



Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland

The Artist in Development Transitions Model

Transition(s) the practice supports: The Artistic Development of a Musical Theatre student from entry to employment.

Abstract:

This case study illustrates the artist in development transitions support model used in the BA Musical Theatre programme. The development of a musical theatre artist in a Conservatoire context can be thought of as a three-tiered process. Students are encouraged to view their artistic development as a continuous and transitory process from their entry into the Conservatoire, through their learning and development to prepare them for the world of work thereafter. From their point of entry to the Conservatoire, students engage in a development process that helps them to understand themselves, explore their industry; and consider how they, as artists, will exist in their industry. The Artist in Development strand of the BA Musical theatre programme is designed to cultivate an awareness of this journey and develop the necessary skills to facilitate transition through each stage.

Description:

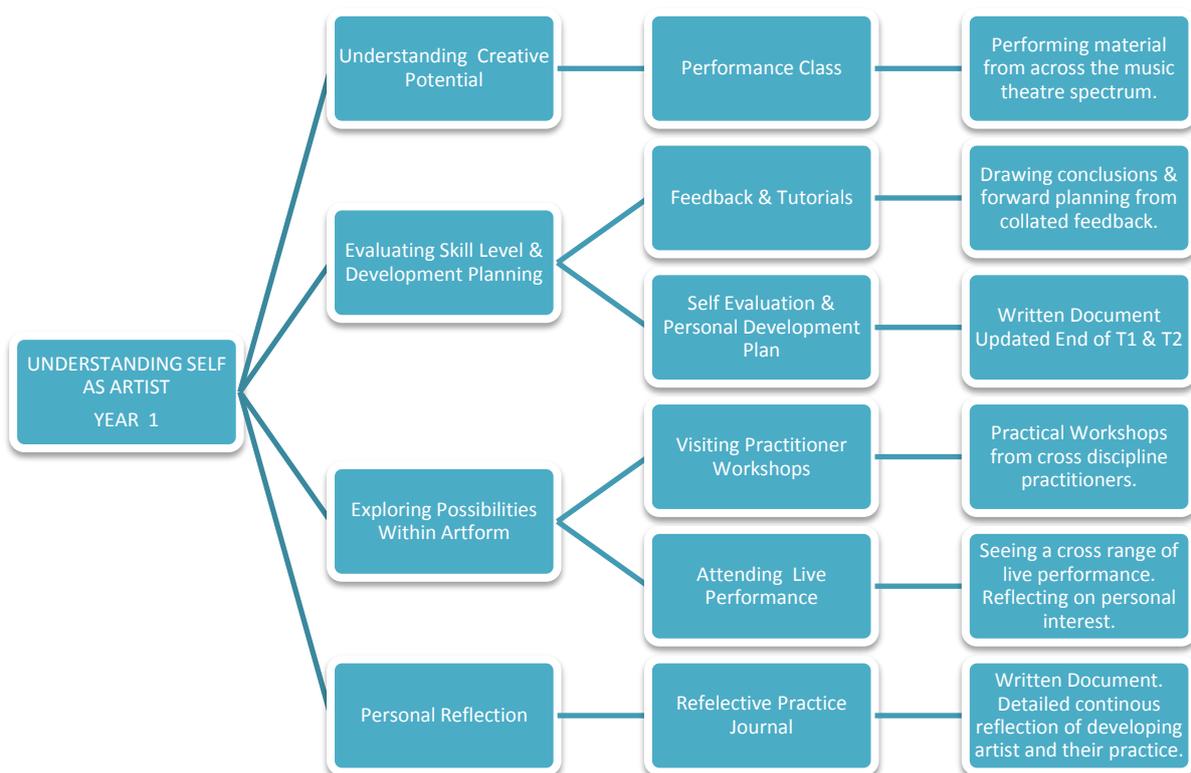
The development of musical theatre artists at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is a three-tiered process, mirroring each year of their undergraduate training. This compartmentalisation is functional and allows teaching staff to present focused and appropriate module content customised to the student's level of experience and growing immersion in the musical theatre genre and industry. Students are encouraged to view their artistic development as a continuous and transitory process from their entry into the Conservatoire, through their learning and development to the world of work thereafter. From entry to the Conservatoire, students engage in a development process that helps them to understand themselves, explore their industry; and consider how they, as artists, will exist and thrive in their industry.

The 'Artist in Development' strand of the BA Musical Theatre programme is designed to cultivate an awareness of this journey and develop the necessary skills to facilitate and transition through each stage. The 'Artist in Development' model was created as part of the RCS' undergraduate curriculum reform process and was launched in our new BA Musical Theatre programme in 2011. The strand has three modules at SCQF level 7, 8 and 9 and is delivered throughout each academic year. An overview of each year is provided below.

Our approach to the development of musical theatre artists over a three year period enables the student to view their developing professional practice as a connected and ongoing developmental process that is intrinsically connected to their skills development.

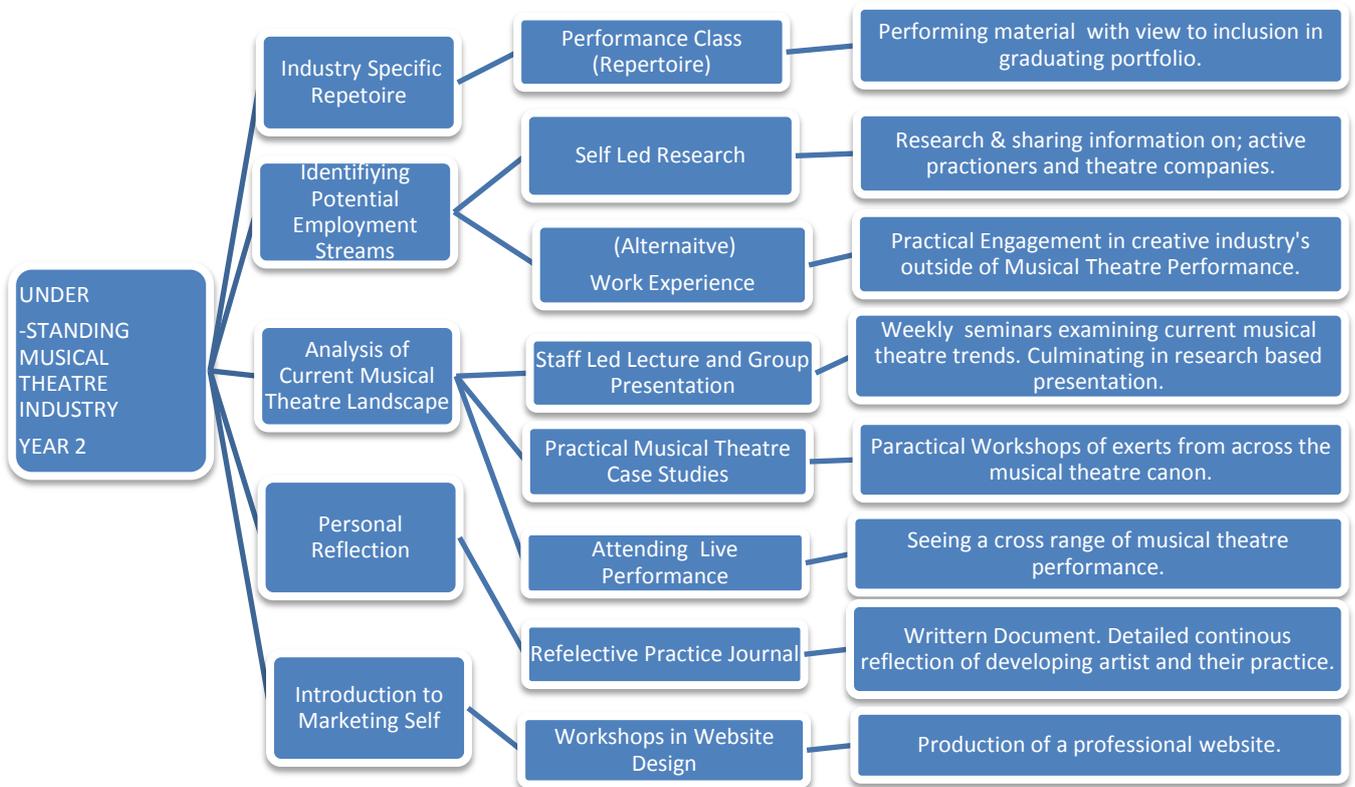
Year 1 –Overview

In year 1, the artist in development focusses on themselves as musical theatre artists as illustrated below:



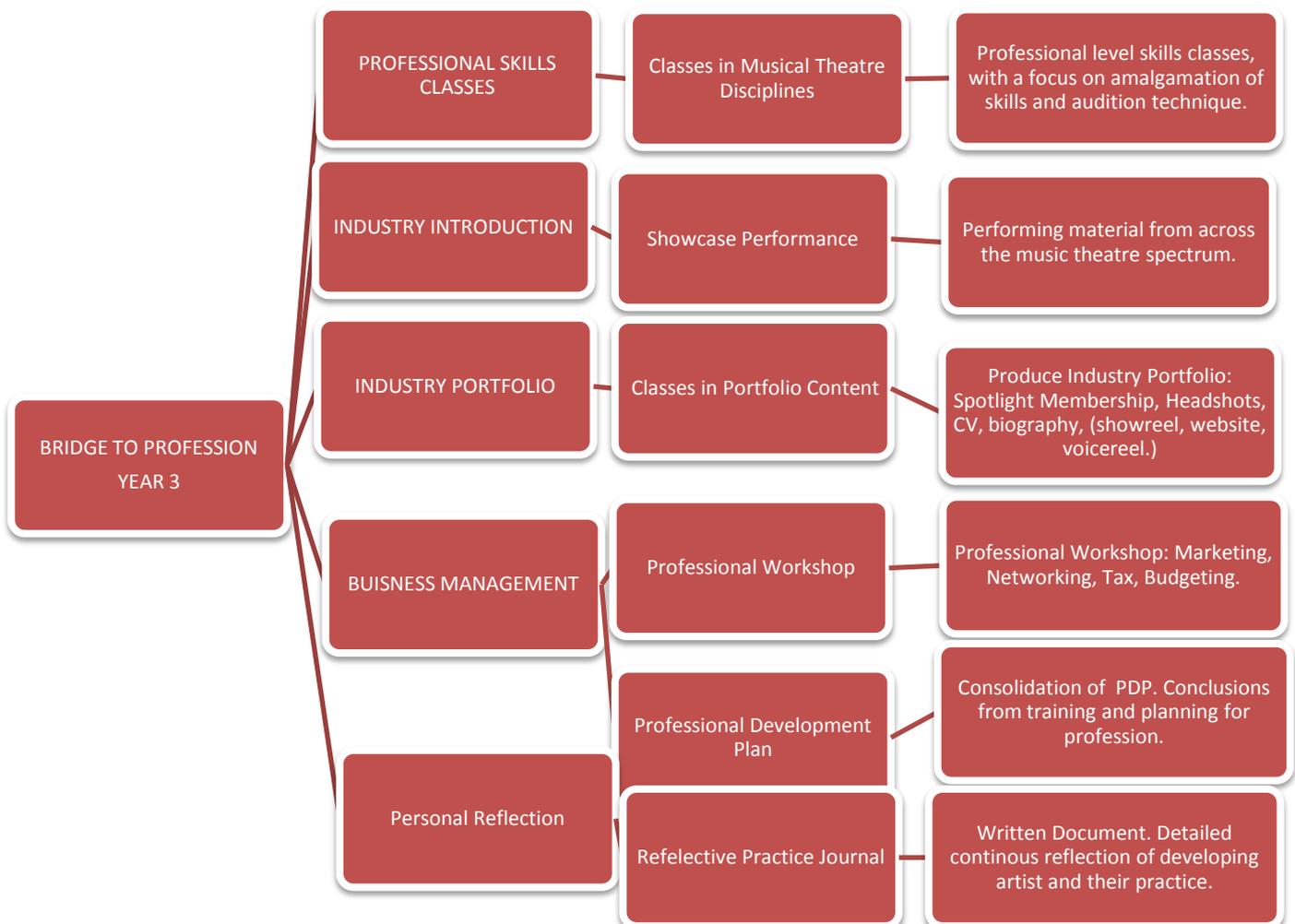
Year 2 – Overview

In Year 2, the artist in development focusses on developing their understanding of the musical theatre industry:



Year 3 – Overview

In Year 3 the artist in development undertakes intensive preparation for employment/self-employment in musical theatre industry:



The 'Artist in Development' transitions model has the following key components:

Feedback Tutorials and the Online Learning Contract

Feedback tutorials are core to the holistic development of each artist and a vital element of our transitions model.

Early tutorials in year 1 are diagnostic in nature, focussing on the students' learning and performance journey to date and setting short-term and long-term goals for their personal artistic development. Later, and in particular in years 2 and 3, tutorials will encourage students to investigate the musical theatre landscape and encourage exploration of different employment opportunities to inform the development of industry specific repertoire and showcase opportunities.

All tutorials are informed by tutor feedback, input from industry professionals working with students, self-assessment and reflection. Students will use tutorials to agree long term personal development actions allowing for focused planning of continuous practice. Discussion in tutorials provides meaningful ways to focus on the needs of an individual learner, identify key learning points and identify areas for development. Development actions are recorded in the students online learning contract; clearly, ensuring that their learning journey across all three years is documented transparently.

Reflective Practice Journal

Within the Artist and Development modules students create and maintain a meaningful Reflective Practice Journal relevant to both their study strand and individual artistic process. The journal itself informs their tutorials and students are encouraged to use their reflective practice journal and any key reflections to inform and promote artistic and developmental dialogue with their tutors.. Tutorial dates are selected to coincide with key dates of summative reflection, ensuring that the student's reflective practice and their documentation of this are central to any staff/student exchange.

Professional Input, Engagement and Feedback

Another core element of the 'Artist in Development' transitions model is the opportunity for students to have input, engagement and feedback from professionals working in the musical theatre industry. Across all three years of the programme, students are supported in their transition from artist in development to professional artist by working and engaging with practicing professionals including: artists; directors; choreographers; musical directors; and agents. The ability to receive, synthesise and act on feedback from industry professionals is vital for artists who will be working in an industry where an awareness of self, process and industry are essential for positive learning and development. Examples of how professional engagement and feedback are created in the model include: attendance at professional performances and workshops with visiting practitioners in years 1 and 2, work experience both within and outside of the musical theatre profession in year 2 and professional level skills classes and industry showcase in year 3.

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