



Department of Theatre,
Film and Television Studies

Postgraduate studies in

Theatre, Film and Television Studies

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Important information

The programme information published in this brochure was correct at time of going to print (May 2021) and may be subject to change. Prospective students are advised to check the definitive programme information, including entry requirements, that is available on our website before making an application, to ensure that the programme meets their needs.

Welcome to the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies

Aberystwyth is situated in a unique location on the west coast of Wales between Cardigan Bay and the Cambrian Mountains, and the university is very much at the heart of the community. If you choose to join us, you'll become part of a lively, outward-looking community of students and staff.

The Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies is one of the few interdisciplinary departments of its kind in the UK and provides high-quality focused learning, teaching and research opportunities to students from across the globe.

We have an international reputation for teaching and conducting cutting-edge research. This makes Aberystwyth University an ideal place to pursue both Masters and Doctoral degrees.

Many of our teaching staff are leading professionals working in the fields of Scenography, Theatre, Film and Media as well as being active researchers, and our large, vibrant postgraduate community is viewed as a key component of our research and teaching excellence.

Departmental staff have formed working relationships with a range of companies including National Theatre Wales, Music Theatre Wales, National Dance Company Wales, Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru and Arad Goch. We are also proud of our well-established and active relationships with key industry partners, such as the BBC (studios situated within the department's Parry Williams Building), S4C, Fiction Factory, the British Council Wales and Wales Arts International.

We are proud to offer exciting programmes that combine the creative and the critical through innovative practical work and challenging scholarly enquiry. You will gain intellectual, practical and transferable skills that will prepare you for a variety of careers in the creative industries and beyond.

In this brochure we give you a taste of what we can offer and invite you to visit us to learn more and get a feel for the department for yourself.

Professor Simon Banham
Head of Department



Our courses

Taught degrees

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Documentary Filmmaking: Landscape and Ecology

MA

This unique Masters degree enables you to develop your practical skills as a documentary filmmaker in a research-led context with access to both film and digital technologies.

You will have the opportunity to explore a range of techniques, experiment with new approaches and take risks as you develop your own creative voice through a period of sustained reflection that leads to a final practical project. The course is designed to equip you with technical expertise, supported by a grounding in the key critical debates in documentary film. You will be encouraged to experiment with different media and methods, and to think about documentary as a form of both personal expression and political intervention, stimulating new ways of seeing and engaging with the world. You will benefit from departmental interests in documentary history and theory, space, place and landscape, activism, ecocriticism and site-specific performance.

Specialist opportunities for Documentary Film students at Aberystwyth include:

- use of facilities to work across digital, 8mm and 16mm film, including a digital research lab and darkrooms for analogue film and photography
- access to the National Screen and Sound Archive
- taking part in workshops and masterclasses with visiting artists
- field work and trips.


Employability

On graduation you will be equipped with the creative and critical skills required to pursue a career as an independent filmmaker, artist or collaborator within professional organisations. You will gain advanced technical knowledge in your chosen specialisms, including camerawork, sound and editing.

Key Facts

 Degree type: MA.

 Course Code: P311.

 Duration: 1 year (full-time) or 2 years (part-time).

Modules

Modules that you may study on this course include:

- Documentary Practices
- 16mm Filmmaking
- Key Concepts and Debates in Human Geography
- Risk, Resilience and Behaviour in a Changing Environment
- Ecocriticism and Ecocinema
- Human Geography: Theory and Method
- Exhibiting Film
- Engaging Publics
- Practice Research Project.

Documentary Practices

Combining critical inquiry and creative practice, this module encourages you to develop your own authorial voice and to explore the possibilities of the documentary form, reaching beyond traditional techniques to find new and innovative languages.

16mm Filmmaking

Provides a rare opportunity for you to explore the material possibilities of 16mm film. Using our specialist lab and taught by experts in the field of photochemical film, you will explore Bolex shooting, hand-processing, optical printing, tinting and toning, as well as projection and installation.

Ecocriticism and Ecocinema

Introduces you to the expanding field of ecocriticism, an environmentally conscious approach to the study of cultural productions that has impacted significantly upon film theory and practice.

For more details and the latest information on our modules, see our website.

Film Producing

MA

This degree aims to extend your knowledge and experience of film production and film producing. Our teaching offers you training in research methodologies, provides a combination of applied research and vocational training, and stimulates vigorous intellectual inquiry.

In every area of this course you will be encouraged to develop your academic and practical knowledge of film producing through a series of case studies and research-led explorations. Your participation in seminars and a range of vocational exercises will enable you to develop, contextualise and reflect critically upon your own work in a broader professional context.

Specialist opportunities for Film Producing students at Aberystwyth include:

- working with an experienced film producer on all aspects of the film producing modules
- vocational training through the film producing modules
- access to masterclasses run by industry professionals
- access to studios and workshops, digital research equipment, and the Department's filming and post-production facilities and equipment.

Employability

The MA in Film Producing combines theoretically-informed film practice with technical skills and critical thinking, giving you the chance to develop high levels of production work alongside an appreciation of the craft, history and broader professional context of filmmaking. The aim is to stimulate creativity and embed a systematic understanding and knowledge through a combination of theory and practice, as well as nurturing the essential competencies and capabilities demanded by key industry employers and the independent production sector.

Modules

Core modules that you may study on this course include:

- Case Studies in Film History
- Aspects of Media Law
- Film Producing
- Film Distribution and Exhibition
- Financial Analysis and Decision Making
- Film Production Project.

Case Studies in Film History

Through historical analysis of film texts, you will develop a particular understanding of text in relation to contexts of production, exhibition or reception. You will explore continuities and disruptions across both Hollywood, European and world cinema, including popular and alternative cinema.

Aspects of Media Law

Enables you to critically evaluate and research the current legal protections and structures in place to ensure compliance with strict and complex precedent, and to investigate new strategic approaches to the business of filmmaking. There will be a strong vocational aspect to the module.

For more details and the latest information on our modules, see our website.

Key Facts



Degree type: MA.



Course Code: P313.



Duration: 1 year (full-time) or 2 years (part-time).



Theatre Practice: Performance and Scenography

MA

The Theatre Practice degree is aimed at students who intend to pursue creative practice in performance and scenography in order to become professional artists and/or practice-based researchers.

Housed in its own dedicated building and led by internationally recognised practitioners, this degree enables personal and professional development through the sustained exercise of creative practice in performance and scenography.

Within Aberystwyth's historic Assembly Rooms, you will have a dedicated workspace with the opportunity to work daily as a community (or 'Assembly') of experimental, developing artists, specialising in diverse aspects of contemporary performance practice, from scenography, design and installation, to acting, writing and directing. Whilst supporting personal pathways, the teaching will foster such specialisms by encouraging them to intersect and intertwine, forming a cultural environment of collaboration and exchange in order to strengthen the creativity of the individual and the individuality of their creativity.

Specialist opportunities for Theatre Practice students at Aberystwyth include:

- a dedicated workspace
- access to studios and workshops
- creative development led by internationally recognised practitioners
- access to the National Library of Wales and its archives
- working in an extraordinary and inspiring location and environment.

Employability

Graduates of this course will be well-prepared to work within a breadth of creative and related industries as individual practitioners or as collaborators within creative companies and organisations. You will also acquire essential skills to pursue practice-based research and further academic study at PhD level.

Modules

Core modules that you may study on this course include:

- Compositional Practices
- Creative Production Project
- Space, Time, Material and Form
- Research Project.

Compositional Practices

Will allow you to explore a range of conceptual, compositional and practical strategies and methodologies for making contemporary theatre, performance and scenography, as the basis for individual creative development.

Creative Production Project

Involves the creation of a substantial, original performance work, conceived, produced and presented collaboratively, facilitated by a professionally experienced member of staff and/or guest artist.

For more details and the latest information on our modules, see our website.

Key Facts



Degree type: MA.



Course Code: W461.



Duration: 1 year (full-time) or 2 years (part-time).



Advanced Media Production

MSc, PGDip, PGCert

Combining practical knowledge of computer programming with media production skills, this course is suitable for individuals who are currently employed, or wish to work, within the creative industries. It will equip you with the theoretical and real-world skills required to work with digital and media technologies.

This is an interdisciplinary degree hosted by the Department of Computer Science and the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies. Generous discounts are available to those students working in a relevant industry in the West Wales & Valleys region who meet the eligibility requirements.

Contact time

We have designed our training to be as accessible as possible, particularly for those in full-time employment. Each taught module runs over 14 weeks via distance learning which can be taken for your own continuing professional development or interest or built towards a postgraduate qualification.

A typical postgraduate student is expected to study for 200 hours when taking a 20-credit module. You should anticipate spending between 10-14 hours a week on online lectures, presentations, podcasts, readings and assignments. Wherever possible, the training will be relevant to your day-to-day role.

Most training is by distance learning and web-based which means that as long as you have access to a reasonable broadband connection you can study where and when best suits you. Learning materials for each 14 week module include recorded lectures from academics and industry experts, presentations, podcasts, e-group projects, guided readings, interactive workbooks and discussion forums, as well as assignments and e-tutorials.

Some modules will follow a blended learning programme of short workshops of between 1-3 days, combined with elements of distance learning.

Modules

Modules that you may study on this course include:

- Introduction to Media Production
- Programming for Digital Media
- Web Development
- Applied Graphics
- Digital Cultures
- Big Data
- Advanced Skills in Media Production
- Gender and Media Production
- Extended Reality
- Research Concepts and Skills.

Introduction to Media Production

Trains you in the fundamental practical skills required in the pre-production, production and post-production sectors of the media and creative industries. Content includes script breakdowns, schedules, budgets, camera, lighting, sound and editing.

Programming for Digital Media

Focuses on programming around digital media - images and sound.

Applied Graphics

Gives you a grounding in image and video processing and 3D animation.

Gender and Media Production

Develops your understanding of the relationship between gender and media by examining topical issues of consumption, representation, and industry practice and regulation.

Most modules are taught through the medium of Welsh, English or bilingually.

For more details and the latest information on our modules, see amp.aber.ac.uk



This course is part-funded by the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government.

Key Facts



Degree type: MSc, PGDip,PGCert.



Course Code: G4P3D.



Duration: Up to 5 years (Distance learning).



Research degrees

MPhil, PhD, DProf

We have a vibrant community of research students working with us, who have come to us from across the UK, Europe and further afield. The range of topics and methodologies employed is exceptionally wide, covering textual, archival, historical, practice-based, empirical and philosophical studies. Research projects include work in English and Welsh, and across the whole range of theatre and drama, performance, scenography, media and communication, and film and television.

We offer an annual programme of research seminars, with high-profile visiting speakers and performers; a series of postgraduate forum seminars, designed to strengthen both specific and generic skills in all postgraduate students; and an annual three-day research conference, attended by staff and all postgraduates, where current research from across the Department is shared and discussed.

Although we have particular strengths in Theatre and Performance Research, and Welsh Theatre and Media Research, we also welcome research in other topics, including:

- aesthetics, politics and social engagement
- alternative, avant-garde and experimental theatre and film
- British cinema
- contemporary British and Irish theatre
- documentary film and television
- documentary and verbatim theatre
- film, press and broadcasting censorship and regulatory policies
- film stardom and performance
- horror, fantasy and cult film and television
- intermediality and post-cinematic theatre
- landscape in film and performance
- minority-language theatre, film, television and online media
- music and sound in film
- national and transnational theatre and cinema
- performance, film, media and television historiography and archiving
- practice as research in relation to film, television, media, performance and theatre
- site-specific performance
- television drama, genres and aesthetics.

MPhil

The MPhil is a one-year course (or two years part-time) where you will be expected to produce a thesis of around 50,000-60,000 words. You will work under the direction of one or more supervisors but are not required to attend any classes. After the year spent at Aberystwyth you will have up to two years to write up your research.

PhD

A PhD is awarded upon the satisfactory completion of a thesis of about 80-100,000 words followed by a viva voce examination. This will be shorter for a practice-based PhD with the exact weighting between theory and practice being decided according to the project you have in mind. The normal period of registration is three years (full-time) and it is expected that the thesis will be submitted within four years of your initial registration. Part of your first year is spent undertaking research training, leaving the second and third years for full-time research into your chosen topic.

DProf

The Professional Doctorate or DProf is more appropriate for those pursuing professional rather than academic careers and is designed to allow qualified professionals to study towards a doctorate while maintaining their employment. A DProf will be awarded in recognition of the successful completion of an approved taught programme of study, together with the successful completion of an advanced piece of research. The collaborative aspect provided by a work-based research project provides an ideal opportunity to embed new knowledge in the workplace and ensure that your research is relevant to industry.

For further information see our [How to Apply pages](#), or contact us.



Our research

Research in the Department of Theatre Film and Television Studies (TFTS) foregrounds the study of theatre, film, performance and media within historically, geographically and politically located cultural contexts.

There are three Research Groups:

- Theatre and Performance Research
- Film and Television Research
- Welsh Theatre and Media Research.

Additionally, there are four cross-disciplinary research themes in TFTS: History, Politics, Place and Aesthetics.

The Department draws upon an extensive network of local and global connections and collaborations in order to sustain research into the regional, national and international significance of theatre, performance, film, and screen media within a globalised cultural environment.

The Department has a particular commitment to supporting research which is relevant to the cultural and social life of Wales, whilst setting it within a national and international frame of reference.

Theatre and Performance Research Group

The Department supports scholarly study, field research and practice-led enquiry in theatre and performance, and welcomes interdisciplinary approaches. Several members of staff are award-winning artists and emphasis is upon processes of making, reading and analysing theatre and performance in local, regional, national and trans-national contexts.

Current research themes include:

- contemporary theatre and performance
- history of Welsh language theatre and drama
- installations across the art/science boundaries
- intermediality and post-cinematic theatre
- performance and architecture
- performance and physical culture
- performance and disability
- performance and rural community
- postdramatic theatre
- relational aesthetics
- scenography, performance and the everyday
- theatre and time.

Film and Television Research Group

The Department supports scholarly study and practice-led enquiry in film, television and media, and (along with the Department of History and Welsh History) the Centre for Media History and its major journal, *Media History*.

Research is conducted across a range of topics in film, television and media studies, with particular concentration on the following areas:

- broadcasting and national identity
- digital culture
- digital tools and teaching practice
- documentary film
- experimental filmmaking
- French avant-garde film
- intermediality and post-cinematic theatre
- media history
- rural studies - filmmaking.

Welsh Theatre and Media Research Group

The Department acknowledges its special responsibility for conducting research into Welsh (especially Welsh language) theatre, film, media and performance, which it does by means of a focused interrogation of the experience of community, the cultural construction of nationality, and the artistic investigation of social identity.

Particular research interests include:

- contemporary Welsh theatre and performance
- Welsh theatre history
- minority language media
- the media in Wales
- the media and national identity
- film, broadcasting and arts policy in Wales.

Employability

By completing one of our Masters degrees, you will be well-prepared to work in a breadth of creative and related industries, as individual practitioners or as collaborators within creative companies and organisations. You will also have the essential skills to pursue practice-based research and further academic study at PhD level.

With our Masters courses, our aim is to stimulate creativity and embed a systematic understanding and knowledge of the subjects studied through a combination of theory and practice. We also aim to nurture the essential competencies and capabilities demanded by key industry employers and the independent production sector.

You will gain advanced technical knowledge in your chosen specialisms together with critical thinking skills. This combination will allow you to develop your abilities as a producer alongside an appreciation of the craft, history and broader professional context of film and programme making.





Student profiles



Aimée King

MA Documentary Filmmaking: Landscape and Ecology

I studied Ecology & The Environment at undergraduate level and as my degree finished, I found myself wondering how I could share what I have learnt and effect change, which led me to this masters. My perception of documentary, and more broadly of the world, has shifted. Whilst the history of traditional documentary film is acknowledged and respected, there has been an emphasis on making room for the less conventional. The modules are intersectional, bringing together ideas of ecological consciousness and social sciences with more practical documentary skills, and I have been able to apply what I have learnt both academically and introspectively to my own filmmaking.



Jack Wierenga

MA Film Producing

MA Film Producing is the ideal launchpad for the aspiring film producer. The course focuses on the aspects of film making that are usually missed out in other film courses such as media law, financial planning, and the business of film. The lecturers are steeped in industry knowledge, engaging and genuinely care about creating the next generation of working film producers. I have used industry standard budgeting and scheduling software and techniques to challenge me beyond what I thought I was capable at this stage, all to assist me in creating a professional polished final film and launch my future career.



Ella Phillips

MA Theatre Practice

After my undergraduate degree I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. I had a comprehensive knowledge of theatre on both a practical and theoretical level, but I lacked the confidence to implement it. The course so far has not only improved my existing knowledge but developed my confidence in myself. There is a perfect balance of theoretical and practical teaching and the assessments give you the opportunity to apply that learning. The degree creates a community of theatre makers that can create work together and have comprehensive discussions and debates about the nature of theatre and we have a dedicated building to do this.



Department of Theatre
 Film and Television Studies
 Aberystwyth University
 Parry-Williams Building
 Aberystwyth
 SY23 3AJ

☎ +44 (0) 1970 621537

@ tfts@aber.ac.uk

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