

## Course Outline: Developing and Producing Unscripted Formats

One Year Full-Time MA

### Course Overview

**The UK is the world's leading exporter of unscripted TV formats. This MA puts you at the centre of that success.**

Hit shows like *Britain's Got Talent*, *Strictly Come Dancing* (adapted internationally as *Dancing with the Stars*), *The X Factor*, *MasterChef*, *The Great British Bake Off*, *Love Island*, *Gogglebox*, *Come Dine With Me*, *Race Across the World*, *Undercover Boss*, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* and *The 1% Club* - all developed and produced in the UK - have helped establish Britain as the global powerhouse of unscripted television.

At the same time, a new generation of trailblazing UK content creators are creating fresh, digital-first formats and unlocking younger audiences for unscripted entertainment online, whether it's Amelia Dimoldenberg's *Chicken Shop Date*, which demonstrates how low-cost, high-concept formats can achieve significant international reach, or The Sidemen's *Inside*, a digital reimagining of *Big Brother*.

This one-year MA programme is designed to prepare graduates for the convergence now taking place between these two worlds; between traditional broadcast television and the world of the online creator.

Across six practical modules, you'll learn how to devise, develop, and produce original unscripted formats for broadcast, streaming, and platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram.

### **You don't just develop ideas - you make them.**

You'll explore every stage of the process, from idea generation and development to casting, shooting, editing, and publishing your work. You'll work both in a 4K TV studio and on location. You'll be introduced to the latest AI tools shaping modern development and production workflows. Along the way, you'll discover how some of the world's most successful unscripted formats are made and meet the creatives responsible for them.

By the end of the course, you'll have built a strong portfolio demonstrating your ability to create original, returnable, and scalable formats for television and online platforms. You'll have developed industry connections through networking with producers, production companies, and influential creators. And you'll graduate with a deep understanding of the unscripted landscape and how formats are produced and sold at the highest levels.

**If you want to shape the future of unscripted entertainment - on television or online - this is where it starts.**

### Course Structure

The MA is delivered across three terms, from January to December.

#### Term 1 (January – April)

##### **Fundamentals 1: What is a Format? (1 week)**

What exactly is a format? How does it make a show both recognisable and adaptable across different markets and cultures?

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**Fundamentals 2: Single Camera, Sound & Lighting** (1 week)

Introducing students to the core technical skills essential for self-shooting in television production.

**Module 1: Fact Ent Production - Location** (6 weeks)

An immersive location-based production experience, which sees students apply the practical skills they have learnt in Fundamentals 2. Can the students create a storyline and capture the tone of a hit Factual Entertainment show like *Clarkson's Farm*?

**Fundamentals 3: Editing with Adobe Premiere Pro** (1 week)

An introduction to editing with this popular and flexible software.

**ASSESSED WORK:**

- Fact Ent Production

**Term 2 (April – July)****Module 2: YouTube Channel Challenge** (every Monday for 16 weeks)

In this longitudinal module students work in pairs to create a YouTube channel from the ground up, producing two original episodes of a simple, presenter-led format, shot single-camera and produced on a minimal budget. The module concludes with a presentation in which the students explain how the channel might evolve over future episodes.

**Fundamentals 4: Research** (1 week)

This week focuses on building essential research skills required for working in television and online content production through a series of real-world, time-limited research challenges.

**Module 3: Format Development - Studio** (3 weeks)

This module focuses on the creative and practical skills required to develop entertainment formats from concept to pitch and will see students learn how to brainstorm ideas, create decks and sizzles, and pitch their ideas to a panel.

**Fundamentals 5: Casting** (1 week)

In this module, students will be introduced to the core principles and practices of casting for unscripted formats.

**Module 4: Format Production - Studio** (7 weeks)

In this module, formats developed in the previous module are selected for studio production. Students work in teams (1 x Director, 2 x Producers) to create a 25-minute pilot episode of their show.

**ASSESSED WORK:**

- YouTube channel
- Format Development – deck, sizzle, verbal pitch
- Studio show

**Term 3 (September – December)****Module 5: Digital-First Format Development** (3 weeks)

This individual graduation project tasks students with developing a digital-first format for YouTube with potential for future broadcast development.

**Fundamentals 6: Multi Camera (Location)** (1 week)

Students will learn how to plan and execute a multi-camera setup on location before participating in a hands-on multi-camera field exercise.

**Module 6: Digital-First Format Production** (15 weeks)

This individual graduation project tasks students with producing the aforementioned digital-first format. It will be shot multi-camera and will be supported by a budget of several thousands of pounds

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and represents a significant step up in both ambition and production scale. Each student must work on at least one other graduation production.

### **Module 7: Master's Portfolio**

#### **ASSESSED WORK:**

- YouTube channel
- Graduation Pitch – deck, sizzle, verbal pitch
- Graduation Film x 2
- Masters Portfolio

#### **Other Activities:**

- Attend studio recordings/BTS visits
- Project specific trips (for example, Neasden Temple)
- The Podcast Show
- Content London

#### **Assessment Methods**

Students will be assessed throughout the course, receiving both oral and written feedback on their performance after each module.

There are also 2 formal Progress Reviews during the course where students receive a written report from their Head of Department and can compare this with their own self-assessment.

The latter and final of these sees students make a short presentation of their work, charting their progress during their year at the NFTS. They will then be asked questions in relation to this by the Head of Department and another independent Head of Department present at the Review.

In their presentations, students reflect on their achievement in respect of their final project and address either directly or indirectly how, through their work, they have met the assessment criteria for the course.

#### **Who Is This Course For?**

This MA is designed to produce multiskilled graduates who have the combination of practical, technical, creative and editorial skills required to work in unscripted content in the modern world, be it for broadcast television, branded content, or as an online creator.