



University of Essex

2026 Prospectus



EAST 15

ACTING SCHOOL

Why East 15

Over 60 years of expertise

Training the best new talent for stage,
screen and behind the scenes careers.

Highest ranked drama school in the UK

In the Guardian University Guide 2026
(as part of the University of Essex).

Diverse and international cohorts

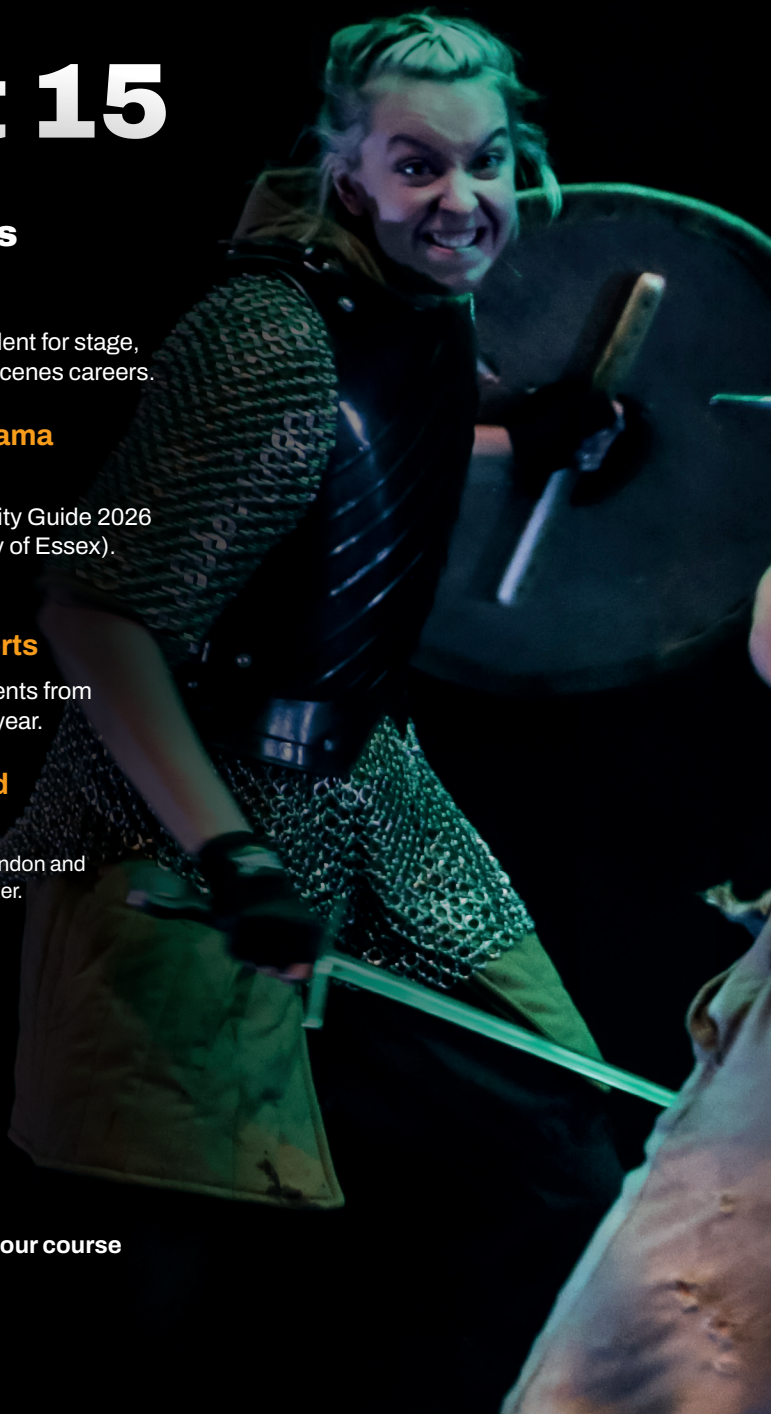
Attracting aspiring students from
over 70 countries each year.

Two fully equipped campuses

Loughton at the edge of London and
the historic city of Colchester.



Find your course



Our history

1945

Joan Littlewood founds the Theatre Workshop

The Theatre Workshop broke new ground by reinterpreting classics for a modern age, as well as commissioning fresh plays from socially conscious writers. They succeeded in creating an outstanding ensemble who combined improvisational brilliance with technique, method, research, textual analysis and the intense expression of truthful emotion.

1961

East 15 Acting School is born

Margaret Bury established East 15 Acting School, drawing teaching methods and philosophies from the pioneering work of the Theatre Workshop. For over sixty years, we have been offering radical training that has produced renowned actors, directors, producers and technicians across theatre, film, TV and radio. While we consistently innovate with changing times, Theatre Workshop's guiding principles continue to inform our teaching and productions today.

2000

Merging with the University of Essex

East 15 found an ideal partner in the University of Essex – an institution known for its tradition of encouraging students to think differently and challenge convention. This merger ushered in new opportunities for students and enabled us to develop fresh and exciting programmes with state-of-the-art facilities.

2007

Expansion of facilities and courses

In response to ever-changing industry, we introduced unique training programmes designed to prepare students for diverse career paths. More recently, we set up a Motion Capture Volume that is served by 30 VICON sensors.

Today

A leading UK conservatoire

East 15 stands apart with an extensive portfolio of courses – from acting and directing to producing and technical theatre. Our teaching staff comprises experts from around the world, who provide hands-on vocational training that prepares the next generation for a wide range of careers in live and recorded performances.

Our training

At East 15, our training recognises and develops your personal talents and intuition. We support your creativity by instilling a strong work ethic and developing industry-ready technical skills. You will develop a methodology and practice that give you the confidence to continue building your craft, long after you graduate.

Conservatoire training

For performers

Our performance training is practical and intensive. You'll not merely gain a solid foundation in theory; you will put your learning into practice in our studios and rehearsal rooms. We encourage you to experiment and innovate, pushing your boundaries to prepare for the work that lies ahead.

Acting technique

Our acting training is centred on exploration. At East 15, you do not learn a single approach to acting; we embrace a philosophy that exposes you to a range of theories and practices, allowing you to develop your own practice. While much of our original approach was based on the theories of Stanislavski, over the years we have embraced diverse practitioners such as Chekhov, Laban, Grotowski, Lecoq, Brook, Meisner and other contemporary practitioners.

Movement

Our movement classes transform how you connect with your body as a performer. Each BA, MA and MFA programme has a tailored movement syllabus, drawing from contemporary somatic practices and the pioneering work of legends like Jean Newlove, Grotowski, and Chekhov.



Voice

Voice training is aimed at releasing your full vocal potential and moving past the limits of your habitual voice. Our voice tutors draw on techniques from renowned practitioners such as Berry, Linklater, Laban and Chekhov to provide training that meets the demands of today's industry, while catering to each individual student.

Singing

Singing at East 15 is about developing your unique voice and discovering how to use it across a range of musical genres and environments. Our programme teaches you how to approach a song with confidence, connection and energy, with a focus on acting through song.

Media

You'll gain hands-on experience working with recorded digital media, preparing you for a successful career in today's multimedia landscape. Our facilities – which include sound recording studios, a motion capture volume, full camera kits and video editing suites – allow you to develop skills in screen acting, voice-overs and digital content creation.

Preparing for industry

Our professional-standard productions give you a realistic taste of working in the industry. We also equip you with skills to support your future profession, such as audition and self-taping techniques, CV writing and marketing yourself as an actor. A curated programme of guest lectures and workshops from working practitioners and artists help shape you into an industry-ready professional.



Creative training for technicians

We have an illustrious record of training professionals who work in technical, backstage, behind-the-camera and creative roles. Our training is vocational, giving you hands-on experience right from the start of your course.

Learning by doing

You'll have opportunities to work on real-world projects from day one, whether taking on a role in the production crew of our productions, working behind the camera to create short films, or directing fellow acting students in a variety of projects.

Specialist facilities

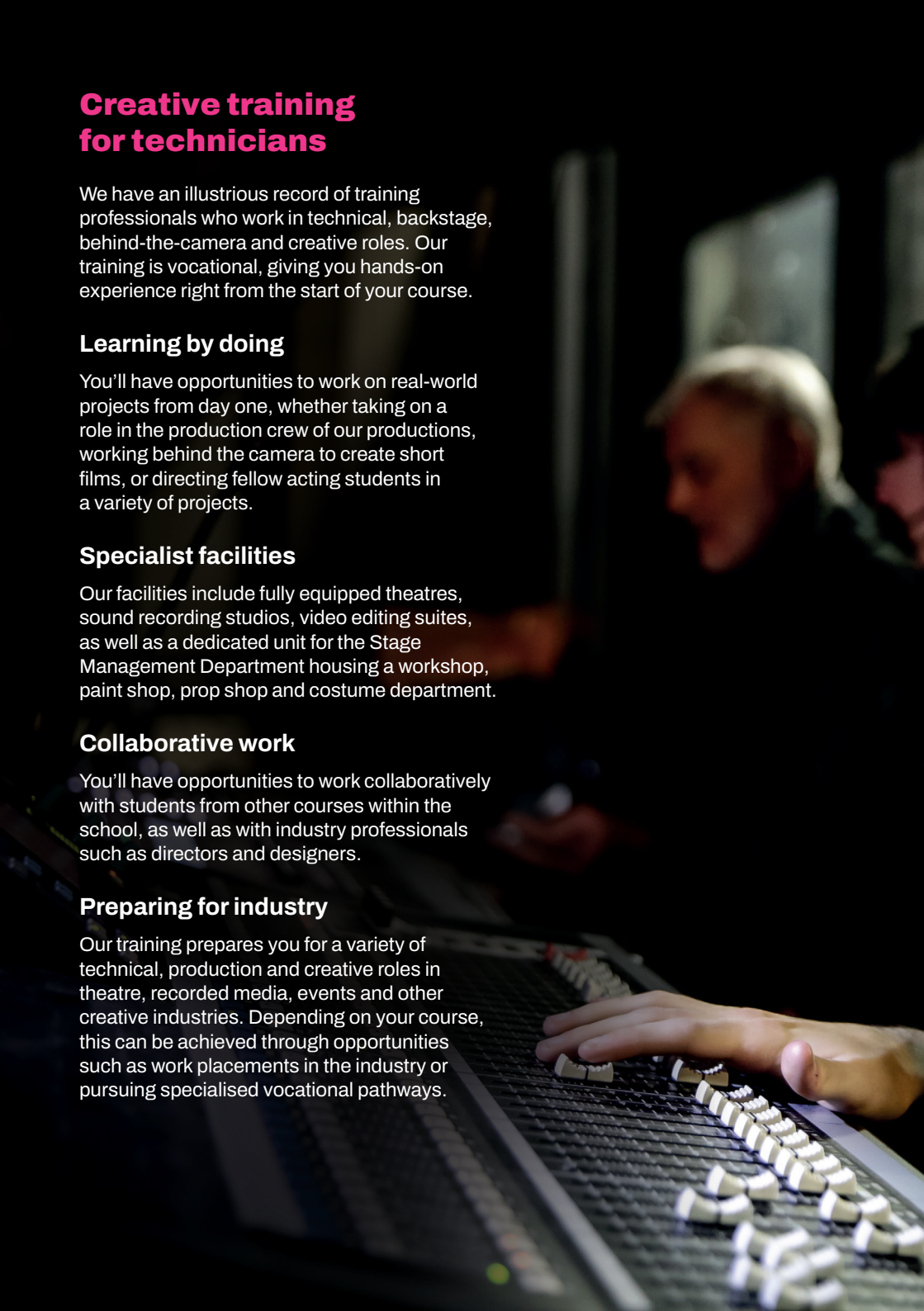
Our facilities include fully equipped theatres, sound recording studios, video editing suites, as well as a dedicated unit for the Stage Management Department housing a workshop, paint shop, prop shop and costume department.

Collaborative work

You'll have opportunities to work collaboratively with students from other courses within the school, as well as with industry professionals such as directors and designers.

Preparing for industry

Our training prepares you for a variety of technical, production and creative roles in theatre, recorded media, events and other creative industries. Depending on your course, this can be achieved through opportunities such as work placements in the industry or pursuing specialised vocational pathways.



A man with dark hair and a beard, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a large black headset with a microphone, is shown in profile. He is looking towards the left, presumably at a computer screen. The background is dark and out of focus, with a single light source visible in the upper left. The overall mood is professional and focused.

“East 15’s extraordinary legacy and its reputation for rigorous and inspired teaching ensures students consistently display an unusual degree of courage, vision and versatility that is very exciting to watch”.

– **Colin Firth**

Our Alumni

We take immense pride in our alumni, who take the skills, values and ingenuity they have learned at East 15 into the performing arts industries and beyond. Our goal is to prepare you for a long, sustainable and successful career in your chosen creative path – whether it is acting on stage or screen, working backstage, starting your own creative company, working in your community, or taking your talents to different fields such as education, politics or social work.

Our acting alumni have found success on stage, screen, radio, and in the video games industry, securing starring roles as well as creating their own work. Graduates of our stage management course have gone on to work at prestigious destinations such as the RSC, the National Theatre, Northern Ballet, the BBC and international theatres in locations like China or Dubai. Creative producing graduates work as freelance producers collaborating with creative teams, or take on roles as writers, editors, producers, researchers and managers in theatre, film or other media. Former directing students have established themselves as professional freelance directors, teach on drama programmes, and have started and run companies and venues as Artistic Directors.



Patricia Allison
Netflix's Sex
Education



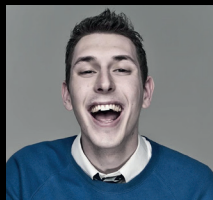
Melissa Johns
Netflix's Adolescence,
BBC's Life, ITV's
Grantchester



Clint Dyer
Associate Artist (former
Deputy Artistic Director)
at the Royal National
Theatre



Stephen Daldry
Three-time Tony Award
winner and Academy
Award nominated director



Blake Harrison
The Inbetweeners



Kyran Thrax
Winner of RuPaul's
Drag Race UK



Meng-er Zhang
Netflix's The Witcher,
Marvel's Shang Chi



Daniel Ezra
The Running Man,
The CW's All American



Lily Newmark
Netflix's Sex Education,
Alien: Earth



Kiell Smith-Bynoe
BBC's Ghosts



Corinna Brown
Netflix's Heartstopper,
Prime Video's The
Summer I Turned Pretty



Nathaniel Curtis
Channel 4's It's A Sin

Our Campuses

Loughton campus

Our Loughton campus is located at the edge of East London. With easy access to the city, as well as proximity to the Epping Forest, this campus gives you the best of both worlds.

Getting here

We are only a ten-minute walk from Debden station on the Central Line of the London Underground. In just thirty minutes, you can get to the centre of London to enjoy West End theatres, shopping, restaurants, and connections to mainline train stations, including London St Pancras for Eurostar services.

Facilities

There are three sites at the Loughton campus – Hatfields, Roding and Unit Four. Hatfields is a beautiful Georgian dower house set in five acres of green land. This site boasts of 14 rehearsal spaces, a dance studio, radio recording room, library, screening rooms, a large café and common areas.

Just a short walk from Hatfields is Roding House – which contains 10 rehearsal rooms, a green room, a black box theatre space and our costume department. Next to Roding House is Unit Four, a £1.5 million facility which is home to our Stage Management department. The Unit contains a large workshop, paint shop, prop shop, prop storage facilities, a sound recording studio, computer lab and teaching spaces.





The Corbett Theatre

The Corbett Theatre based at Hatfields is our own, fully equipped theatre. Converted from a medieval tithe barn, the theatre has tiered seating for 130 people, alongside dressing rooms and technical facilities. We use it extensively for public performances, as well as for practical lectures, rehearsals and technical training. The Students Union Lounge adjacent to the theatre is a popular spot for students to socialise.

Beyond the campus

A short stroll from the campus will get you to Loughton town centre, with independent boutiques, shops, restaurants, pubs and a local leisure centre providing gym and pool facilities.

The town is situated on the edge of the Epping Forest, a 6000-acre ancient woodland, ideal for walking, running, cycling, or simply taking a well-deserved break.

Loughton accommodation

Our Loughton students live off-campus in the local town. This gives you the flexibility to choose between living in a shared house, with a landlord, or on your own.

Our Student Service Team can offer support with connecting you to trusted local landlords and letting agents, helping you find the right place.

Colchester Campus

Located in 300 acres of parkland, our Colchester Campus is surrounded by beautiful countryside and with Colchester city centre just down the road it really is the perfect place to study, live and relax.

Ways to keep busy

The centre of campus is a vibrant hub bringing together students and staff from over 140 countries, with a weekly street market, international cultural celebrations and society events.

You can watch a film at our on-campus cinema, Cine10, compete in a pub quiz at one of our student bars, enjoy a show at the Lakeside Theatre, or dance the night away at Sub Zero, our on-campus nightclub.

Places to study

At the centre of campus is the The Albert Sloman Library. Next door is the Silberrad Student Centre, home to study pods, group working spaces, IT suites and our student services hub. We have a variety of study spaces so if you want to work with friends or spend quiet study time between lectures, there'll be somewhere you can focus on your studies. Computers, scanners and printers are available in our IT labs as well as free short-term laptop loans.





Food and drink

Whether you need a coffee and a croissant, want to grab some street food, or indulge in something hearty, we've got food and drink establishments on campus. We also have a weekly food market with local suppliers, and the SU shop has all the essentials (and more).

Health and wellbeing

You have access to an NHS health centre on campus. If you need childcare during your time at Essex we have a day-time nursery.

We celebrate and welcome a mix of faiths and beliefs from around the world. Our multi-faith space is a place to practice or explore faith, either on campus or by connecting you to a local place of worship.

We also offer a full range of support services that covers everything from commuting to mental health.

Money matters

Undergraduate fees

Home/UK: £9,535/year

EU/International: £22,600/year

*Scholarships available for UK and International students

Postgraduate fees

Home/UK: £20,150/year

EU/International: £22,350/year

*Scholarships available for UK and International students

Please note: Course fees may vary depending on your chosen field of study. All fees are subject to annual review and revision. We recommend checking our website for the most up-to-date information.

Loans, bursaries and scholarships

At East 15, we are committed to making our training accessible by offering numerous funding opportunities to support you throughout your studies. These include a broad range of University of Essex scholarships and bursaries, which are available based on your country of residence or academic record.

We encourage you to explore our scholarships and bursaries page to see what support you could be entitled to before you embark on your studies with us:



Some of the scholarships we offer include:

Undergraduate students from EU countries may be eligible for the Undergraduate EU Scholarship, which offers £5,000 off tuition fees each year.

International students from specific non-EU countries may qualify for the International Undergraduate Scholarship, worth £5,000 in the first year of study.

International fee-paying master's students from the EU could be eligible for a £5,000 tuition fee discount. In addition, international postgraduate students from all regions may qualify for the Global Talent Master's Scholarship, also worth £5,000.

For UK students, government support is also available in the form of tuition fee loans, along with maintenance loans to help cover living expenses. Repayment will begin only after you're earning above a certain threshold. We also offer financial packages to support students from diverse backgrounds. Bursaries are available for care leavers, students with refugee status, and students from lower income backgrounds taking part in year-abroad or placement programmes.

The Essex Futures Bursary provides a support package of up to £3,000 to UK undergraduate students with household incomes below a certain threshold. UK masters students with a first-class degree from a UK university may qualify for a 15% discount on their tuition fee.



Applying to East 15

We recommend that you review the entry requirements for your chosen course on our website before applying. While we do not have a fixed deadline for applications, we advise you to submit your application as early as possible, as we may close them at any time from mid-May.

Applying for an undergraduate course

You can apply for our undergraduate courses either through UCAS or the University of Essex Direct Application Form.

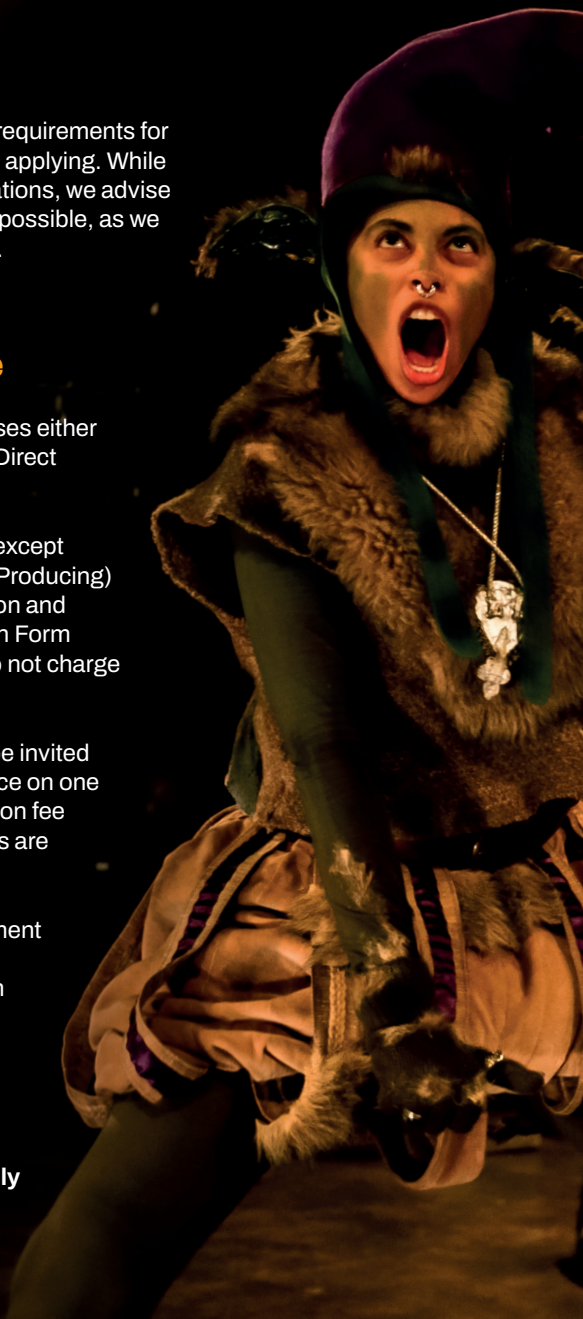
Applicants to all undergraduate courses (except BA Stage Management and BA Creative Producing) will need to submit a Round 1 video audition and complete an additional East 15 Application Form indicating your course preferences. We do not charge any audition fee for Round 1.

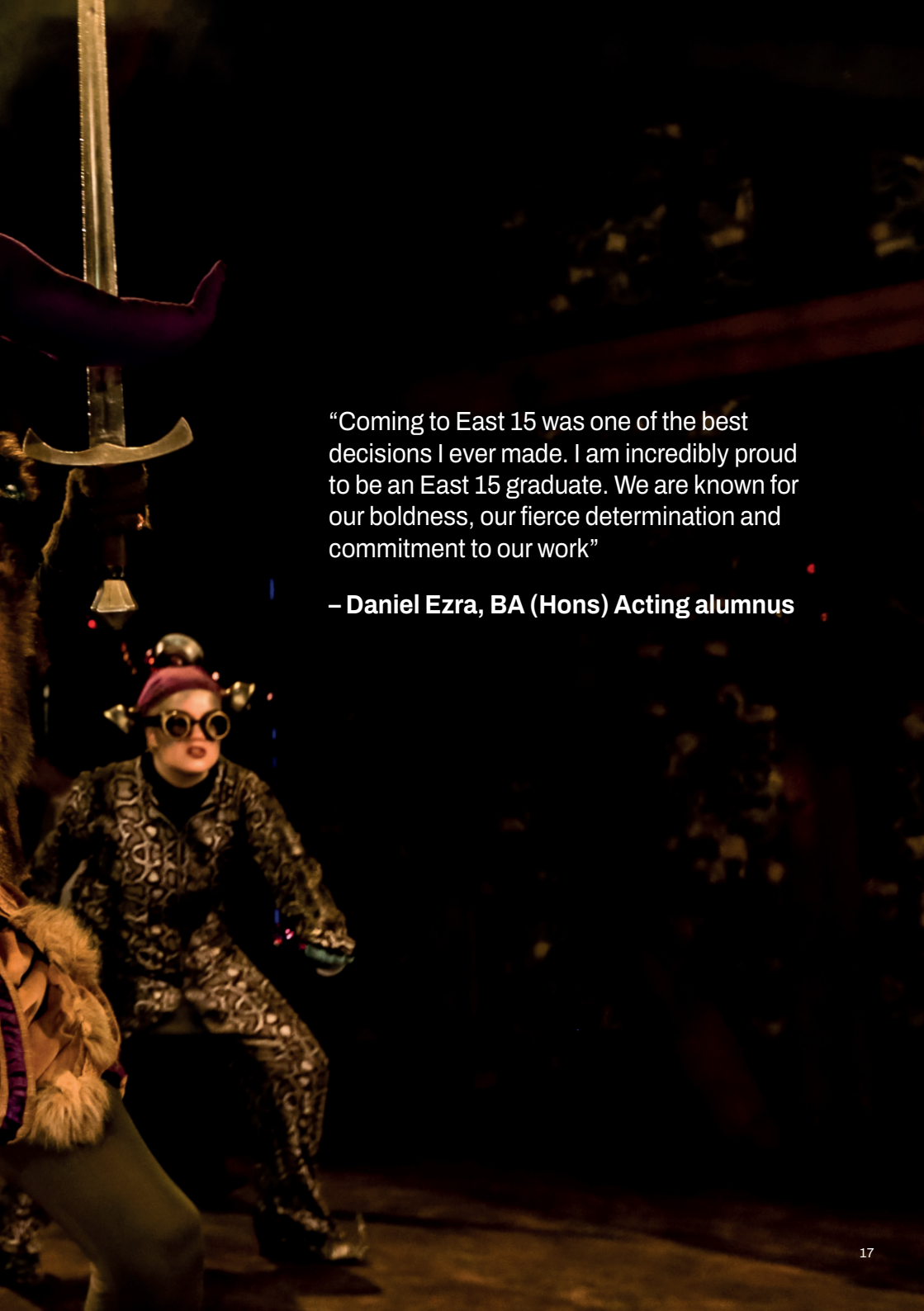
If you are successful in Round 1, you will be invited to a Round 2 audition, which may take place on one of our campuses. There is a £10 administration fee to attend the Round 2 audition, but waivers are available to eligible applicants or online.

If you have applied for BA Stage Management or BA Creative Producing (Theatre and Short Film), you will be invited to attend an interview. We don't charge any interview fees for these courses.



Find out more and apply



A person wearing a dark, patterned jumpsuit, a red headband, and large goggles is crouching in a dark, industrial-looking environment. To the left, a large, ornate sword or dagger is visible. The background is dark and textured, possibly a wall or a set.

“Coming to East 15 was one of the best decisions I ever made. I am incredibly proud to be an East 15 graduate. We are known for our boldness, our fierce determination and commitment to our work”

– Daniel Ezra, BA (Hons) Acting alumnus

Applying for a Postgraduate course

The journey to a postgraduate course begins by completing the University of Essex Application Form.

If you are applying for one of our acting-based postgraduate courses, you will need to provide a link to a Round 1 video audition as part of your application. Successful applicants are invited to Round 2 auditions which may be conducted on campus, online, or at regional or international auditions. We do not charge an audition fee for Round 1 auditions, but there is a £10 administration fee for Round 2 auditions.

Applicants to our MA and MFA Theatre Directing programmes will need to attend an interview as part of the application process. There is no interview fee for this course.



Find out more and apply

Our courses

Undergraduate

Acting and performance

BA (Hons) Acting
BA (Hons) Acting (International)
BA (Hons) Acting and Contemporary Theatre
BA (Hons) Acting and Community Engagement
BA (Hons) Acting and Fight Performance
BA (Hons) Acting and Physical Theatre
BA (Hons) World Performance
Cert HE Acting for Stage & Screen – Loughton
Cert HE Acting for Stage & Screen – Colchester (January start)
Cert HE Acting for Stage & Screen – Malta*

Technical and producing

BA (Hons) Stage Management
BA (Hons) Creative Producing (Theatre and Short Film)

Postgraduate courses

MA Acting
MA Acting (International)
MA Theatre Directing
MA Acting for Digital Media
MFA Acting (International)
MFA Acting with Digital Media
MFA Theatre Directing

*Subject to final approval

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Find your course

