

ITALIA CONTI

Curriculum Policy

FE / HE

Approval and Review:

Approved by Senior Leadership Team	12 th March 2020
Reviewed by	Quality Assurance Manager
Checked by:	Course Leader - Musical Theatre Course Leader - Acting
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This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Senior Leadership Team annually.

Italia Conti

1. Purpose	3
2. Curriculum Overview.....	3
2.1 Musical Theatre and Dance Courses.....	3
2.2 Acting Programmes.....	4
3. Aims.....	4
4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment	5
5. English entry requirements	5
6. Learning Difficulties and Disabilities	6
7. Careers.....	6
8. Defining Italia Conti’s Professional & Vocational Training Quality Indicators	6

1. Purpose

This policy is set out to ensure that Italia Conti has a clear vision in regard to the quality of its curriculum in practice.

Italia Conti believes that within our curriculum design and delivery all students:

- are entitled to a training and education that will enable them to develop their full potential, whether that be intellectual, physical, aesthetic, creative, emotional, spiritual or social;
- should be appropriately challenged in their learning environment;
- should develop outstanding performance and creative skills in a conservatoire environment which is complemented by a robust academic education;
- should have their needs addressed by having personalised learning at the heart of our learning and teaching;
- should be provided with an equal opportunity to be appropriately challenged and stretched;
- should receive an inspiring education for life.

In return, Italia Conti expects that:

- all students understand the extent of the commitment that is required for their programme of study; this concerns not only their attendance, punctuality, application and completion of work, but also in the less easily definable areas of emotional openness, imaginative flexibility, physical courage and stamina, intellectual and personal rigour, philosophical curiosity, and a willingness to reconsider even beliefs, opinions and allegiances, though not necessarily to change them;
- all students embrace the experiences of their courses so that they can get the most from their time here.

2. Curriculum Overview

2.1 Musical Theatre and Dance Courses

The Italia Conti Musical Theatre and Dance Courses seek to mould young musical theatre and dance performers utilising the widest possible range of ideas and training methods. This allows each student to construct a personal way of working, whose development will continue throughout their life. The programme also aims to produce flexible performers who can work in a wide range of styles and media genres.

Work on these courses is dedicated to vocal and physical training, and to the exploration of a range of dance, singing and acting techniques which underpin all performances.

The modern performer is not just a puppet who regurgitates lines or choreography but seeks to be a creative artist that uses his/her inner resources to create truthful performances, and constantly engages with new approaches to communicate both physically and vocally.

Part of the programme will teach the students to be original and individual in their work, to reinvent old techniques and develop new ones.

2.2 Acting Programmes

The Italia Conti Acting Programmes do not seek to mould students to any one method or system for acting. The programmes aim to make available to their students the widest possible range of ideas and training methods, so that each student may begin to construct a personal way of working, whose development will continue throughout their life.

The programmes also aim to produce flexible performers who can work in as wide a range of styles or media as possible.

The programmes include underlying theories of training and performance, as well as clear philosophies about the role of drama in society, which permeate the teaching.

Students' work on these programmes is dedicated to vocal and physical training, and to the exploration of a range of techniques for creating and developing character, and for working flexibly and responsively in the space.

The modern performer is not just a puppet who regurgitates lines and moves for an audience, but a creative artist, who uses their inner resources to create truthful fictions, and constantly seeking new ways to communicate both physically and vocally.

3. Aims

Italia Conti endeavours to provide a mix of education and training in the performing arts to empower students to become life-long learners who are:

- responsible for their own learning;
- engaged in the learning process;
- self-directed and value themselves;
- creative thinkers;
- enjoy a work ethic which values dedication and reliability;
- global citizens, equipped to operate in an international environment through collaborative work, problem solving and effective communication of ideas;
- able to assume new roles in supporting and mentoring peers;

- capable of acquiring knowledge, and developing new skills and approaches;
- competent and discriminating users of ICT in their daily activities of learning and managing knowledge;
- aware of the requirements of their chosen careers in the performing arts and competent in those skills, given their age and ability, which with further training will sustain them in their careers;
- conscious of the need to ensure they have personal access to a much wider range of educational and career opportunities, should the need arise.

4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Teaching, learning and assessment on Italia Conti's vocational programmes are fundamentally **experiential** (students have to do it rather than study it), **embodied** (it requires the skills to be learned and demonstrated physically/practically as well as intellectually) and **holistic** (students have to bring together all the vocal, physical, emotional, intellectual, technical and creative skills of performance, and not just one or some of them).

These principles inform the design and delivery of the programmes: from working largely in practical workshops and classes (not lectures or online), to assessment events being predominantly practical skills demonstrations, including preparation for performance and, of course, performance events.

Formal written work is included within the training (it is a fundamental life skill, as much as anything professionally related), but the majority of assessment will be practice based.

Learning opportunities on the courses require physical, emotional and intellectual commitment in order to fulfil the requirements both of a demanding vocational training and to ensure the academic standards of the courses are met.

The learning opportunities include a diversity of tasks and activities to fulfil both of these inputs. These are detailed in the **Course Specifications**.

Students receive specific briefings on a termly basis from session tutors about what is expected within their class.

Teaching staff on the vocational programmes are for the most part drawn from practitioners who are working professionally in various disciplines, but who also teach in other performing arts institutions.

5. English entry requirements

Students whose first language is not English are expected to have achieved a Level 2 equivalent in English. International students will need to demonstrate IELTS level 6.

6. Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

Italia Conti conducts initial assessment for students to screen for learning difficulties and disabilities during induction week, as well as acting upon any information passed on by the student's previous school or college.

Students who have been assessed as having a learning difficulty and/or disability or those with specific Special Educational Needs have their needs considered individually by the learning support coordinator.

Note: the provision for a student with a learning difficulty depends on a student's need having been formally diagnosed; and may include such help as group support or 1:1 sessions. Students are required to attend support sessions if they are identified as in need of support.

7. Careers

Careers guidance is supported through the specific units in the curriculum at FE level, and through Professional Preparation weeks and study at HE level.

8. Defining Italia Conti's Professional & Vocational Training Quality Indicators

Our **vocational training** develops the skills required of performing artists and acknowledges the **following characteristics** of the profession:

- the occupation of "performing artist" can be defined in multiple ways and there is no prescriptive set of core identifiers;
- performers require diverse skills set which are often subject to change but which usually require some element of career specialisation;
- the performing arts industry often lacks a stable and conventional career and development path;
- Career success often reflects a number of factors in a student's background and experience, and excellence in training can help but not necessarily guarantee this.

The following **indicators** and **practices** are the **core INTERNAL drivers** for considering the quality of our provision:

Italia Conti

- the attributes identified in the recruitment process for appropriate candidates will reflect the training undertaken and the demands of the industry; these may differ from conventional academic selection criteria and processes;
- the training is holistic and developed through practical and experiential work; it is often assessed by practical tasks which may differ from more conventional modes of academic teaching, learning and assessment;
- formative and summative assessment in the professional/vocational area will prioritise cumulative practice and performance as a key assessment strategy;
- the delivery and assessment of academic standards is integral to the development of professional/vocational standards;
- holistic development is achieved by paying attention to the individual needs of the student;
- holistic development requires comprehensive student engagement with a diverse range of learning opportunities and outcomes; these should include intellectual, practical, emotional, creative and technical aspects;
- learning in this area requires considerably more contact hours than conventional courses because of the need to develop students both intellectually and physically;
- strategies for responding to personal and professional feedback effectively are developed in students;
- a recognition that learning in this area is reliant on a high level of collaborative learning opportunities, and in the students' ability to work with others;
- a recognition that conventional teaching qualifications may not always reflect the range of industrial experience and pedagogic practice required for the industry; that this needs to be reflected in the recruitment processes for staff;
- resources required to support and develop students on these programmes may be different to the resources expected and demanded within conventional programmes.

It is intended that these internal drivers should inform the design and delivery of the provision. They will provide indicators to consider within monitoring, review and enhancement processes, both in respect of both internal practice, and engagement with external benchmarks and processes.

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