



THE VOICE
COLLEGE

Personalised Learning Pathways

Module Descriptors

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Module Descriptors

MODULE DESCRIPTORS: **TEACHING PRACTICE & CONTEXTUAL SKILLS**

Please note that all modules may also be taken as stand-alone study options for Continuing Professional Development purposes either before or after taking one of our Distance Learning or PLP courses.

Many of our modules have specially-created in-house papers, but others will require the purchase of a textbook.

A01: Learn About the Larynx (single module)

This module focuses purely on laryngeal anatomy: what the different muscle groups and cartilages do, how the vocal folds work, and much more. If you are a singing teacher, a knowledge of laryngeal anatomy is crucial as it helps you to identify what is going on inside a student's throat as they sing. All high-level teachers should have a working knowledge of laryngeal anatomy as it provides a contextual background for so much more, including pitching, breath control, and vocal damage. Unlike most of our modules, *Learn About the Larynx* is fully automated, and delivered via our exclusive online course platform.

Portfolio / Research Modules (single or double)

A portfolio requires you to conduct a piece of independent research, or to engage in and evaluate rehearsal, teaching, performance or other creative processes that will demonstrably enhance a particular aspect of your work and learning. You are encouraged to discuss and agree upon the focus of this module with your Personal Tutor some time before commencing work on it.

Portfolio / research modules are deliberately non-prescriptive, in order to offer you the opportunity to explore an aspect of your work that is of particular interest to you. The only *specific* objective here is that once complete, your portfolio must be seen to have further developed your existing skills, or opened up a new avenue of learning. You are encouraged to challenge yourself during this module, by exploring weaknesses over and above existing strengths.

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T01: The Consultation Process (single)

The first meeting with a student sets the tone for the rest of your working relationship with them, and is critical in ensuring that you successfully gain new business. This module discusses how to conduct that first meeting / consultation, including exercises that quickly and easily help you to deduce what type of singer you have in front of you, what they need to achieve and how you might help them to achieve it.

T02: Setting Up a Private Teaching Studio (single)

Being able to teach is one thing - but what about the day to day running of your teaching studio? Do you know how and where to advertise? Do you have the physical resources necessary to run a studio of this kind? Do you understand the tax implications, and how to keep records? This module gives you an incredibly useful insight into how to run a successful teaching practice. *Requires purchase of textbook.*

T03: Teaching Beginners (single)

This module examines a range of techniques pertinent to the teaching of singers who are completely new to training, whatever their age. Teachers in the very early stages of their careers are advised to hone their craft by working with beginners, as it enables them to find their feet and pass on the benefit of their knowledge and training without feeling intimidated by students from a professional background, or who have extensive previous training. The key text offers a wealth of exercises and techniques which will prove very useful to all teachers. *Requires purchase of textbook.*

T04: Warming Up the Smart Way (single)

Singers are often unaware of how to warm up properly, and teachers should be aware that mindlessly singing scales is not considered best practice. This module explores a range of simple and effective warm up techniques which can be adapted to suit any singer, regardless of their age, gender or musical style.

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T05: Working with Adolescent Voices (single)

This module focuses on the many changes that take place in the adolescent voice as the singer goes through puberty. The voice is not fully formed at this age, and needs a quite different approach to that required when working with adult learners. You will study a range of approaches that will help you to deal effectively with younger, developing singers.

T06: Music & Singing Skills for Very Young Children (double)

This module explores ways in which singing teachers can engage with small children from birth to 5 years or older in a range of meaningful but fun ways, helping them to establish technique, ear training, performance skills and overall musicality early on in life! It is well documented that the development of music skills is highly beneficial in the overall development of the brain. The work here includes an overview of various pedagogies including Kodály, Orff and solfège, and explores useful exercises for practical application in the classroom.

T07: The Practical Application of Dalcroze Eurythmics (single)

This module focuses on the all-important development of rhythmic skills in children (also useful for adult students)! It explores the concept that “Music is the fundamental motivating force in all the arts, especially music.” (Dalcroze), and examines how we must make music with the whole body. This is a very important principle in singing, as there can be no true musicality without rhythm being felt and expressed throughout the body. For children, we can tap into and develop that innate, physical rhythm through games and exercises. This is a must for all teachers of children. (Note: this module echoes the work explored in Module S01, but requires no book purchase, as it is delivered via an in-house paper - great for overseas students who might have trouble obtaining hard-copies of texts).

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T08: Teaching Children 7 - 11 years (single)

This double module offers a range of exercises, techniques and approaches for working with children. The key text comes complete with two audio CDs and offers a comprehensive and well-tested methodology for the traditionally difficult area of teaching children, finding the balance between play and technique, and showing you how to address technique in a child-friendly way which neither alienates the child nor over-extends the young voice.

T09: An Introduction to Vocal Energetics (single)

Coming soon! An exploration of the world of energetics, which goes beyond the familiar realms of traditional techniques and pedagogies to explore the "sixth sense" of the voice, and the underpinning concepts of primal voice. A fascinating look at instinctive, primal, and creative vocalisation.

T10: Songs & Strategies - Adolescents (single)

This resource-rich module explores a world of songs which help young teenagers to develop a wide range of singing and musical skills. The module also provides a wealth of ideas for the implementation of the songs in a classroom setting, giving the teacher a go-to resource for lesson planning and development.

T11: Teaching Groups (single)

This module examines a wide range of teaching techniques necessary to the teaching of groups - a very different proposition to that of teaching individuals. You will study how to develop technical, musical and ensemble skills, plus the all-important psychology of group teaching and learning, and how to plan lessons and assessments for groups. *Requires purchase of text.*

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T12: Working with Rock Singers (double)

This double module, based on the work of top US coach Jaime Vendera, focuses on the very specific problems faced when teaching rock singers, who tend to make quite heavy demands on the voice. As a teacher, you will need to know how to build the requisite vocal strength so that your student can rehearse and gig at high volume and intensity several times a week without succumbing to the hoarseness or vocal fatigue which is so prevalent among singers who work in this style. If you can teach rock singers successfully, your books are much more likely to be full! *Requires purchase of text.*

T13: Overcoming Stage Fright and Performance Anxiety (single)

As an experienced practitioner will tell you, being a singing teacher involves a lot more than 'simply' teaching the nuts and bolts of voice production. This module offers the savvy teacher the opportunity to explore a range of strategies which can be used to assist students in overcoming common performance anxiety problems, using a range of NLP, visualisation and trance-state techniques. The module does not require specialist training or a therapeutic background, as it offers easy-to-apply techniques explained in layman's terms. A must for any teacher who ever encounters anxious students. (That would be... everyone!)

Requires purchase of text.

T14: Introduction to the Psychology & Practice of Teaching (single)

This module examines a wide range of essential teaching skills and techniques, including looking at how to teach students of different ages, how to write and develop a curriculum, how to motivate students and how to monitor and evaluate your own work. There is a wealth of knowledge in the key text, and you will be given the opportunity to focus in on specific topics which are of particular interest to you. *Requires purchase of text.*

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T15: Exploring the Psychology & Practice of Teaching (double)

This double-length version of module T14 examines a wide range of essential teaching skills and techniques, including looking at how to teach students of different ages, how to write and develop a curriculum, how to motivate students and how to monitor and evaluate your own work. There is a wealth of knowledge in the key text, and you will be given the opportunity to focus in on specific topics which are of particular interest to you.

Requires purchase of text.

T16: The Foundations of Teaching Singing (single)

This important module focuses on what to do during the first few months of teaching, when establishing good underpinning technique is so vital. What you teach during this early period - and how you respond to your students' needs - affects your ongoing relationship with them, and very much affects whether or not they choose to continue training in the medium-long term. An indispensable and very popular unit for inexperienced or unconfident teachers looking for a step-by-step "how to", and is a useful resource for more experienced teachers too. The module comes with a wealth of audio resources.

T17: Music & Singing Skills for Very Young Children (single)

This module is the shorter version of Module T06. It explores ways in which singing teachers can engage with small children from birth to 5 years or older, in a range of meaningful but fun ways, helping them to establish technique, ear training, performance skills and overall musicality early on in life! It is well documented that the development of music skills is highly beneficial in the overall development of the brain. The work here includes an overview of various pedagogies including Kodály, Orff and solfège, and explores useful exercises for practical application in the classroom.

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S01: Rhythm and Movement (single)

Of all of the skills that a good singer requires, rhythm is often perceived as the most difficult to acquire. This module explores the development of rhythm, especially within children, but with an approach which can easily be transferred to an adult setting. It looks at tempo, at dynamics, at feeling rhythm within the body, at expressing rhythm in a wide variety of physical ways, at patterns, at note values and phrasing. It also offers a huge range of exercises for the development of these skills. A fascinating subject for teachers who will find themselves faced with singing students who just cannot seem to find “where 1 is”.

Requires purchase of text.

S02: The Voice-Body Connection (single)

This largely research-based module focuses on the single most important underlying factor in singing: the connection of the body with the voice. Singers and teachers alike tend to think of the voice as something that happens discretely in the throat and mouth, with wider reference to the abdominals, but the truth is that the mechanism is far more complex than that, and that good singing relies on maximising what Theodore Dimon refers to as “our upright design”. Correct use of the upright design, focusing on posture and the head-neck-back relationship is where all good singing technique must begin, and it is in the study of this work that your understanding begins of exactly how important is our use of the body as a whole, in singing. *Requires purchase of text.*

S03: Understanding Vocal Registers (double)

This part-practical, part-research module concentrates on the notoriously complex area of vocal registers. You will study the work of a range of practitioners, working with a wide range of techniques, concepts and theories based in the most recent voice science, allowing you to develop your skills and knowledge based on facts, rather than on tradition, supposition, habit or belief. You will also be required to demonstrate a range of competencies in the practical use of vocal registers. This is a challenging module, but one which will transform the way that you think about registers!

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S04: Feldenkrais and The Voice (single)

This module explores the work of Moshe Feldenkrais D.Sc, and how his revolutionary exercises and techniques may be applied to the voice. You will discover the impact of specific muscular relaxation on the voice, and experience the effects of a range of Feldenkrais' exercises on your own singing, providing you with an extraordinary range of helpful approaches to commonly-encountered problems in singing or the teaching of singing. No-one ever knows how transformative this work is, until they study it!

Requires purchase of text.

S05: Better Belting (single)

This much-requested module breaks down belting in a detailed but easy-to-understand way, and works equally well for teachers and for singers. We think this is the most comprehensive short course on belting that you'll find.

S06: Alexander Technique & the Voice (single)

This module looks at the extraordinary effects of the Alexander Technique on the voice. You will discover how to apply The Basic Movement, and then learn The Seven Actions, documenting their effects on your voice (or that of your students). The benefits of learning some basic Alexander Technique cannot be overstated. Your singing will never feel the same again!

Currently in development

Breathwork

Productive Practise

The Healthy Voice

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Teaching Practise (TP) Modules

We strongly encourage all singing teachers to undertake at least one Teaching Practice module as part of their PLP, although it is not obligatory. We offer Teaching Practise at the following levels:

- Novice (single or double)
- Improver (single or double)
- Intermediate (double)
- Advanced (double)
- Specialist (double)

The feedback that we get from our students (at all levels) is that the Teaching Practise modules allow them to consolidate, further explore, append and enhance both their existing skills and new ones learned on their courses.

Each TP module includes a live, online assessment of your teaching by an experienced tutor. He or she will observe you teaching one or more students, and will then give you detailed one-to-one feedback after the lesson is over. The advice given during those tutorials is very often worth its weight in gold, and more than compensates for any nerves that you may be feeling leading up to the assessment. (Yes, most people get nervous - even really experienced people)!

Personalised Learning Pathways are part of our Distance Learning provision and are treated in exactly the same way as our "off the shelf" standard courses. You will be assigned a tutor who will work with you throughout your course, and you will be given your own private Study Room on our exclusive campus, along with access to the Library, and to the Common Room, where you will be able to engage with other students, alumni, and the whole teaching team.

We are here to help, so if there is anything you need, just let us know!

Team VC