

## UNIT STRUCTURES AND CONTENT IN LINE WITH HEAD, HEART AND HAND Performing Arts

### Synoptic analysis

Students experience a broad range of disciplines. The requirements of this specification can be met through specialising in a minimum of **two** performance/production disciplines. ***Students are introduced to this concept and the disciplines in Year 9.***

Learners should aim to include at least one performance and one production discipline. The specific theory, knowledge and understanding for each discipline is developed across both internally assessed units and also referred to in Unit 3 if fundamentally the core content of the course. Reference to the performance/production discipline list forms the core of all teaching and learning across the qualification.

Students develop knowledge and understanding of their chosen discipline skills areas with specific reference to:

- researching other performers/theatre companies
- evaluating the effectiveness of their own and other performances
- recording the process from workshop/rehearsal to performance
- identifying individual development and progress through skills audits.

Students are provided with the opportunity to work on learning and developing knowledge in new and existing skills through a range of performance and production disciplines outlined in the following sections.

Irrespective of which performance/production disciplines are undertaken, teachers and learners should be aware of the need to work safely within their respective environments.

### CORE THREADS

**Head** – Knowledge and understanding of real world practices linking to all aspects of the Performing Arts industry

**Heart** – Understanding the importance of being part of something bigger, responsibility and an ensemble member and the importance of teamwork

**Hand** – A deeper sense of autonomy when fulfilling roles

### UNIT ONE : Unlocking Creativity

This unit develops the knowledge and understanding of the creative skills necessary to devise an idea for a production. Students provide evidence of their learning and development of appropriate skills through the presentation of a portfolio of supporting evidence and a recorded pitch. These are based on a brief provided by a current performing arts company/practitioner/performer, supported with vignettes from the proposed completed work.

Students produce:

- a portfolio of supporting evidence
- a presentation of their final pitch including supportive extracts.

In this unit learners will be assessed on:

- research
- idea development
- planning and budgeting
- presentation (skills and content).

Students must choose a minimum of **two** discipline areas, **one** from the performance list and **one** from the production list.

**Head** – Understanding how to analyse a stimulus to generate original ideas, the selection and rejection of ideas, the processes of planning a creative event

**Heart** - compromise, extending the ideas of others, respectful turn taking, patience and tolerance of difference

**Hand** – applying this knowledge and understanding to a full production (which is afforded in unit 2)

## UNIT ONE: PREPARATION

Students learn to:

- **make informed choices** as they research and experience, through practical workshops, the range of skills required of those working in the performing arts which will **develop knowledge and understanding of the industry as a whole**
- **carry out a series of skills audits to indicate their individual progress, identifying their particular strengths and areas for improvement (it's important that learners also identify how they plan to meet the challenge of improving specific skills and learn new ones)**

**(identifying next steps)**

- **become aware of the different types of disciplines and roles within the performing arts and how to apply them in their own production ideas and performances**
- **identify their particular strengths and weaknesses and make informed choices as to what their role(s) might be in preparing the pitch and subsequent performance extract ( independent thinking)**

**(reflection and independent thinking)**

Students also:

- experience a range of practical workshops exploring appropriate skills from the selected disciplines available to them (the workshops should be designed to give learners a good working knowledge of the skills required of the chosen discipline areas and the demands of performing arts)

**Head** - gain an experience of the key disciplines which they can opt to be assessed on, through workshops.

**Heart** – Develop rapport with the company (the class) and begin to understand the individual strengths of others

**Hand** – The opportunity to grow and develop in an area of interest

## UNIT ONE: ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

Students research the performing arts industries based on their selected brief and

include in their evidence of knowledge and understanding.

Five key areas:

- productions
- performances
- operational/technical constraints
- resources required
- roles and responsibilities.

Links between the five key areas

- rehearsal techniques and practice methods
- risk assessment
- individual disciplines including skills and techniques
- appropriate historical research.

**Head - Understand that theatre specialisms expand beyond what is on stage, and have their own demands, expectations and outputs**

**Heart – learn to value the work of others and its place in achieving a goal**

**Hand – The opportunity to apply the skills once the planning has taken place**

## UNIT ONE: IDEAS DEVELOPMENT

Students create, based on their knowledge and understanding, an idea for their production and include the following in their evidence:

- information on the development of the pitch
- style and genre of the proposed production
- target audiences
- links to employer/practitioner brief
- key observations for idea development
- selection of appropriate material
- most effective ways of presenting ideas to others
- technical aspects of performance, selection of possible performance spaces/venues
- analysis and evaluation of effectiveness of the production idea.

**Head - Understand that positive impact that combining different aspects of stage craft can have on the creation of a relevant response to a brief**

**Heart – Managing the emotions of others through the selection and rejection process in a respectful, forward thinking way**

**Hand – Develop presentation skills**

## PLANNING AND BUDGETING

Learners will need to plan and budget for their production and include the following in their evidence:

- the pitch (including action planning and meeting deadlines, choice of job roles, timings)
- copyright and performing rights
- marketing and publicity, including social media
- budgeting (including forecasts, costs, ticket sales and venue hire:
- advertising).

**Head - Understand that the theatre industry is a business with all of the legal and financial responsibilities which accompany this**

**Heart – Managing ones time and planning to complete a goal**

**Hand – Physically handling money and profit and loss**

## PRESENTATION (skills and content)

Students pitch their production to an audience and include as evidence:

- presentation skills
- application of performance skills
- application of production skills
- communication of artistic/creative intent for their production idea, including:
  - mood(s)
  - meaning(s)
  - idea(s)
  - theme(s)
  - style/style fusion(s)
- design and technical skills to illustrate the production idea, including:
  - extracts
  - vignettes
  - storyboard.

**Head** - Professional pitch processes, transferable to any work / business environment.

**Heart** – Confidence, public speaking, presentation skills, building rapport, personal expression

**Hand** – Develop a question and answer section to complement the pitch c

## PORTFOLIO OF SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The portfolio will include evidence of the student's research, idea development, planning and budgeting.

The portfolio should reflect each individual's approach to the employer/practitioner brief presented to them during the unit and specific details given of the work carried out in preparation of the 'pitch' and supportive extracts.

The portfolio of supporting evidence will be made up of selected materials and notes created as part of the developing skills work and the preparation of the pitch and performance extracts.

Students record their individual journey through the workshops, planning meetings, rehearsals, recording and presentation of the final 'pitch'.

Students identify their strengths and areas for improvement and record the strategies that they employed to develop their production idea. Learners should avoid generalised statements and focus on giving specific examples of how they worked, developed and contributed to the process.

Students are taught the creative processes involved in preparing the work for this unit and be able to communicate these clearly.

Group evidence is not acceptable; all work must be clearly identifiable as the work of the individual learner.

### **Students should also include the following:**

- Skills audits, identification of personal development.
- Identification of individual involvement in performances and planning.
- Specific skills explored by students; strengths and areas for improvement.
- Reports of meeting, identifying specific outcomes/actions and individual responsibilities taken.
- Proposed budgeting, including equipment hire, venue hire, costume and props hire as appropriate.
- Rationale of the pitch and subsequent performance.

**Head** - How to analyse, reflect on and communicate through the written word a creative decision making process

**Heart** – Personal reflection of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in the process

**Hand** – Applying this knowledge and understanding in exam conditions

### UNIT 1 SUMMARY

#### What is assessed?

This unit assesses the theoretical content of the learner's chosen discipline (performance or production). Learners will demonstrate core knowledge and understanding of: the following:

- Research
- Idea development
- Planning and budgeting
- Presentation (skills and content)
- Transferable skill of communication.

#### How is it assessed?

- Internally assessed
- 36 GLH (guided learning hours) approx
- 60 marks
- 30% of Technical Award

#### Evidence

Core knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Portfolio of supporting evidence (30 marks)
- The recorded pitch (25 marks)
- Transferable skill (5 marks).

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## UNIT TWO

This unit builds on knowledge and understanding from Unit 1 to explore production/performance in a creative and structured form as both an individual and as a member of a group. The purpose throughout this unit is to work as a member of an ensemble creating a performance suitable for an audience. Learners will be expected to make informed choices about the disciplines and skills to be employed and should work collaboratively with others. Students produce a final performance/production.

**Head - How to fulfil a professional theatre role with relevant demands and expectations in a working production context**

**Heart – motivation, attention to detail, independent thinking and working**

**Hand – reflecting this knowledge and understanding in exam conditions and developing further autonomy in the role**

Students complete self-assessment based on their individual contribution from time to time and set themselves targets, identifying specific responsibilities taken during the course of the creative process. This unit builds on the synoptic performing and technical knowledge developed as a result of completing Unit 1.

In addition to the content found in Performance/production disciplines, students are taught how to assess Strengths/weaknesses. Students are also taught to recognise the importance of leadership, responsibility and teamwork.

Students are taught the value of routines and self-regulatory behaviour through show discipline and how to create a Performance Company and correct use of technical language. They are also taught understand the importance of participation in meetings, rehearsals, recording of key issues/problems and how to resolve them, how to compromise, the selection and editing of material, time management and how to work to a specific time schedule, performance running times and value the contribution of self and others.

Students are taught to know and understand the various ingredients of a final performance and what needs to be facilitated, such as technical demands, eg LX, FX, special effects, Health and Safety of performance area, venue and knowledge of relevant local regulations eg fire, audience management, marketing and publicity, Health and Safety, costume and stage management, Students must also evaluate their work and that of others.

To complete this unit, students must consider the discipline selected by each learner of the group that best demonstrates their knowledge and skills, give due consideration to the strengths and weaknesses of the group, their role as an ensemble, take responsibility for different aspects of production, planning meetings, setting targets and deadlines, teamwork, lead and attend production meetings, design and technical aspects, attend and lead appropriate rehearsals including dress and technical rehearsals prior to the final performances, explore a range of skills areas to achieve the most effective performance, utilise resources and existing equipment, costume, scenery, rostra, lighting, sound systems, camera and respect health and safety procedures at all times.

## EVIDENCE FOR ASSESSMENT

### LOG BOOK

Students are provided with a logbook at the start of the process, to be completed and submitted as part of the final assessment for Unit 2. The logbook will contain **three** self-assessments which are to be completed at key points of the process. This includes, not exclusively, a plan for performance, the identification of a specific brief and a rationale for an idea which will effectively become the plan for performance, charting the learning journey from conception to fruition. There is also a section for a summative evaluation.

### PERFORMANCE/ PRODUCTION

Learners will select one discipline from a range of performance or production skills. When choosing, students consider their strengths and weaknesses, preparation, the rehearsal and refinement, the production process and the demands of the brief.

#### **UNIT 2 SUMMARY**

##### **What is assessed?**

This unit provides the opportunity for students to be assessed on the theoretical content of a holistic production or performance, both as an individual and as a member of a group. This is based on a key performance or production role in a performance based on one of five performance briefs and marks are awarded for the transferable skill of teamwork

##### **How it is assessed?**

- Internally assessed
- 36 GLH approx
- 60 marks
- 30% of Technical Award

##### **Evidence**

- DVD of final performance/production (55 marks): where production skills are nominated a short DVD demonstrating the learner's ability to work within their nominated skills area. The work demonstrated must be for the performance given by the group.
- Transferable skill (5 marks).
- Logbook outlining their contribution to the final performance/production with details of nominated skill chosen for assessment.

## UNIT THREE

Students are assessed on their knowledge and understanding of key areas of performing arts and also on how they have applied this knowledge with understanding to their own work. They will also be required to analyse and evaluate approaches to production and simulated briefs.

This unit draws on work that has been carried out across all the units of the award. The synoptic

nature of this written paper allows learners to respond to a range of questions designed to assess their understanding of the performing arts. This requires learners to demonstrate that they can identify and use effectively, in an integrated way, an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories, and knowledge from across their whole course of study, which are relevant to a key task. It is an important part of the award that students understand how the range of disciplines, skills, research, performances and presentation work that they have been involved in work together to achieve success. **The phrase that they use in the specification is interrelation.**

The nature of the performing arts is that it is important to understand how performances affect audiences and can highlight aspects of our social and cultural lives.

Students will be expected to explore not only employment possibilities within the performing arts but also the place of our industry in the wider economy. The range of jobs available to individuals within the performing arts industry not only involves performers in drama, dance and music but also technicians, designers, film makers, writers, composers, graphic artists, radio and recording artists, DJs, installation artists and community arts facilitators. Students look at the work of both independent and subsidised companies working within the industry and consider how their organisation impacts on the performances that they provide. Students carry out research on at least one performing arts organisation and consider its programming, business plans, employment processes such as interview or audition, marketing, publicity, target audiences and the products and services they provide. Students consider the impact of social media in the promotion and development of performing arts products.

In preparing for this unit students need to consider aspects of the work carried out in other units, referring to the practical application of knowledge understanding and skills and how both performance and production disciplines combine to achieve success. Students relate the research that was carried out when preparing work for either performance or presentation to the demands of the performing arts profession.

In the shared area there is a folder with all areas of the specification accounted for in terms of resources and planning.

**Head - How to apply the knowledge and understanding gained across the two years in a time sensitive and pressured situation.**

**Heart – drive and resilience**

**Hand – carry forward the learning and apply the myriad character building opportunities into their personal and professional development**

#### UNIT 3 SUMMARY

##### What is assessed?

Core knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Roles and responsibilities within the performing arts industry
- The role of performing arts in society
- Approaches to rehearsal
- Working as a deviser/performer/director
- Marketing and public relations
- Health and safety
- Design and technical elements
- Reviewing performance
- Theatre/film in education.

##### How is it assessed?

- Externally assessed
- Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- 48 GLH approx
- 80 marks
- 40% of Technical Award

##### Questions

A combination of multiple choice questions, short answers, extended responses, design/devising questions.

## APPENDIX – ACADEMIC PLANNING FOR SEPTEMBER IN THE LIGHT OF COVID 19

Owing to the impact and repercussions of Covid – 19, the main focus of learning for term one 2020 should be UNIT 3 ( Preparation and learning for the written exam). This is for the following reasons:

1. This unit is the threshold paper; students cannot pass the course without passing this unit
2. It is work 40% of the student's overall mark
3. This will allow for plans to be assessed and evaluated in the hope that more practical lessons can take place in term two (January 2021).

At the discretion of the lead teacher and the senior leadership team, the planning and research for Unit 1 could continue to take place in parallel to the preparation for unit 3. Groups could theoretically continue to plan and research their piece and pitch whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines. Depending on how the groups respond to this, socially distanced pitches and extracts could be created. Students have started to compile work for this unit and it will be accessible to them via their own notes and work saved on the shared area.

Unit 2 is a trickier concept as the nature of it is all about the production process and the realisation of a production on stage and in its entirety. This does not adhere to present risk assessment or social distancing guidelines. Students were scheduled to be assess on their work for We Will Rock You. At the time of writing, AQA have issued no guidance on how this unit should be completed, so this will be an ever changing and evolving landscape throughout the academic year 2020/ 2021.