

# Level 7 Certificate in Directing for Theatre

## Maynooth University (Department of Adult and Community Education)

### INTRODUCTION

The Level 7 Certificate in Directing for Theatre in Maynooth University is a part time course that runs every second Saturday from October to May each year. Each year the course attracts students from the amateur drama circuit, youth theatre sector, fringe, university and college drama societies, and professional actors who would like to develop directing skills.

It offers practical training in theatre directing and is facilitated by professional directors from the Irish, UK and US theatre. The course is coordinated by **Peter Hussey** of Crooked House Theatre Company, and is taught by **Sebastian Harcombe** (former Head of Acting at RADA, Drama Centre and Drama Studio, London), **Louise Lowe** (Anu Productions and Abbey Theatre), **John O' Hagan** (Performing Arts Department Head at [Lindenwood University](#), Professor of Theatre and the Creative Arts and Communications Division Director at [Principia College](#), and Assistant Professor of Theatre at the [University of Wyoming](#)), **Bairbre Ní Chaoimh** (freelance director), **Anna Galligan** (Carlow Youth Theatre and Carlow Institute of Performing Arts), and **Mary Linehan** (former Kildare County Arts Office and co-founder of Smashing Times Theatre).

### WHO IS THIS COURSE FOR?

- Mature students (21 years and over on 1 Jan. in year of application) who wish to train for the theatre industry in Ireland and who would like to be prepared for further study in the field of directing;
- Those who wish to explore the field to discover if they wish to make a career in it. In this sense the Certificate serves as a skills-based training course for new directors;
- Those in the amateur, youth theatre and community theatre sectors who wish to formalise their experience into specific training, acquire accreditation and gain additional skills by doing so;
- Those who are emerging directors in fringe and professional theatre and who wish to gain specific skills and to acquire accreditation;
- Teachers and education workers who would like to train in directing in order to stage productions with students.

### COURSE AIMS

- To introduce students to fundamental skills of directing for theatre
- To develop emerging directors' confidence in their ability to stage a production

## CONTENT

- Introduction to Stanislavski
- Introduction to Viewpoints
- Actioning and working with text
- Devising new material for performance
- Introduction to Physical Composition
- Introduction to Movement Theory
- Site-Specific and Site-Responsive Theatre
- Making theatre with young people
- Introduction to Directing Theatre-of-the-Oppressed
- Directing Shakespeare – an introduction
- Introducing styles of theatre-making
- Rehearsal techniques

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Participants must be 21 years or over and have the academic capacity to complete a course at university level. Assistance is available free on campus with academic writing, library use, and assignment support.

*They must also have the capacity to direct a performance during the course of the year and, therefore, access to at least one performer is necessary.*

Students apply by sending a short paragraph to [kay.loughlin@mu.ie](mailto:kay.loughlin@mu.ie) with the subject line Application for Cert in Directing for Theatre. In this statement, describe your involvement in theatre to date, and explain why you would like to do this course.

**The deadline to register for the 2024 – 2025 course is Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 5.00pm.**

## REGISTRATION

This course requires a minimum number of 16 students to have registered to do it before it can proceed.

Questions to do with application and registration are dealt with by the Department of Adult and Community Education. Contact:

Kay Loughlin, Executive Assistant of Continuing Education on [kay.loughlin@mu.ie](mailto:kay.loughlin@mu.ie) or by phone on 01 7086062,

Registered students have access to the full ranges of services and supports that Maynooth University offers including the Academic Writing Centre, Maynooth Access Office, Student Budgeting Service and Library.

## ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

1. Students keep a Learning Journal in which they record and critically reflect on their learning, brought about by this course. They write an essay based on this Journal and submit the essay. For those who prefer other media, the 'essay' may also be submitted as a short film or audio documentary.

2. Directing Project – each student will be expected to direct a piece of theatre that is at least 30 minutes long. There is no upper time limit. This is filmed by the student and the film submitted. This can be privately

produced (no public attendance); it can be a performance for one performer; or it can be a public show (possibly necessitating hiring a venue, acquiring rights to perform, marketing and insuring the show etc.). It may be devised, scripted, collated or movement-based. However, it may not be a dance performance or opera (although it may have elements of these in it). It may not be a piece of theatre that has already been directed by someone else and is now being revived by you with the same cast. If you are directing a musical you may not use acting, composition, characterization or composition elements already created by other directors before you. *Please note: the responsibility for doing this assignment is the students own. The university does not provide performers, venues, or scheduling etc.*

The performance that is directed must be a full show (and not an extract of one).

3. Directors' Log – this is a written (or recorded) documentation of your process of staging the play, and it should also contain your reflection on the experience.

It is important to note that Department of Adult and Community Education Regulations prohibit a student from being awarded a grade/mark or a certificate if they:

- do not attend at least 85% of the course
- do not submit all assignments
- do not pass each assignment.

All assignments are due to be submitted to Maynooth on or by **14<sup>th</sup> June 2025** at 5.00pm.

## **ASSISTANCE**

It is not possible for the course to provide assistance with casting, venue hire, or staging productions required as part of the assignments. We will provide advice, information and in-class support as part of the teaching and learning of the programme. Students should make provision to stage, and film their work themselves (in the way one would research and write an essay oneself). *This means students should be able to find a performer or performers for their directing project.* It helps if the student is a member of a drama group, has access to actors, or can work with a youth theatre. However, not being in this position is by no means a major barrier to participation: if the student wishes, the project does not need to be staged for the public, but can be mounted privately, using friends and collaborators, and filmed.

The filming quality does not need to be professional. The assessor simply needs to see the full range of the stage/performing area, clearly hear the dialogue, and see the performers' expressions and actions.

## **COURSE DURATION**

100 hours part-time over one year, on two Saturdays per month, from October to May, excluding holidays in December. Class begins at 10.00am and runs to 5.00pm (with a break of 1 hour for lunch at 1.00pm, and coffee breaks in the morning and afternoon).

## VENUE

**Room 133**, (The Drama Room) in the School of Education (pictured below), North Campus, Maynooth University, County Kildare. <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/>

## CONTACT

1. For information to do with application form, registration, fees, library registration and all university-related queries, please contact Kay Loughlin [kay.loughlin@mu.ie](mailto:kay.loughlin@mu.ie) or Dr Derek Barter [derek.barter@mu.ie](mailto:derek.barter@mu.ie)
2. For information to do with the course content, tutors, assignments and rationale etc., please contact Peter Hussey, the Course Coordinator at [peter.hussey@mu.ie](mailto:peter.hussey@mu.ie)

## WEBSITES

[www.crookedhouse.ie](http://www.crookedhouse.ie)

[www.cornexchange.ie](http://www.cornexchange.ie)

<http://www.theperformancecorporation.com/>

<http://www.anuproductions.ie/2016/>

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL494AA606A3F8B076> – National Theatre UK directing videos

## TESTIMONIALS

The Directing for Theatre course is very wide-ranging and covers a wide variety of directing styles. Each time I come from a class I feel I have gained a huge amount of new techniques. I came to this course as someone who works in the amateur drama world purely for the love of it. Up to now, I have relied entirely on 40 + years of experience and instinct when either directing or acting in a production. This year I took the decision to look at getting some qualifications in the field. One of the most important things I have learned on this course is that we have at all times to protect our actors, especially emotionally. With the help and guidance of Peter Hussey and my classmates, I feel I will be able to negotiate this very difficult territory.

Miriam O'Brien

Brilliantly designed and practical course offering specific expert learning and shared experience of the role of directors in theatre-making. Highly recommend it and very enjoyable. So much so that many of the graduates who are mature students are keen for a follow on enhanced programme of learning with modules to Level 8 from Maynooth and delivered part-time also please. Do this course if you'd like to further your studies as a professional theatre-maker and skilled director.

Mary Elizabeth Sheehan

This is a fantastic course. Very practical and interesting. I thoroughly enjoyed it and learned so much from Peter and great team of guest lecturers.

Mary Blake

I really enjoyed this course, would highly recommend.

Alison Martin

Really enjoyed the course. Highly recommend it.

Joe Bergin

Best training I ever had.

Fiona de Faolte