



## ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC BMus (Hons) Programme 2015/2016

### Level 5: Alexander Technique

*Module Leader and Lecturer for Alexander Technique: Peter Buckoke*

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### ASSESSMENT

Pattern of Assessment (20 credits)	Date	Weighting
Statement of knowledge (1,000 words)	1pm, Friday 11 December 2015	20%
Practice Portfolio: i. two-week self-evaluative diary ii. series of reports on class performances, completed in class time	1pm, Friday 26 February 2016	30%
Essay (3,000-4,000 words)	1pm, Wednesday 25 May 2016	50%

### What is being assessed?

	Class	%	Description
<b>Statement of knowledge</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of principles</li> <li>Assimilation of chosen texts</li> <li>Reference to lecture content</li> <li>Presentation</li> </ul> <b>Practice Portfolio (Diary)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development &amp; variety of strategies</li> <li>Personal connections with life and music</li> <li>Breadth and depth of knowledge of AT</li> </ul> <b>Practice Portfolio/Performance Reports &amp; Essay</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connections between observations and strategies (<i>reports only</i>)</li> <li>Breadth/depth/accuracy of observations</li> <li>Variety of strategies</li> <li>Apparent knowledge of Alexander Technique</li> </ul>	I	90-100	Exceptional
		80-89	Outstanding
		70-79	Excellent
	Iii	60-69	Very Good
		50-59	Fair/Good
		40-49	Limited
	Fail	30-39	Unsatisfactory
		20-29	Weak
		0-19	Very Weak

## Important points about assessment in this module

- All coursework must be submitted via Turnitin.
- Marked work will be returned **after 3 teaching weeks** (i.e. excluding vacations, Audition Weeks, Performance Weeks).
- **STATEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE:** refer to at least two published introductions to the Alexander Technique. Suggested introductory books are given in the bibliography below.
- **PRACTICE PORTFOLIO:** contains two elements (1) a two-week self-observational diary (kept during Course Weeks 14 and 15) on a variety of issues. These could include discussion of what you have noticed about your use of the Technique, decisions you have made in the light of your experience of the Technique, insights from your reading, your practice or from observation of other performers; (2) a series of short written reports on a performance by each of your colleagues. These should be as detailed as possible within the time available for each (approximately 15 minutes) and should focus particularly on the coordination of mind and body during performance. After noting your observations you should suggest suitable practice strategies to encourage relevant progress for each student. Assessment of the portfolio will take into account the quality of the observations and insights.
- **ESSAY:** choose from a list of topics that will be agreed with you during the course by your module lecturer.
- **Coursework assignments must be handed in by the published deadline.** Failure to do so will result in the application of a capped mark of 40% which may be lifted by the Board of Examiners only after consideration of mitigating circumstances submitted by the student. For further information about the Deferral of Practical Examinations, and about the College's policy on Mitigating Circumstances, see page 19 of your *Student Guide*).
- Students missing the stipulated deadline for coursework submission have **up to one week** after the published deadline to submit work if they wish this to be marked and receive a bare minimum pass (40%). Work submitted after this one-week period will not be eligible for marking: it will be marked over the Summer Vacation, should the student fail the module and be offered a reassessment opportunity.

## TUITION TO SUPPORT YOUR LEARNING

- 22 weekly 75-minute lectures/seminars given between September 2015 and May 2016

### What are you aiming for?

- understanding the historical context of the Technique and F. M. Alexander's development of the 'Principles'
- recognising the personal habits that impede the coordination of your mind and body, and the means to work on these
- developing insights into how to apply Alexander Technique to personal practice and performance

### Lecture Plan

Week 1	All students play a 2-3 minute piece). Revision of Alexander basics, Inhibition, Direction, Primary Control etc. Discuss the recommended introductory books.
Week 2	Two students play. Look further into 'Inhibition', 'Direction' and recognition of habit. Discuss 'the next evolutionary step for man' (F.M. Alexander: <i>Man's Supreme Inheritance</i> ). Semi-supine. Hands on work.
Week 3	Two students play. Practice efficiency (Alcantara: <i>Indirect Procedures</i> ). Introduce 'Body Mapping'. Hands on work.
Week 4	Two students play. Discuss social implications of this work and influence on teacher-pupil relationships. How to sit on a chair in a rehearsal. Hands on work.
Week 5	Reading, writing and typing. Two students work on practice. Hands on work.
Week 6	Eyes. (Aldous Huxley: <i>The Art of Seeing</i> ). Describe Peter Grunwald's work. Two students practise. Hands on work.
Week 7	Alexander's procedure: Hands on the back of a chair. Hands on work
Week 8	Breathing. Alexander's procedure: The Whispered 'ah'. Two students practise. Discuss 1 <sup>st</sup> written assignment. Hands on work.
Week 9	Performance anxiety (Havas: <i>Stage Fright</i> , Alcantara: <i>Indirect Procedures</i> ). Discuss first written assignment. Hands on work. Two students play.
Week 10	How to apply Alexander's principles to teaching a musical instrument. Hands on work. Two students play.
Week 11	Discuss effect of Christmas break on work. Anatomy (Gorman: <i>The Body Moveable</i> ), Body Mapping (Conable: <i>What Every Musician Needs to Know About The Body</i> ). Skeleton. Hands on work. Two students play.
Week 12	Walking, standing and sitting. Two students practise. Hands on work.
Week 13	Looking at the different styles of Alexander Work. Macdonald, Carrington, Barlow, Barstow. Discuss self-observational diaries. Hands on work. Two students practise.
Week 14	Visit an Alexander Teacher Training course.
Week 15	Imitation (Alcantara: <i>Indirect Procedures</i> , Chapter 22). Parents, teachers, peers and heroes. Discuss essays. Hands on work. Two students practice.
Week 16	Trial run for observation and practice strategy assignment. All students play for 3 minutes. Discuss performances and possible strategies. (This will be video recorded)
Week 17	Discuss topics for essays. <i>How To Think Like Leonardo</i> . Hands on work. Two students play.
Week 18	Available literature; music related and other specific areas. Direction magazine. Review Reading and Writing. Two students practise. Hands on work.
Week 19	Review performance anxiety and public speaking. How to perform with confidence. Discuss topics for essays. Hands on work. Two students play.

Week 20	<b>Each student to perform a five-minute solo.</b> All students to write a short report on the other performances. Reports collected for marking. Discuss essays. (These performances will be video recorded).
Week 21	Alexander in Education. John Dewey (Frank Pierce Jones, Chapter 11). STAT Database. Discuss essays. Discuss teacher-pupils relationships in schools and Music Colleges. Two students play.
Week 22	Discuss essays. Each student to bring a written question for discussion. Hands on work.

## Bibliography

### *Suggested Introductory Books*

Alcantara, P. de. *Indirect Procedures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)

Barlow, W. *The Alexander Principle* (London: Gollancz, 1990)

Chance, J. *Alexander Technique* (London: HarperCollins, 1998)

Conable, B. *What Every Musician Needs to Know About the Body* (Portland: Andover Press, 2000)

Gelb, M. *Body Learning: An Introduction to the Alexander Technique*. (London: Aurum Press, 1987)

Kleinman, J. and Buckoke, P. *The Alexander Technique for Musicians* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013)

Langford, E. *Mind and Muscle* (Leuven: Garant Uitgevers, 2008)

Macdonald, G. *The Complete Illustrated Guide to Alexander Technique* (Shaftesbury: Element Books, 1998)

Park, G. *The Art Of Changing* (London: Ashgrove Publishing Ltd, 2000)

Pierce-Jones, F. *Freedom to Change* (London: Mouritz, 1997)

### *Further Reading*

Alexander, F. M. *Man's Supreme Inheritance* (London: Mouritz, 1996)

Alexander, F. M. *The Use of the Self* (London: Orion, 2001)

Grunwald, P. *Eyebody* (Auckland: Eyebody Press, 2004)

Havas, K. *Stage Fright* (London: Bosworth and Co. Ltd, 1973)

## GENERAL ADVICE FOR STUDENTS TAKING THIS OPTION

**Philosophy of the Course:** This course is a mixture of academic work and a voyage of self-discovery. Students who are prepared to examine their thinking in a completely open minded way throughout the course will complete it most successfully.