup.ac.uk

Do keep reading as I've compiled a list of summer activities for you to complete which I hope you find not only fun but informative. I look forward to seeing you again and sharing a passion for the fascinating craft of acting and the wonderful world of storytelling!

With best wishes,

Irene Rambota

Course Leader – Acting for Stage & Screen

Advance Practitioner for Creative & Digital Performance (Amersham)

Buckinghamshire College Group



Technical rehearsals for The Crucible by Arthur Miller



WATCH AND EVALUATE AS MANY PLAYS AS YOU CAN



Although theatres have had to close their physical doors, a number of them are broadcasting free shows online which is fantastic. Try to watch and evaluate as many of these as you can before September. These three theatres are screening free live performances every week and are easy to access via YouTube:

- National Theatre
- The Globe
- Hampstead Theatre

It is fantastic preparation for drama school auditions where they will expect you to have immersed yourself fully in the theatre world, absorbing as much information about the industry as you can.

Evaluation is a big part of your coursework and it is so important for you to start understanding how to analyse and evaluate performances, those of others and your own. Evaluating and analysing is all about asking questions such as how and why.

- How does the production bring the story to life?
- Why are some actors better than others at embodying their character truthfully?

Before you even see the play you can find out some background information:

- Who wrote it?
- Who is the director?
- Who is the designer?
- What is it about?
- What are the main themes and messages it conveys?
- What are the main characters of the play?

As regards the actors' performances, ask yourself why you are drawn into the world inhabited by some characters and not others.

- Are the actors 'living' the whole time they are on stage?
- When they enter a scene are they coming from somewhere in a particular emotional state or have they just walked on as the actor?
- Similarly when they are exiting, is it clear their character is going somewhere or are they just actors going off stage?
- Why do some actors stand out? Be detailed with your responses. Sometimes actors upstage other actors by performing individually 'out to the audience' as opposed to connecting to the other actors on stage in order to tell the story.
- How are the actors using the voice and body to embody their characters?
- Are the actors really engaging with each other, connecting and playing their intentions?
- How tight are the cues? Is the energy dropped at any point? If so, why?
- What do you think of the language or text of the play?
- What is the play making you think about? Are there any messages within the story?
- What is the most engaging/powerful/interesting/humorous part of the production and why



Watch the following videos and either participate, as in the warm-ups, or write down the main points that stood out for you.

1. Some vocal warm-ups from the National Theatre, led by Jeannette Nelson. They will give you a taste of the kind of voice classes you will be part of at College, working on breathing, resonance, projection and articulation.

An Actor's Warm-Up: Voice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFXqyl4C1J4>

Vocal Warm-Up #1: Breathing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tc-hoG4nec>

Vocal Warm-Up #2: Resonance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBoOyCLICcU>

Vocal Warm-Up #3: Opening Up the Voice

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_MvIGKwLh0

Vocal Warm-Up #4: Articulation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uRdFtrv2yGA>

2. An introduction to the work we'll be doing when we look at Shakespeare. John Barton holds a master class in how to play Shakespeare, using members of the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) to rehearse scenes. You'll recognise a number of film actors in their youth!

RSC Playing Shakespeare 1 of 9 The Two Traditions 1984

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2VnxiW3oqk>

The links below are for the speeches worked on in the RSC Playing Shakespeare video:

Hamlet, Act 3 Scene 2, Hamlet's advice to the Players, 'Speak the speech I pray you...'

https://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/shakespeare/hamlet/page_150/

The Merchant of Venice, Act 1 Scene 1, 'In sooth, I know not why I am so sad.'

https://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/shakespeare/merchant/page_2/

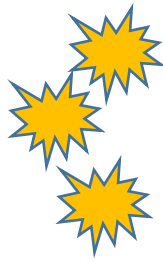
Othello, Act 3 Scene 3, 'I had been happy...'

https://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/shakespeare/othello/page_158/

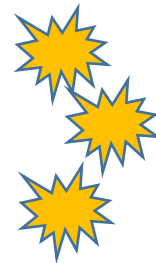
3. On the Level 3 Acting course, you will have the opportunity to work on both stage and screen. The video below will introduce you to some important tips for screen acting.

Michael Caine Teaches Acting in Film

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZPLVDwEr7Y>



MAKE A SELF-TAPE



Auditioning via self-tape is the industry standard these days, so learning how to film yourself acting a scene or monologue is so important.

- Have a go at filming your audition speech using your phone or a camera.
- Choose monologues from your favourite plays or films and create a self-tape.
- You can also film scenes with a member of your family reading in the other actors' lines. This is good practice for industry auditions – the person reading in your cue lines is often the casting director's assistant who isn't usually an actor!

The links below will give you some guidance on the best way to film a self-tape. We'll be working on this during the course, so don't worry about it being perfect. It's just about having a go, having fun and, above all, enjoy telling a story!

Equity's Self-Tape Guide

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzWxlQ8vTSw>

Spotlight: How to Self-Tape at Home

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sD-E3lYZwc>

Everything You Need to Know About Self-Taping

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9g7KiSWbQSg>

The Self-Tape Musts - Casting Director Frank Moisselle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42bU2rFE7jQ>

The students and I look forward to welcoming you to Buckinghamshire College Group!!



*William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream
– fairies in hand-printed fabric designed by Fashion students*