

A new course, and the only one of its kind in the UK!

In September 2021 Mind the Gap is excited to be launching a NEW Performance Academy three-year course for adults with learning disabilities and autism. This course is validated by York St John University, which means students will gain a Certificate in Higher Education equivalent to Level 4, which is the same standard as the first year of a University degree.

It's the first course of its kind in the UK that's tailored to the needs and interests of students with a learning disability and autism. This new offer builds on Mind the Gap's experience and success of running training programmes through our Academy since 1998.

Lots of things remain the same as our previous and other courses!

- High quality teaching led by experienced creative professionals - makers, performers, tutors and workshop leaders.
- Student first approach ensuring interests, ambitions and access needs are met – with dedicated learning support in every session.
- Training takes place in our three studios that are kitted out with everything a performer could possibly need, and where everyone can be sure of a warm welcome.



“The validation from York St John University really cements the company as a beacon for learning-disabled creatives and further strengthens Mind the Gap’s reputation within theatres and theatre industry.”

Charli Ward, Academy Director

The Performance Academy training is based around three main skills: theatre-making, dance and music. All students will be encouraged and supported to develop their understanding and experience in these areas. This makes for a solid foundation for students to progress to future opportunities in the creative arts, and also builds life-skills like teamwork, good communication and confidence.



The three-year course will include classic and contemporary theatre, dance techniques, music production, and music composition (like song-writing). Students will learn dance choreography skills, explore physical theatre, develop skills in devising theatre and participate in workshops led by arts industry professionals.

The Certificate in Higher Education will be gained through learning by doing. Mind the Gap's approach is person-centred with teaching and support staff helping each student find their best ways of learning, and showing what they have learnt. Over the lifetime of the course each student will create a portfolio to record their learning and achievements. This will be used by Mind the Gap and York St John University staff to show and assess each student's progress towards the Level 4 qualification.



How long is the course?

The Performance Academy course starts on 27 September 2021 and runs for 3 years. Each year will offer 35 weeks of training, and will run on Mondays through to Thursdays between 10am and 3pm each day.

How much does it cost?

Like Universities, Mind the Gap Academy courses have a daily cost. This is because funding for opportunities for adults aged 18+ with a learning disability is usually organised through Adult Social Care budgets that are managed by local authorities (e.g. Bradford Council). This is normally through Individual Budgets or Direct Payments. Each day costs £42.01, so each week is £168.04, and the total cost each year is £5,881.40.

Can Mind the Gap help me to find funding?

Mind the Gap can help give you advice about who to contact if you don't already have a Social Worker, but unfortunately we are unable to organise the funding. This has to be done by the individual themselves – normally with the support of a parent or care-worker.

How to apply

To join the course you first need to make an application. Everyone who applies will be invited to an interview and audition workshop.

To make an application you must:

- be over 18 years old
- identify as having a learning disability and/or autism
- be able to attend a practical group workshop audition, followed by an interview
- have your funding in place before the programme begins

The deadline for making an application to this year's course is: 7 June 2021.

If you require more information, contact **melissa@mind-the-gap.org.uk** or call **01274 487390**.

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