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The Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (neaco) is a project aimed at increasing the number of young people going into Higher Education. neaco consists of the University of Cambridge (including its Colleges), Anglia Ruskin University, the University of East Anglia, Norwich University of the Arts, and the University of Suffolk.

Take Your Place is the programme which is being run by neaco in schools and colleges in East Anglia. Information about how your personal information will be used by us in connection with the administration of the Take Your Place programme, and for related purposes, is available at <https://www.takeyourplace.ac.uk/how-we-use-participant-data>.

We will also get in touch by email to facilitate your involvement in the Take Your Place programme. Please contact [info@takeyourplace.ac.uk](mailto:info@takeyourplace.ac.uk) if you have any questions about how we use your data.

Explore your options,  
Discover your potential

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A stylized illustration of a hand with a teal sleeve pointing towards the 'TAKE YOUR PLACE' text.

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Explore your options,  
Discover your potential

Preparing for a Performing  
Arts Application

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A stylized illustration of a hand with a teal sleeve pointing towards the text 'TAKE YOUR PLACE'. The hand is rendered in a light pinkish-orange color, and the sleeve is a solid teal color. The hand is positioned on the right side of the image, with the index finger pointing towards the text.

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# How can we help?

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- This PowerPoint is here to provide you with different ideas to help and support you with writing a Personal Statement for a performing arts course, plus the application and audition process.
- We have put together reading lists, preparation ideas and top tips for the application process for a performing arts course at either a University or Conservatoire

# Where do I start?!

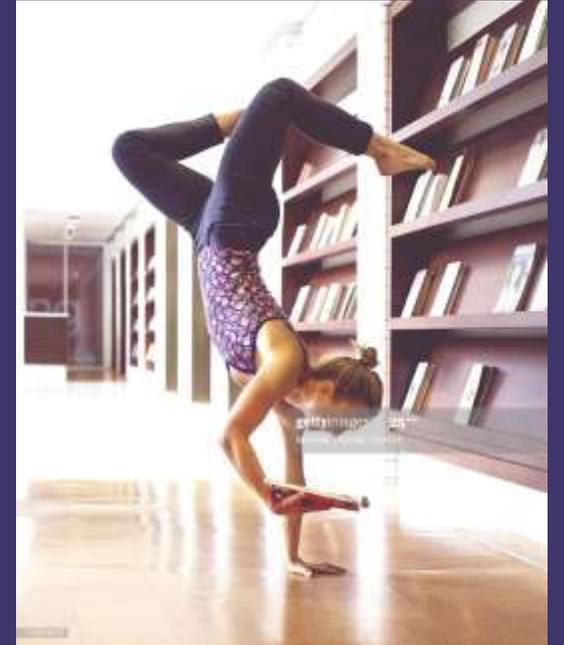
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- Lets start with some reading. We recommend using this time to do some further reading on your chosen subject, as it is important that your personal statement contains an academic paragraph.



# An Academic Paragraph

Having an academic paragraph in your personal statement is really important and we suggest using the following reading lists to help. You can use this paragraph to analyse a small piece of text from a relevant book/journal, article or performance.



# Reading Suggestions

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- Acting:

- Acting Re-considered edited (Phillip B Zarrilli)
- Being an Actor (Simon Callow)
- Beyond Stanislavsky (Bella Merlin)
- Commedia dell' Arte: An Actor's Handbook (John Rudkin)
- Games for Actors and Non-actors (Augusto Boal)
- Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre (Keith Johnstone)
- In the Company of Actors (Carole Zucker)
- The Actor and the Text (Cicely Berry)
- The Art of the Actor (Jean Benedetti)
- The First English Actresses: Women and Drama, 1660-1700 (Elizabeth Howe)
- The Year of the King: An Actor's Diary (Antony Sher)



# Reading Suggestions

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- Practical Theatre:

Devising Theatre: A Practical and Theoretical Handbook (Alison Oddey)

- From Page to Performance: A Study Book for Drama (Don Shiach)

- Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre (Keith Johnstone)

- Strategies for Playbuilding: Helping Groups Translate Issues into Theatre (Will Weigler)

- Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception (Susan Bennett)

- Theatrical Presentation (Bernard Beckerman)

# Reading Suggestions

- Directing:

Conversations with Ayckbourn (Ian Watson)

- Directing in the Theatre (Hugh Morrison)

- Directors in Rehearsal: A Hidden World (Susan Cole)

- Directors on Directing – A Source Book of the Modern Theatre (Toby Cole and Helen KrichChinoy)

- Letters to George (Max Stafford-Clark)

- Taking Stage - Women Directors on Directing (Helen Manfull)

- Taking Stock, The Theatre of Max Stafford-Clark (Max Stafford-Clark and Philip Roberts)

- The Theatre of Steven Berkoff (Steven Berkoff)



# Reading Suggestions

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- Theatre Design:

Craig

- Craig on Theatre (E G Craig edited by J M Walton)
- Edward Gordon Craig - Directors in Perspective series (Christopher Innes)
- Gordon Craig's Moscow Hamlet: A Reconstruction (Laurence Senelick)

Ralph Koltai

- Ralph Koltai: Designer for the Stage (Ralph Koltai and Trevor Nunn)

Julie Taymor

- Lion King, The: Pride Rock on Broadway (Julie Taymor)



# Reading Suggestions

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- Stagecraft:

- A Visual History of Costume: The Sixteenth Century (Jane Ashelford)
- British Theatre Design: The Modern Age edited (John Goodwin)
- Costume 1066-1990s: A Complete Guide to English Costume Design and History (John Peacock)
- Costume and Make-up (Theatre Manual) (Michael Holt)
- Costumes for the Stage (Sheila Jackson)
- Directing A Play (Theatre Manual) (Michael McCaffery)
- Lighting and Sound (Theatre Manual) (Neil Fraser)
- More Costumes for the Stage (Sheila Jackson)
- Practical Theatre: A Post-16 Approach (Sally Mackey)
- Stage Design and Properties (Theatre Manual) (Michael Holt)
- Stage Lighting Design: The Art, The Craft, The Life (Richard Pilbrow)
- Stage Management and Theatre Administration (Terry Hawkins and Pauline Menear)
- The Stage Lighting Handbook (Stage & Costume) (Francis Reid)
- The Visual History of Costume (Aileen Ribeiro and Valerie Cumming)

# What else can I talk about?

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- You can also write about a performance you have seen yourself in your personal statement. Maybe you have seen a WestEnd production recently or a tour of a professional show in your local area.
- YouTube clips/DVDs of professional performances can also be used for analysis in your personal statement.



Below is a list of websites to view performances online:

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- www.cheekbyjowl.com
- www.sharedexperience.co.uk
- www.franticassembly.co.uk
- www.theatredatabase.com
- www.backstage.ac.uk/about.html
- www.complicite.org
- www.fashionmuseum.co.uk
- www.rsc.org.uk
- www.itheatrestudies.com
- www.nationaltheatre.org.uk
- www.stagework.org.uk
- www.Barbican.org.uk
- www.coram.org.uk
- www.theatrevoice.com
- www.whatsonstage.com
- www.britishtheatreguide.info/
- www.theatrecord.com
- www.trestle.uk.com/student
- www.fourallthings.com

REMEMBER: Each afternoon Radio Four present their Afternoon Drama:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qrzz>



# How can I prepare for the application to a conservatoire ?

Applying for a conservatoire is very different to the University application process.

There are many things you can do now to help prepare for your application .



# Dance Courses

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- Does the course you are applying for involve dance modules? If the answer is yes, you will need to have dance position photos taken in appropriate dance wear.



Each institution will inform you of what specific photos you will need. These can be done professionally or at home with a blank backdrop

# Acting Courses

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- Does the course you are applying for involve acting/drama modules? If the answer is yes, you will need to have headshot photos taken and a monologue of your choice prepared.



Monologues can be found online but a good tip would be to use one which allows you to act out various emotions.

# Singing Courses

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- Does the course you are applying for involve singing/voice modules? If the answer is yes, you will need to have a song prepared with sheet music for the pianist to play.



Try and pick a song genre relevant to the course. For example, an operatic song for a classical music course or a song from a musical for a Musical Theatre Course.

# Top Tips!

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- **Research Before Applying to Drama Schools:** It will give you a good idea if there is anything in particular they look for in candidates (other than the most overused one – talented) and it will also be worthwhile if you manage to speak to anyone who has attended an audition at the drama school, just to give you a rough idea on how they found the experience.
- **Don't Attend Just One Drama School Audition :** As competition is so high and places are very limited it is always a good idea to have a few auditions to attend as this will give you a better chance of getting into one of the schools.
- **Budget and Plan Accordingly:** An audition is not always cheap .The usual audition fees range from £30 to £150 and you may need to take into account travel and accommodation if your audition is not close to your home.
- **Do Any Paperwork Necessary Before the Audition:** Do not leave anything for later, and try to be a professional and good student before you even start studying in a drama school. Get into this habit, because that's going to be necessary later on
- **Get Some Drama Coaching Before the Performance:** This can help you a great deal as an acting coach will even be able to help you rehearse and prepare your performance before you do the audition itself. Even just an hour session with an acting coach will be of some benefit to you.
- **Choose a Monologue That Works for You:** Most drama schools, but not all, will ask you to perform a classical Shakespearian piece and a contemporary piece. Make sure that you choose monologues that you connect with and completely understand.

# Top Tips Continued...

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- **Read the Whole Play (don't just learn your chosen monologue):** Don't just choose a piece to recite from one act that you know well. You must read the whole play to make sure you know what your character is doing, feeling and thinking during the words you recite.
- **Rehearse:** Rehearse as often as you can and if possible, get some feedback from other acting friends. This is the time to make mistakes and improve, experiment and fail, to ensure you are as ready as possible for when you do your performance in front the people who will make you nervous.
- **Bring Yourself:** You will most likely be interviewed by the panel as well so let them see the real you. Don't try to put on a mask, and don't try to be "the next greatest eccentric actor." Just be yourself. The panel will want to engage with you as a person who has goals and who wants to join a drama school. They want to find out some of your likes and dislikes and get an idea of the type of person you are because you'll be working with plenty of other people.



# Audition Guides/Stories

Lucy Munden:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kH-zOuTX6iE>

Georgie Ashford:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAXpOkdnxus>



# My HE+

Thinking about applying to University and looking for ways to explore your subject beyond the curriculum? Then this website is for you. Each topic is produced by Cambridge postgraduate students and academics at the cutting edge of research in their field. The topics provide guided activities, questions to think about and suggestions for further reading.



The main subject pages also give you a quick guide to what it would be like to study the subject at university level and suggest some further resources to check out.

<https://www.myheplus.com/>

# Online Courses

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FutureLearn - Explore online courses to continue studying, build professional skills and connect with experts. Useful examples include:

- How to Succeed at: Writing Applications
- How to Succeed at: Interviews



OpenLearn - Open University? – These courses have been designed to increase confidence and develop the skills needed to enter Higher Education and succeed with learning.



- The courses are free and they do not have a start and end date. You can start right away or at a time that suits you.
- You can work through at your own pace
- You can spend as long as you like on an OpenLearn course, plus, if you sign up you can track your progress and work towards a statement of participation.
- There are around 1000 courses to choose from -

# Personal Advice from those who made it!



*Vicki Mason studied Musical Theatre at The London School of Musical Theatre*

School: Cromwell Community College

College: Isle College Wisbech

Drama School: London School of Musical Theatre

Qualification: Diploma in Musical Theatre

Advice I would give to myself.

Use this time to learn audition songs and monologues. Not just by learning the words but the emotion and the truth of the pieces. Get reading plays and watch musicals online, do research into knowing what shows are in the West end and who is casting them, who wrote and composers certain musicals. Keep exercising, hold your own dance class in your living room, keep technique and flexibility on point. Do not use the whole six months as a holiday, keep motivated and set small daily tasks. Write your plan of action the night before.

# Personal Advice from those who made it!



*Alexia Bradshaw studied  
Musical Theatre at Laine  
Theatre Arts*

**Qualification:** The BA (Hons) Musical Theatre

**Drama School:** Laine Theatre Arts

**Advice I would give to myself:** Keep your voice muscles working throughout this time by singing songs of various genres, using scales and warming up and down. Use YouTube to find warm up techniques and keep your voice working each day. I would also use this time to keep your body active and strong; home workouts and dance routines are easily found on YouTube. Learn a new skill that is relevant to your course such as reading music, learning to play an instrument or singing in a different language. Begin researching a play or musical to prepare for your first year project which is usually analysing a performance. Don't stress, good times are ahead just enjoy time at home and doing your own preparation with no pressure.

# Personal Advice from those who made it!



**URDANG**  
ACADEMY

*Hannah Morgan studied  
Musical Theatre at The  
Urdang Academy*

**Qualification:** The BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre

**Drama School:** The Urdang Academy

**Advice I would give to myself:** Use this time to relax as drama school is very intense and often a slight shock to the body! Look after your mind and body as much as you can with reading, meditation, good diet and daily exercise. I would also use this time to prepare your portfolio of music. During the three years at drama school we built a repertoire of songs that we would use in the future for auditions in Musical Theatre. In my opinion, it would be a good time to start preparing these songs now so that in your first year you already have a few songs that you sing well and feel confident performing. Watch musicals to relax, get to know the characters, storylines and scripts as during your studies you will be expected to analyse many different musicals.

# Personal Advice from those who made it!



**URDANG**  
ACADEMY

*Georgia Thompson studied  
Musical Theatre at The  
Urdang Academy*

Qualification: National Diploma in Musical Theatre (Level 6)

Drama School: The Urdang Academy

Advice I would give to myself:

Read! Have a look online at some virtual acting/drama workshops, even YouTube offer some advice videos and information on auditions. Read plays, monologues and scripts and emerge yourself into the world of acting. Keep fit- before starting drama school I didn't do much dance, so it was a huge shock to my body and I wish I had prepared for the amount of fitness classes involved. Work on your singing range, use YouTube for this. Sing scales daily as this will improve your voice muscles. Get excited! Drama School was the best experience of my life! Learn a skill: I would use this time to perfect a skill or learn something new. Sight reading/ reading music will come in handy and practising different accents will also be really beneficial!

# Find Us Online:



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