



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Professional Development for Actors

Unit code: H4TP 34

Superclass: LC

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable learners to understand and develop the knowledge and skills required for operating effectively as a professional actor. It prepares them for working as an actor by giving them the underpinning knowledge of areas for employment, methods of self-promotion, taxation requirements, representation and professional bodies.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate methods of self-promotion within the performing arts industry.
- 2 Demonstrate knowledge of professional practice within the performing arts industry.

Credit points and level

0.5 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (4 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

Recommended entry to the Unit

Access will be at the discretion of the centre and the following recommendations are for guidance only.

Where a learner has achieved the course entry criteria for HNC/HND Acting and Performance, they will have shown sufficient knowledge and skills for access to this Unit. Although it is not necessary for learners to have had previous experience as a working actor, current knowledge and/or experience of the industry would be beneficial.

Higher National Unit specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Professional Development for Actors

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Learners should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Demonstrate methods of self-promotion within the performing arts industry.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Potential areas of employment
- ◆ Skills, experience and qualifications required
- ◆ CVs, photographs and covering letters
- ◆ Showreels, databases and publications
- ◆ Audition preparation and interview techniques

Outcome 2

Demonstrate knowledge of professional practice within the performing arts industry.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Taxation requirements in relation to being employed, self-employed and setting up a company
- ◆ Equity
- ◆ Agents, including co-operative agencies

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Professional Development for Actors

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Assessment will take place at appropriate points in the duration of the Unit in open-book conditions.

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills across all Outcomes by showing that they can:

Outcome 1

Learners are required to produce the following written and/or oral evidence to cover the following:

- ◆ Research three possible areas of employment relevant to the individual's current perceived market.
- ◆ Understanding of necessary skills/experience/qualifications for the three selected areas of employment.
- ◆ Knowledge and understanding of the function of showreels.
- ◆ Research of databases and current publications, providing one example of each.
- ◆ Compile an appropriate CV, photo and covering letter for one of the areas of employment identified.
- ◆ Understanding of audition/interview processes and effective methods of preparation.

Outcome 2

Learners are required to produce written and/or oral evidence in which they accurately:

- ◆ Explain taxation requirements including record keeping and self-assessment in relation to being employed, self-employed and setting up a company.
- ◆ Explain the role of Equity, why it was established, membership requirements and other services provided by the union.
- ◆ Explain the role of an agent, the process of finding an agent and demonstrate an understanding of commission procedures.
- ◆ Explain the difference between an agent and a co-operative agency.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Professional Development for Actors

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 20 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

The Unit is primarily intended to prepare the learners to enter the industry as a professional actor by giving them the essential underpinning Knowledge and/or Skills required for self-employment.

In **Outcome 1** learners should develop awareness of the current trends in the performing arts industry and the implications these have for their current perceived market. With this in mind, learners should then undertake further research into three potential areas of employment for the actor, including current organisations with which the learner may wish to seek such employment. Possible areas for consideration include working in theatre, touring theatre, radio, television/film, corporate entertainment, corporate role play, community arts and theatre in education. It is recommended that learners explore the option of creating their own work as a self-employed practitioner.

Elements of research into employment could include expected working conditions, rate of pay/fee, different types of contracts including repeat fees, buy outs, royalties, per deums, subsistence and retainers.

Learners should also become aware of what is expected of them in terms of conduct, commitment and hours of work. Learners should then develop an understanding of the skills/experience/qualifications necessary to gain employment in their three chosen areas and appropriate methods of self-promotion.

In **Outcome 2** learners should be made aware of the various requirements related to being employed, self-employed and setting up a company. In particular, learners should develop knowledge of current self-assessment procedures and legal requirements. Learners should be made aware of the role of Equity in the life of a professional actor including membership requirements (including student membership), the Equity card, the purpose of reserving a professional name, minimum pay and conditions and the legal support and other services provided by the union. Learners should be introduced to the process of identifying agents appropriate for their perceived market and subsequently pursuing and securing representation. Learners should be made aware of the processes involved in working with agents and co-operative agencies, including commission procedures. Learners should also become familiar with the function of *Spotlight* and *Contacts*.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit may be offered on a freestanding basis but it is likely to form part of a Group Award, which is primarily designed to provide learners with professional knowledge and skills related to working as an actor.

The Unit is likely to be delivered towards the end of the award by which time the learners should have a good appreciation of the main types of workplace environments with which they may be involved. This should allow the Unit to be delivered in a way that enables learners to appreciate its relevance to the occupational area concerned.

Wherever possible, links and case studies used for examples should reflect current industry practice and be drawn from real situations which learners will understand.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

There is a range of methods of collecting and presenting the evidence for Outcomes 1 and 2. These might include one, or a combination of the following:

- ◆ A written report, including references and/or footnotes
- ◆ PowerPoint presentation
- ◆ Oral report
- ◆ Online blog or portfolio

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Both written assessments provide opportunities for development of written communication skills. There is also an opportunity to develop oral communication skills through practical exercises used to develop the learner's understanding of audition and interview processes in Outcome 1.

There is an opportunity to include *Numeracy* through the inclusion of basic accounting as part of the learning and teaching process for Taxation in Outcome 2. Using computer based spreadsheets in this process would also aid the development of *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* skills. The Unit lends itself well to online learning and to support of learning through virtual learning environments.

Working with Others and *Problem Solving* can be included through group research tasks and case studies as part of the teaching and learning process throughout the Unit.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Professional Development for Actors

This Unit will help prepare you for entering the industry as a professional actor by giving you the essential Knowledge and/or Skills. It will help you understand your perceived market within the current industry and will give you an awareness of how to operate effectively as a professional actor. If you have experience of working as an actor or have been involved with related professional bodies, you should be able to make use of this during your study of this Unit.

In the first Outcome you will gain Knowledge and Understanding of the current industry and your individual perceived market within it. You will explore methods of promoting yourself, including CVs, photographs and covering letters, showreels and online databases (including Spotlight). You will also develop an understanding of how to prepare appropriately for auditions and of how to present yourself well in interviews.

In the second Outcome, you will gain the knowledge required to operate effectively as a business, including taxation, representation and professional bodies related to the industry.

The Knowledge and Skills in this Unit have the potential to help you to seek, gain and sustain work as a professional actor.