

### **Course outline: Diploma in Assistant Directing and Floor Managing**

This unique 13-month diploma course aims to give you the skills and capabilities for a successful future career as a First, Second, Third Assistant Director, Floor Runner and/or Floor Manager. It is delivered in partnership with the BBC and with the support of the Assistant Directors Association and the Production Guild.

Being an Assistant Director or Floor Manager is a demanding role that requires a level head, self-confidence and strong communication to ensure a production is delivered successfully. You will be responsible for the efficient and safe operation of the shooting set / television studio, serving as a liaison between the crew and creative talent on set and, as far as possible, help the director realise their creative vision.

The course represents a steady progression, beginning with basic production skills and ending with you undertaking a key role on a graduation fiction, and / or television project. At each stage, additional skills are added through specific workshops (e.g. Scheduling, Working with Supporting Artistes, Negotiating Difficult Situations, etc.) to provide a comprehensive education that is of great value in understanding and finding work in the film and TV industry.

You will primarily learn through the personal, practical experience of working on a series of varied film and TV productions. Each production module is monitored and assessed, your own reflection and feedback is sought and tutor feedback is given to you in individual tutorials.

The course teaches role-specific, industry-recognised skills and techniques used by Assistant Directors of all grades – from how to read a script and identify the key elements within each scene to creating breakdown sheets and the principles of scheduling. There are also many workshops which extend the classroom learning, including understanding the roles of other film departments, working with cast and supporting artistes and applying health & safety in real-world scenarios. Experience is then further developed by working closely with professional assistant directors on set and tutorials with other industry professionals.

### **Course Structure**

The course consists of a logical progression of classes, practical workshops and modules, taught and overseen by industry professionals run over three terms starting in September each year. Teaching usually takes place from Monday to Friday from 9.30am until 5.30pm each week. It combines practical experience on fiction films, commercials and TV Entertainment shows with industry work

experience placements and intensive training. You will collaborate with those in other departments at the School to make films and TV entertainment shows – with all production costs met by the School.

Knowledge is imparted and experience gained through workshops and production experience. Further key training is given in Health & Safety (the Production Safety Passport) and First Aid. A 10-day work experience opportunity is mandatory and you will also be offered training sessions on business studies, managing talent and career development.

You will compile a personal folder (part of your Graduation Portfolio) of written work submitted during the course and your final assessment will be based on this as well as your performance in your Progress Reviews. Please see the sections on Assessment Criteria and Assessment and Final Classification below for more information on how you will be assessed throughout the course.

## **Course Elements**

There are core modules that you will study and work on over the three terms whilst at the School. More information about what you will learn on each module is provided in the Module Brief for that individual module. Included as part of these core modules, or as a supplement to them, are a number of core workshops.

## **Modules**

### **Term One**

- First Year Film
- Scheduling
- The 5 O’Clock Show (TV)

### **Term Two**

- Digi Fiction
- Graduation Portfolio

### **Term Three**

- Graduation Portfolio (*continuing on from Term Two*)
- Beyond Time
- Summer Multi-Camera Module (TV)
- Graduation Fiction Films
- TV Graduation Projects (TV)

## **Workshops**

- Breaking down a script and developing a shooting schedule;
- Interpreting the Scene;
- How to use relevant industry software (e.g. Movie Magic and Final Draft);
- The impact of budget, cast availability and script coverage on the shooting schedule;
- Leading a technical recce;
- Set and Studio Floor protocols and etiquette;
- Liaising with the production office to create call sheets, movement orders, Risk Assessments, Method Statements, location agreements and other production paperwork;
- Managing a set or studio floor with confidence during a shoot;
- Managing talent;
- Health and Safety and First Aid.

## **Production Experience (subject to availability/opportunity)**

You will have the opportunity to work on a number of film or television projects, including at least one graduation project. Decisions about which projects are assigned are on a negotiation-basis between the tutor and students, and are also dependant on the timing of productions and their requirements.

These include:

- First Year Fiction Film
- 5pm Live Show
- Commercials
- Digital Film Project
- Short Film Exercises (Interpreting The Scene / Beyond Time)
- Summer Multi-cam
- Graduation Fiction Film\*
- TV Graduation Project\*

\*Each student's Graduation portfolio is made up of working on a number of significant productions in various Assistant Directing / Floor Managing roles.

By the end of the course, you will have evidence of work in:

- pre-production paperwork;
- practical experience on a set and in a TV studio, including managing crew;
- production logistics (e.g. overseeing locations, movement orders etc.);
- producing production schedules.

## **Optional Productions**

In addition to the productions that are mandatory during the year, there are often many opportunities to work on additional student projects and you are encouraged to do so when time permits with the Course Leader's consent.

## **Health and Safety for Assistant Directors and Floor Managers**

Health and Safety (H&S) is as an integral part of technical workshops and productions. All training is in-line with the ScreenSkills Production Safety Passport and delivered by a specialist member of School staff and the First Option Safety Group. You will always be expected to adhere to the NFTS H&S Policy.

## **Business Studies & Business Skills for Freelancers**

A series of Business Skills seminars, including CV preparation, interview training and working as a freelancer are delivered as part of the Diploma in preparation for work in film and TV production.

## **Work Experience**

You must have completed ten days of professional experience to be awarded the Diploma and this will form part of the exit procedure. The placement should test the skills and capabilities you have gained whilst on the course.

You will be given tutorials on how to find work experiences and some initial contacts to start the process. Further tutorials are given to support this process as required.

This assessment is added to the information given to the Industry Reviewer and forms part of the discussion at your Final Review.