

Course outline: Diploma in Cameras, Sound and Vision Mixing

The course runs for 11 months and is designed to deliver training and practical experience so that you have the skills and professional behaviour to compete for work as a camera assistant, sound assistant or trainee vision mixer in the TV industry and to progress in your chosen specialism as opportunities arise. You will be expected to show that you can operate professionally both individually and as part of a wider production team. You will be taught by industry professionals who specialise in your area of study and others who produce or direct TV Entertainment shows. You will work with students from the Directing and Producing Television Entertainment MA course and the Sport Production Diploma course plus a number of related support production courses.

The course begins with an introduction to the television production process from idea to delivery and an overview of some of the key elements, such as bar counting and chromakey, that are used to realise these projects. You will be introduced to the language of television, how scripts are laid out and examine the different genres that make up Television Entertainment programming. This is made up of joint workshops with the Directing and Producing Television Entertainment MA course.

The course is made up of six modules. You will receive written and verbal feedback on each from your craft tutors, where appropriate, and from the course Senior Tutor.

You will receive a briefing document which describes the learning objectives of each module and how they will be achieved.

Course Elements

The course consists of a logical progression of classes, practical workshops and modules, taught and overseen by industry professionals run over 3 terms starting in Jan each year. Teaching sessions usually takes place during Monday to Friday from 9.30am until 5.30pm.

Knowledge is imparted and experience gained through workshops and production experience. 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.

Induction and Introduction to Camera, Sound and Vision Mixing

The course is designed to give students a good understanding of Television Entertainment programmes and to develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours necessary to enable them to work effectively as part of a professional TV studio crew.

The first stage of the course concentrates on the fundamentals of TV and the Television Entertainment genre and will include studio familiarisation, theory and practical exercises to give students a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the studio team and the way the roles work together to deliver high quality programmes.

At stage 2, students will specialise in cameras/lighting, sound or vision mixing and this will include an attachment to Sky Studios for six weeks. They will also crew for the TV course Producer and Director and sports diploma students for several exercises in the NFTS Television Studio.

There are six key milestones:

1. Passing the Media Technology Fundamentals exam
2. Producing and agreeing a Personal Development Plan with the Senior Tutor
3. Producing a 3,000-word essay on a Television Entertainment show of their choice
4. Mid-course assessment
5. External assessment
6. Final assessment including external input from Sky Studios

The course comprises of the following modules and workshops:

Introduction

- Foundation
An introduction to the School, to the TV Entertainment genre and production roles
- Springboard
Meet tutors from across the school and sample the breadth of the NFTS
- TV Grammar
Every profession has its own language it's critical to rapid, concise, precise communication.

Modules

Module 1 - Studio Familiarisation

Students will gain a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities in a TV studio and how they work together as a team. There will be sessions on basic lighting, camerawork, vision mixing and sound prior to experience in the studio. Students will be given safety training and will work in a number of roles. Students will begin to focus on their chosen disciplines part way through this module.

Module 2 - Media Technology Fundamentals

Classroom based learning. Students will be introduced to the technology concepts that make TV work and the workflows used from pre-studio to broadcast. There will be a written exam at the end of this module. Passing the exam is a requirement of progressing to module 4 and granting the final diploma.

Module 3 - Camerawork/Lighting or Vision Mixing or Sound

Students will prepare for their second studio session and will continue to focus on their chosen discipline. Once in the studio they will work with professional directors and second year MA directing students with tutors working with them to learn the basic skills of their roles.

Module 4 - Sky Placement

Students will move to Sky Studios for six weeks for peer-led training on real shows. This module will be managed by Sky and is a unique opportunity to train in a new state-of-the-art digital HD studio facility. Students will work alongside, and be mentored by, Sky professional crew. (Students are expected to cover any increased travel or accommodation costs arising from this work experience / training arrangement).

Module 5 - Quiz show, Music Show and Situation Comedy

Students will work with leading industry professionals on key TV Entertainment show genres. Classroom based teaching sessions will take place at the NFTS and the shows will then be made at Sky Studios. Sky staff will augment the NFTS teaching team to facilitate this and Sky staff will evaluate student performance and feedback for module and final assessments.

Module 6 – Essay

Worked on from the end of Module 3 until the end of October, this essay takes a current UK television Entertainment show (of each student's choice) as its subject. Students must describe the life cycle of the programme from idea to transmission. Achieving the pass mark is a requirement of granting the final diploma.