

This course overview provides a summary of the programmes offered from September 2019. Please note this may be subject to amendment and change in future years. Students are always consulted on such change and details are made available to applicants holding offers. In order to progress through the course students normally have to pass all modules and achieve 180 credits.

Module Title	
The Opera Professional	20 credits
Research Project	40 credits
Directing Skills 1	40 credits
Directing Skills 2	40 credits
Industry Practice	40 credits

The Opera Professional 1

Credits: 20

Assessment: Portfolio (50%); Performance (50%)

Through a series of seminars, this module will provide an overview of the development of opera, including social and political influences, changes in musical style, dramatic/libretto issues, developments in production style and the “fach” system. Reflective tools will be introduced to enable the students to evaluate and crystallise their learning path across the programme. Building on contextual knowledge gained from the seminar series, the practical part of the project will focus on attaining a deep understanding of the challenges of delivering recitative in opera, across a range of composers, styles and languages. This will be delivered through working sessions, coaching, staging work and a summative performance. The works selected will reflect each student’s potential and, to a lesser degree, ambitions. Works will be chosen through negotiation between student, tutor and Head of Department. Contextual knowledge and an awareness of stylistic requirements relating to the selected repertoire will be taught within individual lessons and developed through research and personal practice.

Research Project

Credits: 40

Assessment: Presentation (25%); Evaluative Log (25%); Research Project (50%)

Through this module, students will extend their relevant contextual knowledge through work with both Music and Drama, depending on their previous experience. Students will have access to:

- Working with actors and singers >
- Learning theory for practitioners through experiential means
- Observing training for singers, conductors & choral groups
- Improving language skills through the vocal studies’ language class provision

They will also participate in elements of the *Collaborative Performance* and *Talking Text & Creating Character* projects undertaken by the MA Advanced Opera Performance students.

Directing students will evaluate and reflect on this breadth of experiences, using them to underpin the development of a range of working methodologies, appropriate to different circumstances and artistic projects. The students will also have access to Postgraduate Research teaching, in order to support the development of necessary research strategies.

Directing Skills 1

Credits: 40

Assessment: Reflective Critique (25%); Presentation 25%; Continuous Assessment (50%)

Classes and briefings on key elements of design will be offered, in line with previous experience or potential areas for development for each student. These may include:

- Set Design
- Costume Design
- Lighting Design
- Video Design

Further mentored work will allow students to observe and potentially participate in an opera box project (offered by Design for Performance course), in which professional opera directors facilitate development of innovative set design by emerging young designers. Where possible, directing students will consult with established industry professionals experienced in the development of new operatic work, examining issues such as the relationship with the composer and/or librettist, negotiating a confluence of artistic intentions, adapting work for performance and methods of devising. Students will combine this learning through work as Assistant Director on a College production.

Directing Skills 2

Credits: 40

Assessment: Mentor Report (40%); Interview (40%); Reflective Critique (20%)

The directing student will take charge of an operatic project, working with a College cast to create a performance (in-house or public, depending on the project) to meet a specific set of objectives established in advance. The student will be mentored across the project by a professional director, whose purpose is to offer advice and feedback at all stages of the project's development, attending rehearsals and meetings by agreement with the student.

Industry Practice

Credits: 40

Assessment: Written Assessment (20%); Mentor Report (40%); Career Development Interview (40%)

Through a series of placements at Welsh National Opera (or another agreed opera house), the directing student will have the opportunity to observe and experience a wide range of activities associated with working on opera productions and company organisation. This may include briefings from WNO casting, budgeting and scheduling staff to enable understanding of the logistics involved in producing an opera from start to finish. Following this, towards the end of the programme, students will undertake an extended mentored placement with a host company to work on an external professional production; clearly defined expectations and outcomes for both parties will be agreed in advance.