



Access and Participation Statement: MPA, January 2017

1. Introduction

This is MPA's Access and Participation Statement for 2017/18. It details our ongoing commitment to fair access and support for students. MPA is entering a period of change and development as we engage with our next Strategic Plan (2017-2021). As we do so, we will retain the commitment to professional training and professional experiences for our students that was part of our founding mission and remains our fundamental purpose for educational activities at MPA.

MPA delivers FE and HE courses at its own venue, offering a dedicated professional training establishment, with studios and study support facilities suited to training for the Performing Arts. MPA maintains strong partnerships with its Awarding Organisations, the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) and Trinity College London (TCL). MPA presently offers a range of programmes in both FE and HE through full-time study.

2. The Vision

The MPA Vision summarises the commitment to training shown by the Directors since the inception of the College. Over the coming years, MPA will enhance its educational provision through excellence in training and student experience, fostering a professional commitment at every opportunity. MPA will continue to develop its international reputation, welcoming students from overseas, working with HE and FE partners to prepare students for high-quality employment in the Performing Arts sectors.

Our motto - *Theatre, as a profession, is a way of life.*

Mission Statement - *MPA will provide an outstanding opportunity for young performers, fostering success in Dance and Theatre in a progressive environment, known for its high calibre of students and staff, where everyone can realize their true potential.*

Ethos - *Our staff and management team nurture a creative, inspirational teaching and learning experience for every student.*

Core Values -

- *MPA supports achievement, recognising professional levels of technical excellence and artistry whilst developing thinking able to demonstrate creative achievement and personal professional growth*
- *MPA cares about individuals through teaching advanced and complex performance activities, safely and effectively, encouraging use of the body expressively to communicate to an audience through the language of dance, music and the spoken word*
- *MPA embraces equality and diversity in all teaching and learning practices supporting inclusivity within the Performing Arts profession*
- *MPA expects our graduating artists to be committed to upholding the professional standards of the industry, including its etiquette. As articulate, team players dedicated to maintaining high-level practical skills, they will be world class performers; fully developed, relevant, highly employable individuals, who will inspire and influence the future of the profession.*

Aims –

- *To provide study which meets the standards and requirements of students who wish to pursue a career in musical theatre/dance/ acting/singing*
- *To achieve a professional level of technical excellence and artistry in our students*
- *To assist our students to develop a kinetic intelligence and understanding of varied dance techniques, singing and acting as art forms*
- *To create the thinking artist through contextual and related studies, helping students to demonstrate substantially extended creative achievement and personal professional growth in all subjects*
- *To help students to undertake performance related activities of advanced and complex nature safely and without injury and use the body expressively to communicate to an audience through the language of dance, music and the spoken word.*

3. Equality and Diversity

We believe that everyone at MPA should be able to progress within Higher Education. We are committed to equal opportunities and believe that all students and staff have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. At MPA we promote positive attitudes to equality in treatment of all MPA students and staff and we are committed to encouraging diversity and reducing discrimination. We recognise the value and importance of legislation, regulations and codes of practice which help to outlaw discrimination in selection, recruitment, induction, programme delivery and assessment. Please see our Equality and Diversity Policy for further information (available on our website).

We aim to ensure that students and staff are truly representative of all sections of society and that every individual student and individual staff member feels respected and are able to give their best, and as such MPA is committed to providing equal access to all regardless of background, gender, age or any other factor.

4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Our Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy (please see our website) highlights the importance we place upon supporting all students individually. We deliver our training within an inclusive, welcoming atmosphere of positive training methods. We operate an open access policy, welcoming applications from talented individuals with the potential to succeed in the profession. Our Strategy reinforces our aim to provide study which meets the standards and requirements of all students who wish to pursue a career in musical theatre and dance.

5. Open-access and inclusion

MPA is based in Woolwich Arsenal, London. This part of the Royal Borough of Greenwich is undergoing extensive redevelopment and very clear signs of regeneration are very evident. MPA has a track record for widening educational access for young people with talent regardless of social, economic or educational background through the provision of outreach programmes, FE courses, HE study and a high level of on-course support for all students at every level of qualifications and training.

MPA has developed excellent relationships with the professional world of theatre, especially through its consultants and staff, who share MPA's commitment to working with young performers. MPA aims to take training to young people of all backgrounds, especially those who do not have the means to enjoy dance and theatre training or those whose economic status or cultural heritage does not favour this sort of training. Talented students are often found through giving opportunities to young people of non-traditional backgrounds and MPA attempts to reach these young people through outreach activities and community provision, including:

- **Community Arts Projects**

MPA is strongly committed to using its knowledge, skills and experience to engage communities and young people in positive artistic and theatrical activities. The dance, singing and theatre skills that MPA teaches to aspiring professionals is of itself a strong means through which to engage amateurs and communities into entertaining, engaging and healthy leisure activities. Community and school engagements also enable MPA to introduce the theatrical arts to young people from all communities and ethnic groups. As such, MPA operates across a range of sectors, including; theatre, dance, performing arts, creative industries, education, health and community cohesion and involvement. The commitment to community engagement is one of the reasons for the strategic decision to move the school from Hampstead to Woolwich Arsenal. MPA stages performances to support both local and national charities which not only make a financial contribution, but also enhance the profile of the College in the community.

- **Easter Course (one day programme)**

A day-long theatre experience and training workshop is provided for young people aspiring to make theatre a career. The programme is a snapshot of what theatre training is all about. The teachers involved are all professional performers and tutors, all of whom are driving forces in the industry. It is open to participants from the age of 13 to 18.

- **School and college taster days**

MPA offers a range of bespoke and public facing open day events to encourage young people and their families to learn more about professional Performing Arts training.

As a result, of this activity, it is encouraging for MPA to be able to see the success of its participation and open-access endeavours, with auditionee numbers in 2015-16 up 32% from the previous year, and in 2016-17 numbers were up by 61%, with over 75% of auditionees requesting specifically to audition for our HE provision.

6. Financial support

MPA, alongside the Dancers' Development Fund (a charitable organisation set up to explore research within the professional Performing Arts sector and to make funds available to support the continued development of the training aspects of educating a young person towards a career in Musical Theatre and Dance) continue to work to solidify opportunities for appropriate financial support avenues for talented young people.

The Directors and Senior Management Team at MPA are fully committed to ensuring that as wide a range of students as possible are able to access our courses, regardless of their financial, social or cultural circumstances. MPA believe in supporting, guiding and assisting deserving students in their studies and to this end, MPA offers financial aid in some cases. Prospective students are encouraged to contact us directly for further information relating to fees and funding.

7. Student Support

MPA remains committed to supporting access and participation partially, through day-to-day activity, promoting inclusive teaching and learning that respects and celebrates the diversity of society and our student community. Our assessment and curriculum design processes ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed and to demonstrate their achievements through a range of assessment modes.

MPA are committed to actively promoting equality of opportunity ensuring that all students reach their learning potential and achieve success on an appropriate course of study. This means that applicants and students who have disabilities or a specific learning difficulty may be entitled to receive support to enable them to participate as fully as possible in life at MPA, enabling them to complete their programme of study successfully.

8. Our Commitment

MPA will ensure that the Access and Participation Statement remains current and reflective of our activities and opportunities for our current and prospective students. As the educational and professional sector in which we work develop and change, we will maintain equality of access and opportunity for our students, informing and updating our access and progression work. This Statement reminds MPA to acknowledge the anticipated need to safeguard the recruitment and retention of students from disadvantaged or non-traditional backgrounds who may be impacted by such changes and ensures that we regularly re-establish our commitment to supporting student personal success; a priority for all students at MPA, maintaining focus on individual students or groups of students who need help when developing activities outlined in this Statement.