

Programme Specification (PG)

Awarding body / institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Name of final award and programme title:	MA Live Art
Name of interim award(s):	
Duration of study / period of registration:	1 Year Full Time
Queen Mary programme code(s):	W47A
QAA Benchmark Group:	N/A
FHEQ Level of Award:	Level 7
Programme accredited by:	N/A
Date Programme Specification approved:	
Responsible School / Institute:	School of English & Drama

Schools / Institutes which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

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Collaborative institution(s) / organisation(s) involved in delivering the programme:

The Live Art Development Agency (LADA)

Programme outline

MA Live Art is a specialised programme of taught postgraduate study led by research leaders, industry professionals, and high-profile artists. Graduates will gain theoretical and practical grounding in histories and practices of live art, while developing professional capacities and networks. The programme is convened by the Drama Department at QMUL in collaboration with Live Art Development Agency (LADA), an internationally leading centre for live art advocacy, preservation and programming.

In the United Kingdom, live art is the preferred term to refer to a range of contemporary practices in performance that privilege the solo performer or collective and their central use of the body, non-specialised materials, and non-traditional venues, styles, and durations. Live art takes place at the vital margins of culture; yet today it also factors as a significant element in programming at major national institutions and festivals in the UK, such as Tate Modern, Manchester International Festival, and Barbican, as well as internationally.

MA Live Art is the first programme of its kind, and will support research and practice in performance art, time-based art, site-specific performance, relational and intimate performance, durational performance, and other experimental practices. Students will engage with and make performance in dialogue with genealogies of visual art and/or experimental theatre in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Students will be enabled to understand, challenge and make live art that has the capacity to intervene in pressing social issues, including gender, sexual, racial or class identity, and environmental and social justice;

engage with the potential for protest and direct action; and experiment with theoretical investigations concerning the body, time, space, subjectivity, documentation and history, for example.

MA Live Art provides students with research and practical training in the field of live art and contemporary performance. These skills will advance students' independent practices as artists, as scholars, or as creative producers, curators or creative industries professionals. Students will engage with, respond to and make performances relevant to established and emergent histories of live art and performance in the UK, Europe, and internationally. Graduates from the programme will gain professionalisation and increased employability, as well as academic preparation for doctoral study.

Students will learn through studio-based and discussion-led methods, through workshops, lectures, master classes, seminars, fieldwork and, depending on their module selection, professional placements. The taught component of the programme includes a mix of seminar, practice and placement modules. Students will complete two seminar modules that provide strong background in cultural histories and theories of live art, as well as skills for carrying out research including performance analysis, theory and historiography. In addition, students will take one compulsory practical module that provides an experimental situation for making critically engaged performances. For their elective module, students can select a further performance practice module, a professional placement module, 30 credits from another MA/MSc programme or DRA7005 Independent Written Project, subject to the approval of the relevant convenors. All students will take the compulsory research methods module 'Research Design' (0 credits pass/fail) which will provide essential training and support in research. MA Live Art culminates in a final written or practice-based research dissertation project. Students' learning experience will draw on LADA and QMUL Drama's significant roster of industry partnerships with advocacy organisations, venues, and Live Art festivals.

The programme of study can be taken either full time (1 year) or part time (2 years). Students on the programme will have access to both QMUL's full research and support services, as well as LADA's study room, which includes an archive of 7000+ items.

Aims of the programme

The programme aims to:

- Meet a need in the live art sector for specialised and targeted teaching and learning at postgraduate level, to enable the development of artists, scholars and cultural industries professionals
- To develop a reflective pedagogy for live art and related practices in performance in order to develop critically, politically and socially active artists, scholars and cultural industries professionals
- To create new knowledge and support experimentation in the practice, theory and advocacy of live art, with a view to developing expertise in the politics, form, mediality, discipline, genealogies and histories of live art
- To sustain interdisciplinary research across visual studies, contemporary art theory, performance studies, and critical theory
- To enable professionalisation, career advancement and increased employability for a range of practitioners in live art; and to enable graduates to work with and develop new and diverse audiences and publics
- To encourage and enable the pursuit of independent study and practice in the field of live art

What will you be expected to achieve?

Students who successfully complete the programme will be able to:

- Think in critically, socially and politically engaged ways about histories and practices of live art
- Make, develop, present, document, write about, curate and/or creatively support live art with an understanding of its professional and critical contexts of reception
- Understand and contribute to the interdisciplinary relationships between live art and visual studies and/or performance studies
- Situate their own practice – as an artist, scholar, or arts professional – within a broader series of critical histories; and to think critically about international histories and contexts, with an understanding of diversity, equality and inclusion
- Undertake independent, rigorous, and intellectually searching research – including as an artist, thinker or producer – led by their own interests, imperatives and ambitions.

Academic Content:

A 1	operate and think reflexively, creatively, critically and technically to develop ideas and construct arguments
A 2	research and examine information, materials and experiences, formulate independent judgements, and articulate reasoned arguments through reflection, review and evaluation
A 3	formulate reasoned responses to the critical judgements of others
A 4	engage interdisciplinary approaches and understand different theories or paradigms of knowledge.

Disciplinary Skills - able to:	
B 1	engage in performance and production, based on acquisition and understanding of appropriate performance vocabularies, skills, forms, working methods and research paradigms
B 2	develop techniques informed or critically influenced by cultural forms, histories, contexts and/or artists and thinkers
B 3	describe, theorise, interpret and evaluate performance scores, documentation and live events from a range of critical and theoretical perspectives
B 4	develop a repertoire of interpretative skills, practices and techniques and to apply them effectively to engage with an audience
B 5	understand, challenge and make live art that has the capacity to intervene in pressing social issues, including gender, sexual, racial or class identity, and environmental and social justice

Attributes:	
C 1	work independently, set goals and manage workloads; and acquire new learning in a range of ways, both individually and collaboratively
C 2	work in planned and improvisatory ways with curiosity and an openness to change; and to anticipate and accommodate change, ambiguity, creative risk taking, uncertainty, difficulty and unfamiliarity
C 3	identify personal strengths and needs, and reflect on personal development and opportunities for life-long learning
C 4	articulate ideas and communicate information comprehensibly in visual, practical, oral and textual forms
C 5	use project management skills, involving the ability to investigate, organise, curate and realise events and creative activities

How will you learn?

Teaching, learning and assessment are predicated upon the Drama Department and LADA's shared belief that theory and practice are mutually enriching forms of enquiry. Live art is not simply a topic of research but also constitutes a distinctive mode of research. In accordance, then, with our aim of creating a 'scholar-artist' postgraduate programme, MA Live Art combines seminar-based and studio-based teaching and learning. (See below for a list of the specific modules.) Moreover, the final dissertation may be undertaken solely through writing, or by a combination of practice-based research and a written element.

Students will learn through practical and discussion-led methods, through workshops, lectures, master classes, seminars, fieldwork and, depending on their module selection, professional placements. The taught component of the programme includes a mix of seminar and practice modules. The programme is taught by members of the Drama Department, with support from staff at the Live Art Development Agency (LADA). This breadth of commitment ensures that students are taught to create and investigate performances from a broad range of theoretical, historical, critical, and aesthetic perspectives. Moreover, the Drama Department is strong in both written and practice-based research. Accordingly, the Drama Department delivers a

research-driven programme that engages with the latest developments and debates in the study and creation of theatre and performance. To capitalise on London's vibrant theatre and performance culture, visiting artists, producers, critics and scholars are brought in, where possible, to offer master classes and lead special seminars.

Students' learning experience will draw on QMUL Drama's significant roster of industry partnerships with advocacy organisations, venues, and live art festivals. Students will also benefit from opportunities to work with LADA in several capacities, from using LADA's extensive research archives to completing an elective placement. Seminar classes will also be hosted at both QMUL's Mile End campus and at LADA (both situated in London's cultural vibrant East End), affording students an opportunity to become acquainted with and to make independent use of respective resources.

Practical options and events are normally held in the department's well-equipped performance and rehearsal spaces. Students can also book independent rehearsal time in one of the Department's five performance spaces. In undertaking practical work, students have access to a range of technical and audio-visual resources.

Students are also provided with a modest, though sufficient, budget for each performance. All practical work is supported by Drama Department technical staff, who will also introduce students to the department's technical resources.

How will you be assessed?

Students are assessed in formats appropriate to the material studied, including presentations, reports, essays, performances, documentation and self-evaluation of practice.

Assessed coursework is supplemented by one 0-credit pass/fail module in semester 2, "Research Design." In this module, students complete a series of developmental writing and research tasks geared to prepare them for their dissertation projects.

All students will complete a final dissertation, and they can choose between a written dissertation or a practice-based dissertation, which includes a written critical reflection component.

All students will present their research plans for the dissertation at the department's annual Postgraduate Dissertation Colloquium. Students also benefit from dissertation advice offered as part of this non-assessed event. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to attend Quorum, the Department's seminar series; this provides a forum for students to engage with research from members of the Department and visiting academics and practitioners.

Each element of assessment is graded as Fail, Pass, Merit or Distinction. The taught modules count for 67% (120 credits) and the Dissertation for 33% (60 credits) of the overall assessment.

General assessment criteria are set out in the MA Guidelines and on the School's website.

How is the programme structured?

Please specify the structure of the programme diets for all variants of the programme (e.g. full-time, part-time - if applicable). The description should be sufficiently detailed to fully define the structure of the diet.

Students follow a prescribed sequence of four credit-bearing modules (120 credits at Level 7) and one 0-credit pass/fail module (Level 7), followed by a dissertation (60 credits at Level 7). The modules include a mix of seminars and practice-based modules.

Semester 1

"DRA7712 Live Art Histories" (30 credits, compulsory)

"DRA7004 Performance Lab" (30 credits, compulsory)

Semester 2:

"DRA7713 Disciplines of Live Art" (30 credits, compulsory)

Choose one 30-credit elective module:

A. "DRA7002 Independent Practical Project" (30 credits, elective)

or

B. "DRA7005 Independent Written Project" (30 credits, elective)

or

C. 30 credits from another MA/MSc programme (30 credits, elective)

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"DRA7103 Research Design" (0 credits, compulsory)

Exam Term-Semester 3/Summer:

Choose one 60-credit project (core):

A. "DRA7000 Dissertation" (60 credits)

or

B. "DRA7711 Practice-based Dissertation" (60 credits)

Notes:

Not all electives will be offered each year.

Students may take 30 credits from a suitable MA or MSc programme as an elective with the approval of the MA Live Art convenor and relevant staff from the other programme.

Students may take DRA7005 Independent Written Project (30 credits) as an elective with the approval of the MA Live Art convenor.

Academic Year of Study

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester

What are the entry requirements?

Normally, a first degree with at least an Upper Second class honours, or equivalent, in Drama, English, or a related field. Professional artistic experience is desirable, though not essential. Mature or non-traditional applicants who do not meet the formal academic criteria but who possess relevant credentials (e.g., professional experience) will be considered. In certain cases, we may call for examples of written and artistic work and/or interview candidates. For non-native English speakers, university IELTS or equivalent evidence of proficiency in English is required.

How will the quality of the programme be managed and enhanced? How do we listen to and act on your feedback?

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between Schools and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate representation from staff within the school/institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year.

The School operates a Learning and Teaching Committee, which considers and advises on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in this Committee's work in a number of ways, such as through consideration of student surveys.

Drama operates a programme review of its taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. This review feeds into the School's Annual Programme Review for undergraduate programmes and for postgraduate taught programmes using the Annual Programme Review pro-forma. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey results and module evaluations, and consideration of Staff-Student Liaison Committee minutes. Student representatives (selected across all the School's taught programmes) are also invited to attend the Annual Programme Review meeting.

What academic support is available?

All students beginning study on the programme participate in a series of Welcome Week activities, which involve introductions to the programme, specific inductions in the use of the online learning environment and the use of Drama practical spaces and facilities. These events also include opportunities for social interaction, and scheduled small group and individual meetings with personal advisers.

Each student's academic progress and personal welfare is monitored by the MA Convenor (adviser). The MA Convenor is the designated member of staff with whom students can also raise issues and problems, and from whom they can seek advice and guidance.

All teaching staff hold regular drop-in hours in which students are actively encouraged to discuss their work and their progress.

Both the MA Convenor and all teaching staff are able to refer students, where appropriate to relevant professional service departments in the College, including Disability and Dyslexia, Welfare, Counselling.

There are two dedicated posts in the School of English and Drama Administrative team to support students: 1) The Teaching and Student Support Manager works with academic staff to assist students in need of support; 2) The E-Strategy Manager supports students in their use of the online learning environments used on all modules.

After submitting a dissertation proposal each student is assigned a supervisor, with whom they have meetings to review the scope, research plans, and early drafts or, in the case of practice-based research, demonstrations of their research. Supervisors also give feedback on presentations delivered at the Postgraduate Dissertation Colloquium.

The quality of pedagogical practice is ensured through team and individual teaching, advising sessions, meetings between students and the MA Convenor, staff attendance at performance and research events, and student evaluations. Such quality is further enhanced by a robust system of external examining, in which the examiner is invited to attend all performance events and reads a representative sample of the written work produced by students.

Programme-specific rules and facts

How inclusive is the programme for all students, including those with disabilities?

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning differences and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one "study skills" tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Mentoring support for students with mental health issues and conditions on the autistic spectrum

Links with employers, placement opportunities and transferable skills

As a collaboration between the Drama Department and the Live Art Development Agency, the programme offers unique opportunities to work with artists and industry leaders while gaining skills that will be of use after the degree.

The programme capitalises on London's outstanding art and performance resources and, particularly, the Department's links with a variety of organisations including Artangel, Artsadmin, Barbican, Live Art Development Agency, London International Festival of Theatre, People's Palace Projects, Project Phakama, Spill Festival of Performance, and more. For students interested in developing their experience in the cultural industries, the programme offers an elective placement module. Students are also encouraged to participate actively in the numerous research and performance events that are a central feature of academic life in Drama at Queen Mary.

The programme aims to provide a range of career prospects for its graduates. The MA programme prepares students for research degrees in theatre and performance; enables sustained reflection and practical development for practicing artists; and enhances professional development in teaching, arts administration and a wide range of other creative careers.

Students who choose to focus on issues related to the cultural industries will have:

- Enhanced knowledge and understanding of issues and practices in the cultural industries
- Developed skills in project planning and completion, in negotiation with other stakeholders
- Developed skills in managing expectations and work in an industry-based context

Programme Specification Approval

Person completing Programme Specification:

Michael Shane Boyle

Person responsible for management of programme:

Dominic Johnson

Date Programme Specification produced / amended by School / Institute Learning and Teaching Committee:

17 Apr 2020

Date Programme Specification approved by Taught Programmes Board: