



WELCOME TO EAST 15 – MFA ACTING WITH DIGITAL MEDIA ESSENTIAL PREPARATIONS FOR YOUR FIRST TERM

Dear Students,

A very warm welcome to East 15 Acting School!

My name is Steve North, and I'm the Head of the MA Acting for Digital Media and the MFA Acting with Digital Media courses. It's a pleasure to welcome such a diverse and talented group of students from the UK and around the world to this exciting and innovative programme.

WHAT TO EXPECT

First Year Acting International (Loughton)

Robin Sneller- Head of MA & MFA Acting International

In the first year, you will embark on a rigorous training for actors, including a deep dive into approaches to text and character work, developing and performing a devised theatre Studio Theatre production, a six week module on Shakespeare including a three week residency and invited public performance at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, development of your own solo writing project and a fully public performance in our own Corbett Theatre.

Your training will include classes in acting, movement, voice, articulation and singing.

Our MFA Acting with Digital Media students train alongside our MA/MFA Acting International for most of the first year, creating a rich and collaborative environment.

Your day will typically run from **9:10 am to 5:30 pm**, Monday to Friday. On occasion, rehearsals or other activities may take place after hours—we'll always give you notice. East 15 has a strict attendance policy, so punctuality and full attendance are expected and monitored.

TERM BREAKDOWN YEAR 1

TERM 1

Character and Scene Study

A focus on acting techniques evolved from the Stanislavski tradition, employing extensive improvisational exercises to explore the core and heart of the approach to acting training at East 15. This enables students from different traditions and approaches to identify and achieve a common language and process as preparation for the subsequent training.

The focus then shifts to applying what we have learnt in the initial improvised exercises to text. Through our intensive, detailed approach to text analysis, research, and use of targeted improvisation, you will expand your ability to bring character and situation to life, and further develop the depth of your process in the rehearsal and performance of naturalistic scenes. This module utilises naturalistic scripts from Chekhov and Ibsen to Hansberry and Rattigan.

The Term ends with a collaboration with the MA/MFA Theatre directing students leading to an internal performance in our studio.

TERM 2

Contemporary Text

Each of the groups works with a director to devise an entirely new show in response to a text, novel, or article. These Studio shows are performed to an invited public audience at East 15.

Shakespeare and the Shakespeare's Globe Residency

This starts with three weeks of workshops and masterclasses to develop your understanding of the meaning and mechanics of Shakespeare's text and study a range of analytical and experimental approaches to develop clarity, accuracy, and be able to inhabit the text truthfully. You will have masterclasses from professionals with extensive experience at the RSC, National Theatre and Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

The second half of this module is a three -week residency at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, where you work with the Globe's own directors, text, movement, voice, and dance experts and rehearse and perform three 50-minute ensemble versions of Shakespeare texts on the Globe stage to an invited public audience.

TERM 3

Writing Workshops and Collaborative projects

You have writing workshops with a professional playwright, working towards your self- penned solo projects .

Public Productions

Your first fully public show is in one of three full-length plays, in our Corbett Theatre at East 15. These are fully supported by professional set, costume, lighting, and sound designers and directed by established professional directors, allowing you to create at least one complete role in a public production promoted to the industry, which will highlight the graduating MA International students. MFA International first year students are mostly in supporting roles in these productions.

Second Year Acting in Digital Media (Colchester campus)

Steve North – Head of MA Acting for Digital Media / MFA Acting With Digital Media

Over the second year, you'll embark on an intensive and immersive journey in acting for digital platforms. Your training and module will entirely focus on classes in screen acting, motion-capture, recorded voice, movement, and industry preparation workshops and classes with guest directors and actors from across the digital media acting landscape.

Your day will typically run from **9:45 am to 5:55 pm**, Monday to Friday. On occasion, rehearsals or other activities may take place after hours—we'll always give you notice. East 15 has a strict attendance policy, so punctuality and full attendance are expected and monitored.

Each term will also include at least one **Priority Week**—a break from the regular timetable during which you'll take part in specialised workshops or filming projects with guest directors.

TERM BREAKDOWN YEAR 2

TERM 1

Each week (excluding Priority Weeks) includes three half-day sessions in recorded voice and movement (Laban).

Other training in this term focuses on:

- Regular practical classes in motion capture and working in the volume
- Regular practical classes in screen acting
- Weekly recorded voice classes working in our professional voice studio
- Regular movement classes focusing on techniques like Laban
- Other term 1 workshops include
 - Introductory classes in filmmaking (editing, camera, sound)
 - Combat and firearms classes
 - Physical theatre acting techniques (including mask work and Le Coq)
 - Meisner Technique, script analysis and improvisation (for screen acting).
 - Filming term 1 screen project

TERM 2

This term is all about the application of your term 1 training (with a focus on learning by doing as much as possible):

- Regular practical classes in motion capture and working in the volume
- Regular practical classes in screen acting
- Weekly recorded voice classes working in our professional voice studio
- Scripted scene work for both screen and mocap
- Recorded voice projects (voicing for games, ADR, animation)
- Filming screen acting scenes on location with a professional crew (DOP/Sound Recordist)
- Creating and filming motion capture footage for your final digital showcase
- End of term 2 Priority Week working with a professional mocap games director.

TERM 3

Your focus shifts to professional development and industry preparation:

- Filming screen acting showreel scenes with a professional TV/Film director and crew
- A self-written filmed screen monologue
- An original motion capture project shot in the volume
- Industry preparation one off workshops led by professionals in all forms of digital performance, casting, business of acting,
- 48 Hour film challenge

- Please note that from week 6 of term 3 you will also need to work on your final Portfolio which is submitted by the end of term 3 as part of your final mark for the MFA. Most classes become optional from this part of the course onwards.

PREPARING FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD

Beyond any specific prep materials, the most valuable things you can bring are:

- An open heart
- A generous spirit
- An inquisitive mind
- Full commitment to the training

In terms of early preparation, we encourage you to:

- Research screen acting, motion capture, and voice work
- Watch films, TV shows, and play video games (see reading and watch lists for recommendations)
- Explore the work of industry leaders like **John Dower**, **Pascal Langdale**, and **Jessica Jeffries** on YouTube to better understand motion capture
- Try some basic video editing—film short clips on your phone and edit using beginner tutorials
- Familiarise yourself with **Premiere Pro** and the **Adobe Creative Suite**, which you'll have access to throughout the year
- Familiarise yourself with **Reaper Recording software**, which is the programme we use to record audio in Voice studio.
- Learn the basics of using the **Canon EOS R6 Mark II**, **Sony FDX 3** and the **Canon EOS C70**—these are the cameras we use on the course, and there are plenty of tutorials and guides available online

Recommended Reading:

- *To the Actor* by **Michael Chekhov** (especially the chapter on Psychological Gesture)
- *Respect for Acting* by **Uta Hagen** (especially chapters 22-27)
- *The Complete Stanislavsky Toolkit* by **Bella Merlin** (chapters on given circumstances, objectives, subtext, 6 Fundamental Questions, Active Analysis)
- *William Esper's books* on the Meisner Technique

All of these texts will help support and enrich the practical training you'll experience from day one.

I will come to Loughton to introduce myself and see some of your work in the first year. In the meantime, if you have any questions please email me direct s.north@essex.ac.uk

With best wishes,

Steve North

Head of MA/MFA Acting for/with Digital Media
East 15 Acting School – Southend