

**DRAMA**  
**Higher**

**Sixth edition – published June 2002**

## NOTE OF CHANGES TO ARRANGEMENTS SIXTH EDITION PUBLISHED JUNE 2002

**COURSE TITLE:** Drama (Higher)

**COURSE NUMBER:** C037 12

### **National Course Specification:**

The Investigative Drama Folio **will no longer form part of the external course.**

The external course components will now consist of the two **Question Papers** worth a total of 85 marks and the **Acting Examination** consisting of 50 marks.

SQA will scale the raw marks to reflect the following weightings:

- Question Paper 1 30%
- Question Paper 2 25%
- Acting Examination 45%

The revised weightings are designed to reflect the practical nature of the subject.

We have updated the Arrangements documents to include the above changes and have taken this opportunity to provide clarification on the following points:

- In the Course specification, Unit 2: Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context, we have amended the sentence which states that SQA will prescribe a range of texts for study each year. In practice, SQA has not revised these on a yearly basis. While we will continue to publish regular advice on texts to be studied and may in future rotate texts over a number of years, we have deleted the words 'each year'.
- In the Course Specification, Unit 3: Contemporary Scottish Theatre, we have highlighted that **a minimum of three contemporary Scottish plays** (which may be texts and/or productions) **must be studied in order to prepare candidates for the external examination.** (For internal assessment purposes, candidates are required to complete an extended response which analyses **two** texts/productions).
- We have clarified our view of monologues (Course Details, Acting Examination). Where we previously stated that 'monologues should be avoided', we now advise that 'As Acting requires character interaction, it is not acceptable for a candidate to perform a monologue'. In the same section, we have given additional advice which states that where a candidate has no spoken language facility, centres should contact SQA in order that special arrangements can be made.

**NOTE OF CHANGES TO ARRANGEMENTS (Cont)**  
**SIXTH EDITION PUBLISHED JUNE 2002**

**COURSE TITLE:** Drama (Higher)

**COURSE NUMBER:** C037 12

**National Unit Specification:**

D196 12 Investigative Drama Changes to Performance Criterion (e) of Outcome 1.  
Changes to Evidence Requirements of Outcome 3.  
Changes to Guidance on Approaches to Assessment.

D197 12 Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context Changes to Guidance on Approaches to Assessment.

D198 12 Contemporary Scottish Theatre Changes to Evidence Requirements of Outcome 1  
Changes to Guidance on Approaches to Assessment.

## National Course Specification

### DRAMA (HIGHER)

**COURSE NUMBER** C037 12

#### COURSE STRUCTURE

The course has three mandatory units as follows:

<i>D196 12</i>	<i>Investigative Drama (H)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>D197 12</i>	<i>Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context (H)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>D198 12</i>	<i>Contemporary Scottish Theatre (H)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>

This structure allows both progression and the possibility of integration as the units may be taught either sequentially or concurrently.

All courses include 40 hours over and above the 120 hours for the component units. This may be used for induction, extending the range of learning and teaching approaches, support, consolidation, integration of learning and preparation for external assessment.

#### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following:

- Standard Grade Drama at Credit level
- Intermediate 2 Drama
- other appropriate prior experience in drama.

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#### Administrative Information

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## **National Course Specification (cont)**

**COURSE**                      Drama (Higher)

### **CORE SKILLS**

Core skills for this qualification remain subject to confirmation and details will be available at a later date.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

## National Course Specification: course details

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### RATIONALE

Higher Drama develops the central concept of exploring relationships and promotes candidates' knowledge and understanding of theatre. The course focuses on the skills of acting, directing and investigating in a variety of dramatic contexts.

Higher Drama is an excellent medium for personal and social development. The subject's links with personal growth have long been acknowledged: drama methodology is founded on the development of a fuller understanding and awareness of self and others, and on the promotion of personal and interpersonal skills in communication, co-operation and relationships. These relationships may be between people, between people and ideas or between people and the environment.

The exploration of relationships is undertaken mainly through the practical process of 'acting out', which incorporates self-expression through language and movement. The *Investigative Drama* unit will involve candidates in selecting a significant theme, topic or issue for investigation, in exploring it, in preparing their findings, in translating these findings into drama form(s), in taking directorial responsibility and in performing to an invited audience. The predominantly practical approach envisaged for this unit will employ a workshop methodology.

In addition to the continuing practical emphasis on investigation and self-expression, the Higher course will include the study of how drama has been used as a means of expression and communication by others. It is important that candidates should have some knowledge and understanding of the art of theatre, its forms and its practices. Accordingly, *Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context*, the second unit, involves a predominantly practical study from the perspective of actor and director. A text will be chosen from a list of prescribed texts.

The study of the art of theatre is continued in *Contemporary Scottish Theatre*, the third unit of the course. In view of the variety and vigour of contemporary Scottish theatre and of developing in candidates a familiarity with their indigenous culture, this unit involves the study of two or more aspects of Contemporary Scottish Theatre chosen from a list of four areas of study.

The art form of drama is primarily expressed through acting. It is the principal vehicle by which meaning is conveyed and through which the exploration of relationships is mediated from text to an audience. Through acting, candidates can demonstrate the full complexity of their interpretation of character. All candidates, therefore, should engage in acting, focusing on interpretation, characterisation and performance skills.

No study of drama as an art form can be considered complete without reference to direct experience of live theatrical performance which will illuminate knowledge and understanding of the practice of theatre.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### **Aim**

The aim of this course is to advance the candidate's general education through provision of a range of learning experiences which will develop important skills and areas of specific drama knowledge. The course seeks to provide opportunities for candidates to:

- investigate relationships, issues and topics
- gain knowledge and understanding of aspects of theatre
- develop acting and directing skills and contribute to a presentation
- experience theatrical performance.

### **COURSE CONTENT**

#### **Unit 1: Investigative Drama**

In this unit, candidates will, as a group, use creative drama skills to investigate and explore an theme, issue or topic. They will devise their own drama and present the end product to an invited audience. Each candidate will be responsible for the organisation and direction of an identifiable section of the presentation.

This unit is essentially a group activity. **In the event of a centre presenting a single candidate, arrangements will have to be made to enable that candidate to work with individuals drawn from other teaching groups.**

The choice or choices of issue, topic or theme for investigation is the decision of the centre. The unit is process-driven rather than content-driven and focuses on the active exploration of relationships. However, it is recommended that candidates should engage in language, movement and theatre.

#### ***Language***

In drama, language normally means spoken language (or other appropriate mode of communication) in use in a variety of interactive situations, real or imagined. It also involves some written language, for example, in the form of devising a script or scenario or creating role cards. A variety of activities in Investigative Drama will give candidates opportunities to generate their own language in situations of improvisation or rehearsals.

At Higher, candidates should be aware of the importance of selecting language which is appropriate to purpose. The purpose may be a dramatic one, for example, when improvising language to suit a character or situation, or when writing a script, or may be in the context of group discussion, planning and organisation. Language should be used effectively, to communicate the desired message or meaning within a range of dramatic and non-dramatic situations.

#### ***Movement***

In drama terms, movement means all forms of physical expression which do not involve the voice. Movement is used in a variety of ways in order to explore, express and communicate ideas, emotions and relationships. Like language, movement can be either improvised or rehearsed. Improvised movement provides opportunities for personal response to a given stimulus while rehearsed movement may develop candidates' own ideas or involve more stylised forms of dramatic movement such as mime or dance drama.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

### COURSE Drama (Higher)

Candidates should be fully aware of the role of movement in the communication of message and meaning and of the importance of selecting movement appropriate to purpose.

#### *Theatre*

In the Investigative Drama unit, theatre should be considered in the context of the formal presentation of the exploration of relationships. This will involve the performance skills of acting and directing and, as appropriate, the technical skills of designing within the areas of set, lighting, sound, costume, stage make-up and props.

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

Candidates will acquire knowledge and understanding of the following:

- function of role play
- drama form and structure
- the communication of meaning to an audience through performance and design concepts
- drama and theatre terminology.

#### *Skills*

Candidates should use the following broad skills:

- co-operating and participating
- investigating
- improvising
- devising
- designing
- directing
- acting
- evaluating.

### **Unit 2: Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context**

A range of texts for study will be prescribed by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Candidates should explore the chosen prescribed text from the perspective of an actor and of a director in preparation for a production.

Both skills and knowledge and understanding of the arts of directing and acting acquired and used in *Investigative Drama* will be further developed in this unit. Each candidate will use their studies of the text to conceive a directorial interpretation of the play and to develop the characterisation, in practical terms, of one chosen dramatic role.



## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### ***Knowledge and understanding***

In the study of any prescribed text, it is expected that candidates will gain knowledge and understanding in most of the following:

- the historical and social context in which the text was written
- the playwright's intended audience and, where relevant, comparison with a modern-day audience
- style and intentions of the playwright
- characteristics of any dramatic genre(s) associated with the text
- structure and language of the text
- staging and architecture associated with the original presentation of the text
- use of theatrical effects to enhance presentation.

In addition, candidates will be required to study characterisation in terms of motivation of character, relationships with other characters and development of character within the action of the play.

These aspects of study should be used to inform the candidates' understanding of how the text is translated into theatre form, in terms of the social and theatrical environment in which the play was originally presented and its impact on contemporary theatre.

The focus of the main areas of study which will inform the candidate's thinking will be determined according to the text selected. For example, in a Greek tragedy, the main focus might be within the historical and social context and the staging and architecture of the period, while in a Brecht text, the emphasis might be on style and intentions of the playwright and the dramatic genre.

### ***Skills***

Candidates should use the following areas of skills:

- investigating
- analysing
- directing
- acting.

### **List of prescribed texts**

<i>Antigone</i>	Sophocles
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>Ghosts</i>	Henrik Ibsen
<i>Mother Courage</i>	Bertolt Brecht
<i>Waiting for Godot</i>	Samuel Beckett
<i>Look Back in Anger</i>	John Osborne
<i>The Birthday Party</i>	Harold Pinter
<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i>	Federico Garcia Lorca
<i>The Crucible</i>	Arthur Miller
<i>Juno and the Paycock</i>	Sean O'Casey
<i>Lovers</i>	Brian Friel

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### Unit 3: Contemporary Scottish Theatre

For the purposes of this course, students may refer to any post-1900 play which is set in Scotland and/or written by a playwright Scottish by birth or residence and/or commissioned by a Scottish theatre company using a Scots translation, a Scottish idiom or a Scottish setting, for the external examination.

**A minimum of three contemporary Scottish plays which may be texts and/or productions must be studied.**

Plays/productions should be explored from both the perspective of actor and that of audience in terms of communication of meaning and perceived impact.

Where possible, study should be enriched by current Scottish dramatic writing and experience of current Scottish drama production.

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

In the study of any contemporary Scottish plays and/or productions, candidates would be expected to gain knowledge and understanding in two or more of the following specified areas of study:

- social, political and religious dimensions
- use of history, nostalgia and popular tradition
- issues of gender
- current productions and issues.

While it is acknowledged that there is likely to be some overlap of traits between the specified areas of study, the following guidelines on content should help to focus study.

Social, Political and Religious Dimensions:

- social background and conditions
- nationalism
- industrial relations and the workplace
- political theatre as entertainment
- distribution of wealth
- relationship between the individual and the establishment
- sectarianism
- devices used to communicate social, political and religious messages.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

### COURSE Drama (Higher)

#### Use of History, Nostalgia and Popular Tradition:

- historical accuracy
- devices used to create a sense of period
- myth and legend
- growth and decline of industry
- the sectarian divide
- relationship between the individual and the Establishment
- distribution of wealth
- romanticism
- devices used to create/generate nostalgia
- use of Scottish song, music and dance
- variety, pantomime and farce
- satire
- celebrations, rituals, social gatherings.

#### Issues of Gender:

- symbolic martyr
- romantic hero
- relationships
- relationship between the individual and the Establishment
- marriage and the family
- women and power
- men and power
- sexual development of characters
- oppression/suffering.

#### Current Productions and Issues:

This is a more general area of study which builds on candidates' experience of the work of specific playwrights or Scottish theatre companies and contemporary Scottish theatre productions which they have seen. Aspects of study would include one or more of the following:

- the dramatic effectiveness of a specific Scottish theatre production
- the work of a specific playwright
- the importance to Scottish theatre of the work of a specific Scottish theatre company
- the identification of a current theme or trend in Scottish theatre based on the candidates' own experience of Scottish plays and productions.

Common to all areas of study will be the use of language, humour and characterisation.

Candidates should explore the interpretation, characterisation and acting of one character from a contemporary Scottish theatre text which may or may not have been used by the candidate in the specified areas of study. The knowledge and understanding gained from this will be used to inform the acting of the character in performance.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### *Skills*

Candidates should use the following broad skills:

- investigating
- analysing
- appreciating
- acting.

### *Acting*

Acting is an important and integral part of all three component units although it does not feature as a discrete unit of work at Higher Level. Specific exercises may be devised to develop particular acting skills but these skills will be used in the context of portraying characters. In *Investigative Drama*, the candidate may be developing characters to act from improvisation, from a dramatic role card or from a detailed scenario or devised script provided by another candidate. In *Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context* and in *Contemporary Scottish Theatre*, the emphasis will be on the interpretation of character from text. For all units, it will be necessary for candidates to develop and use characterisation and performance skills. Although acting is essentially a practical activity, candidates should also develop the knowledge and understanding to be able to describe the acting process using appropriate technical vocabulary.

### **Use of the additional 40 hours**

The additional 40 hours may be used for:

- extending the range of learning and teaching approaches - for example, trips to theatrical performances with prior or follow-up activities in the studio or classroom situation, visiting speakers/drama practitioners, differentiation strategies for candidates of differing drama experiences
- additional support - for example, individual tutorials followed by redrafting of written or taped assignments or further practice of specific skills
- consolidation of learning - for example, the consolidation of the knowledge and understanding gained from specific practical drama activities, such as workshops
- integration and preparation for external assessment - for example, rehearsals of acting pieces for the external assessment of acting.

Further advice on and more detailed suggestions for the use of the additional 40 hours is contained in the section 'Approaches to Learning and Teaching'.

### **ASSESSMENT**

To gain the award of the course, the candidate must achieve all the component units of the course as well as the external assessment. External assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the course award.

When units are taken as component parts of a course, candidates will have the opportunity to demonstrate achievement beyond that required to attain each of the unit outcomes. This attainment may, where appropriate, be recorded and used to contribute towards course estimates and to provide evidence for appeals.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### Details of the instruments for external assessment

The external course assessment will comprise two question papers and a practical examination of acting .

135 marks will be available distributed as follows:

Component of the Course assessment	Marks
Question Paper I	
- Section A (1 x 20 mark question)	20 marks
- Section B (1 x 25 mark question)	25 marks
Question Paper II (2 x 20 mark questions)	40 marks
Acting examination	
- Role 1	25 marks
- Role 2	25 marks
<b>Total</b>	<b>135 marks</b>

SQA will scale these marks to a weighting of: (Question Paper I 30%)  
(Question Paper II 25%)  
(Acting Examination: 45%)

### Question Papers

**The examination based on the two question papers will take place within the main diet of the SQA external examination**

#### Paper I

Paper I will be of 1 hour 20 minutes' duration. 45 marks will be awarded for this paper, 20 marks from Section A and 25 marks from Section B. The paper will focus on the prescribed texts and will be divided into two sections.

#### Section A

This section will deal with comment on the social, historical and theatrical contexts of the studied prescribed texts. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge of the text they have studied, in terms of content and the social/historical/theatrical contexts, and to show an understanding of how the text could be communicated to an audience through performance. The paper should be answered from the perspectives of a director or actor in preparation for an intended production. Candidates should base their answers on the prescribed text chosen for study. Credit will be given for the candidate's ability to make use of appropriate quotations. Six questions will be set and candidates will be expected to answer **one** question in essay form.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### *Section B*

This section will require the candidate to analyse an extract from their chosen text from the perspective of a director. There will be one compulsory question in two parts which will take the form of a dramatic commentary.

The question will carry 25 marks. Candidates will be asked to:

- a) draw a rough ground plan to show the staging of the extract (5 marks);
- b) annotate the script of the extract to show important moves and stage positioning, key interpretative notes for actors and any important technical effects. (20 marks).

### *Paper II*

Paper II will be of 1 hour 20 minutes duration. 40 marks will be awarded for this paper. It will deal with comment on the trends and issues in Contemporary Scottish theatre as outlined in the specified areas of study (see Course Content).

Candidates will be required to show knowledge and understanding of how trends and issues are exemplified by the contemporary Scottish plays/productions which they have studied. Candidates should answer from the perspective of a member of an audience who is appreciating the plays/productions. Candidates must explain how the playwright put his/her message across through the text and, where the candidate has experience of a performance of the text, how this message could be highlighted through performance. Where appropriate, candidates may make reference either to a performance of the text or their workshop experiences in the drama studio/classroom situation. Credit will be given for the candidate's ability to make use of appropriate quotations.

Twelve questions will be set and candidates will be expected to answer **two** questions in essay form. 20 marks will be allocated to each question. Questions will focus on the following areas of study:

- social, political and religious dimensions
- use of history, nostalgia and popular tradition
- issues of gender
- current productions and issues.

### *Acting examination*

Acting will be externally assessed by a visiting examiner. 50 marks will be awarded for this element, 25 for each of two roles. Candidates will be required to demonstrate their acting skills in the performance of two contrasting acting roles as follows:

- i one based on **one** of the prescribed texts (see Course Content)
- ii one based on a text from contemporary Scottish theatre.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

All acting performances **must** involve an audience. For each role, candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- use characterisation skills (5 marks)  
(consideration will be given to the identification and use of textual clues, the originality which the candidate brings to the part and the believability of the characterisation)
- use voice skills (5 marks)  
(consideration will be given to fluency, interpretation and the technical areas of voice subsumed in use of the vocal instrument)
- use movement skills (5 marks)  
(consideration will be given to character movement, technical ability, stagecraft, originality and integration of movement)
- create an impact on an audience (10 marks)  
(Consideration will be given to the actor's relationship with other characters and the effectiveness of the communication with and impact on the audience as perceived by the external examiner).

Each acting role should involve the candidate in an acting contribution of around five minutes. All extracts chosen for performance should involve interaction with at least one other character.

**As Acting requires character interaction, it is not acceptable for a candidate to perform a monologue.**

Roles would not be considered to be contrasting if they involved the candidate in similar use of voice, movement, and general characterisation or acting style. Candidates may play a role of the opposite gender, using either a representational or naturalistic style of acting. Whichever style is chosen, the performance must always meet the criteria for assessment. Candidates should not play two cross-gender roles. Where a candidate has no spoken language facility, centres should contact SQA in order that special arrangements can be made.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

A candidate's grade will be determined by overall performance in the course. The criteria for the different parts of the external assessment are laid out below:

#### *Examination Papers*

##### *Paper I*

Section A tests candidates' knowledge and understanding of the prescribed texts and how these, from the perspectives of director or actor, could be communicated to an audience through performance.

Section B requires the in-depth analysis of an extract from the prescribed text from the perspective of a director. Candidates will be assessed on their knowledge and understanding of how an extract of the chosen prescribed text could be contextualised within an overall intended production of the play and how it could be presented to an audience. The candidate must answer from the perspective of a director in preparation for a production.

The grade descriptions for C and A are as follows:

<i>Grade C</i>	<i>Grade A</i>
Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the historical/social/theatrical context in which the prescribed text was written.	Demonstrates extensive knowledge and understanding of the historical/social/theatrical context in which the prescribed text was written.
Gives a fairly detailed explanation, with some justification, of how a prescribed text could be communicated through performance.	Gives a very detailed and well-justified explanation of how a prescribed text could be communicated through performance.
Demonstrates ability to analyse an extract from a prescribed text from the perspective of a director.	Demonstrates a high ability to analyse an extract from the prescribed text from the perspective of a director.

##### *Paper II*

Section B tests candidates' knowledge and understanding of how trends and issues are exemplified by the contemporary Scottish plays/productions which they have studied.

The grade descriptions for C and A are as follows:

<i>At Grade C</i>	<i>At Grade A</i>
Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of how specified trends and issues in contemporary Scottish theatre are exemplified in appropriate plays/productions.	Demonstrates extensive knowledge and understanding of how specified trends and issues in contemporary Scottish theatre are exemplified in a range of highly appropriate plays/productions.



## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### *Acting examination*

The quality of acting will be assessed on the candidates' ability to use characterisation, voice and movement skills to create an impact on the audience. There must be a degree of contrast between the prescribed text acting role and the contemporary Scottish theatre acting role.

The grade descriptions for C and A are as follows:

<b><i>At Grade C</i></b>	<b><i>At Grade A</i></b>
Makes use of appropriate textual clues to give a believable interpretation of characters.	Makes highly effective use of a range of highly appropriate textual clues to give a very believable and original interpretation of characters.
Uses voice and movement effectively in terms of appropriateness for characters and demonstration of technical skills.	Uses voice and movement very effectively in terms of appropriateness for characters and in the demonstration of well-developed technical skills.
Creates an impact on the audience in terms of effective interaction with other characters and overall communication of the characters.	Creates a significant impact on the audience in terms of highly effective interaction with other characters and overall communication of the characters.

### **Relationship between external and internal assessment**

The criteria for a C pass in this course closely reflects the level of competence required for success in its component units. However, the course assessment requires that the candidates demonstrate the ability to integrate the competencies acquired in the component units within challenging contexts.

The course assessment instrument for the knowledge and understanding of both prescribed text in its historical, social and theatrical context and the knowledge and understanding of specified trends and issues in contemporary Scottish theatre is the written question paper. The formal examination situation challenges the candidates to answer unseen questions within a specified time constraint. The candidates are not allowed to bring any dramatic texts into the examination room so it is more demanding to make use of appropriate quotations. The written papers relate to Unit 1, Outcome 1, Unit 2, Outcomes 1 and 2 and Unit 3, Outcome 1.

The course assessment instrument for Acting requires the candidates to integrate the characterisation and performance skills acquired across all three component units. The extra challenge in the course criteria is that the candidates must perform two contrasting roles with little time to refocus between roles. There will be the added formality of and heightened sense of theatrical occasion by the presence of the external examiner, who will be one of the invited audience. It is acceptable for candidates to use the same dramatic roles and acting pieces for external assessment as they did for internal assessment, as the context for external assessment is more demanding. The acting examination relates to Unit 1, Outcome 2, performance criterion (e), Unit 2, Outcome 3 and Unit 3, Outcome 2.

When the units of *Investigative Drama*, *Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context* and *Contemporary Scottish Theatre* are taken as parts of the Higher course, teachers/lecturers may find it useful to assess the outcomes concerned with practical work using the grade descriptions for the course award. This would apply to *Investigative Drama*, Outcome 2, *Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context*, Outcome 3 and *Contemporary Scottish Theatre*, Outcome 2.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND TEACHING

#### General advice on learning and teaching

The three component units may be taught in any order and may be taught sequentially or concurrently. There are opportunities for integration, particularly in the choice of theme or issue, for the *Investigative Drama* unit which may reflect a theme or issue in the selected prescribed text and/or in one or more of the chosen contemporary Scottish texts. Indeed one of the specified trends and issues for the *Contemporary Scottish Theatre* unit could provide a rich stimulus for *Investigative Drama*.

When planning learning and teaching approaches for Higher Level Drama, it is important to consider the course as a whole. Account should be taken of knowledge and understanding and skills which are common to two or three of the component units of the course. This will allow the selection of learning and teaching approaches which reflect the progression and continuity between units and which are appropriate to the different contexts of each unit.

#### Investigating

Investigation skills are integrated into all three component units. In each unit, the focus and context of the investigation is different. In *Investigative Drama* (Unit 1), the emphasis is on the active investigation of the chosen issue, theme or topic using creative drama skills, study skills and theatre skills. As a group, candidates should investigate their own and others' attitudes, opinions and values in relation to the chosen issue, theme or topic. This part of the investigative process may be carried out using a combination of role play, improvisation, group discussion, researching and discussing appropriate source materials provided either by the teacher/lecturer or by candidates themselves. Relevant Scottish texts and/or the chosen prescribed text could form part of the source materials to allow candidates to investigate how a playwright has explored and presented in drama form the issue, theme or topic.

The end product of this part of the investigation is to make decisions on which points of view should be communicated through presentation to an audience. The candidates will discuss, explore and make initial decisions on the overall message, style and staging of the presentation then identify sections suitable for individual directorial responsibility.

The candidates should then investigate how their individual sections could be interpreted in terms of drama form, content, structure and design and technical concepts. Candidates should have the necessary knowledge and understanding for this process, and account should be taken of the candidate's prior drama experience. Candidates should be aware of the purpose and context of their directorial sections but should have sufficient flexibility to consider a range of possibilities for interpretation.

Candidates should select from the possibilities they have investigated, using suitable criteria for selection. These may include clarity in communication of message, creation of dramatic tension, dramatic impact on audience, need for variety within overall presentation, constraints of time, personal interest or expertise, expertise of performers, size of group, context and purpose of section within overall presentation.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

### COURSE Drama (Higher)

In both Unit 2 (Study of a Prescribed Text in its Theatrical Context) and Unit 3 (Contemporary Scottish Theatre), the emphasis is on investigating text using a range of learning and teaching approaches. Candidates will explore, in a predominantly practical manner, how theatre has been used and is used as a means of expression and communication. A workshop methodology is necessary for investigating both the chosen prescribed text and the selected Scottish texts. Workshops may include acting, improvisation around the text, characterisation exercises, directing, experimenting with staging/design concepts and presenting. This should be supported and consolidated by discussion, reading, individual research, follow-up assignments and the attending and evaluation of live performance. While exposition may be necessary if presenting an overview to contextualise study of both the prescribed text and contemporary Scottish theatre, the active investigation of text should be the core from which other activities are derived.

Ample opportunities should be provided for supported self-study, using a range of learning materials such as specialist reference books, video or audio tapes, slides and photographs, information packs produced by the teacher/lecturer and the dramatic texts themselves. Candidates should have clear targets and a suitable framework for any supported self-study assignment.

Some of the additional 40 hours' teaching time may be used in the preparation for and consolidation of the experience of attending live performances.

#### **Acting**

Acting is integrated into all units. The art of acting has many facets. Certain skills may be taught but the entity of acting is informed by observation, experience and truth. Learning situations should be created to develop characterisation, voice and movement skills, but it should be remembered that the overall impact on the audience is more than the collation of these taught skills (see section on Instruments of Assessment).

#### ***Characterisation***

Stress should be laid on the depth of characterisation and avoidance of stereotypes. Therefore, when working with extracts of prescribed text or contemporary Scottish theatre plays, candidates should be familiar with the complete text in order to make full use of textual clues to enhance interpretation. In *Investigative Drama*, the interpretation of character may be developed entirely from improvisation or from a devised script and/or role card devised by another candidate. The relationship and interaction with other characters should be an important focus.

#### ***Voice***

It will be necessary to devise specific activities and exercises in order that the candidates can communicate their texts/words clearly and effectively, demonstrating an awareness of the use of voice. The context for this may be any or all of the component units but should be introduced early enough to enable candidates to build on their voice skills throughout the course. Use of the vocal instrument should include an awareness of breathing, tone, modulation, articulation, pitch, pace, tone, volume and accent. Attention should also be paid to fluency and the pointing of lines.

#### ***Movement***

Specific activities and exercises will be required to develop candidates' awareness and use of movement. Like voice, these should be introduced early, to allow progression of skill in this area throughout the course. Consideration should be given to the contribution of movement to character portrayal, the appropriate use of the acting area and the relationship with the audience.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

### COURSE Drama (Higher)

As acting does not feature as a discrete unit but is integral to all component units, consideration may be given to using some of the additional 40 hours for specific exercises and activities related to the acquisition of acting skills. Also, in larger teaching groups, it may be necessary to devote additional time to the rehearsing of acting pieces for the external examination.

#### *Directing*

Directing is integral to both *Investigative Drama* and *Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context*. Account will need to be taken of the individual candidate's prior drama experience. It may be necessary to devise specific exercises and activities to ensure that candidates are aware of the role of the director and the directorial process in order that they can acquire and use directorial skills. These skills should be developed prior to the rehearsing of the individual sections of the Investigative Drama presentation. Use may be made of extracts from any of the texts to be studied in the other two units for this purpose. Some of the additional 40 hours may be used for directing exercises. The purpose of, format for and process of dramatic commentary should be taught both as a method of preparing for and consolidating practical directing experience.

#### **Preparation for external assessment**

##### *Unit 1: Investigative Drama*

There is no external assessment component in Investigative Drama, but skills practised and developed through studying this unit will assist in preparation for the practical acting examination.

##### *Unit 2: Study of a Prescribed Text in its Theatrical Context*

It will be necessary for candidates to undertake assignments which require an extended response to prepare them for the written examination. At first, these essays may require knowledge only of the content of the text and its social and historical context, but the questions should progress to requiring a directorial or acting perspective as well.

The candidates may prepare for the dramatic commentary question through directorial workshop assignments which combine practice and theory.

The acting examination requires the performance of one role from any prescribed text. If the prescribed text chosen for study is used, then candidates can prepare their characterisations through their ongoing study in the unit. If other prescribed texts are used, then although acting skills are being further developed, the preparation for the acting examination will not be as integrated. Chosen roles should be learnt so that use of a script does not interfere with acting. Either a naturalistic or a representational style of acting may be used. Candidates may perform either in the style in which the play would have been performed originally or by using modern conventions of acting.

##### *Unit 3: Contemporary Scottish Theatre*

A minimum of two specified areas of study should be chosen. The teacher/lecturer should select at least three plays each of which will exemplify one or more of the chosen areas of study. It is important for the selected plays to provide comparative as well as appropriate individual study. These plays (which may be texts and/or productions) should be studied from the perspective of audience and an actor. If choosing 'current productions and issues' from the specified areas of study, it may be advisable to choose two or more plays which have been performed by the chosen theatre company or two or more plays written by the chosen playwright.

## **National Course Specification: course details (cont)**

### **COURSE** Drama (Higher)

It will be necessary for candidates to undertake assignments which require an extended response to prepare them for the external question paper. Initially, the questions may deal with an individual play but should progress to those requiring a comparative study.

Candidates will be required to study the interpretation and acting of one role from contemporary Scottish theatre. The role does not need to be taken from one of the plays which have been studied in class; it may be taken from any contemporary Scottish theatre text and should contrast with the one chosen from a prescribed text.

Where appropriate, arrangements should be made to ensure that there will be no artificial barriers to learning and assessment. The nature of a candidate's special needs should be taken into account when planning learning experiences and selecting assessment instruments. Alternative arrangements can be made as necessary.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

## National Unit Specification: general information

**UNIT** Investigative Drama (Higher)

**NUMBER** D196 12

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this unit is to develop competence in investigating a chosen issue, theme or topic in order to devise a theatrical presentation in which individual directorial responsibility is taken for an identifiable section of the presentation.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Take responsibility for an identifiable section of a presentation.
- 2 Contribute to the presentation process and final presentation.
- 3 Evaluate the effectiveness of the final presentation.

### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following:

- Standard Grade Drama at Credit level
- Intermediate 2 Drama
- other appropriate prior experience in drama.

### CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher.

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### Administrative Information

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## **National Unit Specification: general information (cont)**

**UNIT**                      Investigative Drama (Higher)

### **CORE SKILLS**

Core skills for this qualification remain subject to confirmation and details will be available at a later date.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards**

**UNIT** Investigative Drama (Higher)

Acceptable performance of 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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

### **OUTCOME 1**

Take responsibility for an identifiable section of a presentation.

#### **Performance criteria**

- a) Selects the initial ideas for form and content of section with justification in terms of potential dramatic impact.
- b) Uses drama form and structure appropriate to the interpretation of the section.
- c) Selects design and technical concepts appropriate to the interpretation of the section.
- d) Prepares effectively for each rehearsal for own identified section.
- e) Evaluates the effectiveness of the process of the candidate's own section.

#### **Evidence requirements**

See end of this section

### **OUTCOME 2**

Contribute to the presentation process and final presentation.

#### **Performance criteria**

- a) States ideas and opinions within group discussion which are relevant and useful to planning, organisation and ongoing evaluation of the presentation process.
- b) Directs own section effectively in terms of communicating clearly with actors and developing suitable stage positioning/moves, delivery of lines and characterisation.
- c) Participates positively in the other sections, in terms of taking direction and experimenting with dramatic ideas.
- d) Portrays acting role(s) convincingly.

#### **Evidence requirements**

See end of this section

### **OUTCOME 3**

Evaluate the effectiveness of the final presentation.

#### **Performance criteria**

- a) Comments, with justification, on the impact of the performance on the audience.
- b) Evaluates the effectiveness in performance of the group's overall choice of drama form(s), structure, staging, design and use of technical effects.
- c) Evaluates own contribution to performance in terms of acting role(s) and directorial section.
- d) Evaluates the contribution of others to performance in terms of acting and the implementation of technical skills.



## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**UNIT**                      Investigative Drama (Higher)

### **Evidence requirements (for whole unit)**

The candidate should present:

- Their evaluation of the effectiveness of the process and the final performance under controlled conditions. Controlled conditions are defined as examination conditions ie candidates are not allowed access to texts, books, notes or any other form of assistance during the assessment.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes**

### **UNIT**                      Investigative Drama (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre the notional design length is 40 hours.

#### **GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT**

In this unit, candidates will, as a group, use creative drama skills to investigate and explore an issue, theme or topic. They will devise their own drama and present the end product to an invited audience. Each candidate will be responsible for the organisation and direction of an identifiable section of the presentation.

For further detail on the content of this unit please refer to the section 'Course Content: Unit 1: Investigative Drama'.

#### **GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT**

For advice about the sequencing of this unit, if taught as a course component, and suggestions for integration, please refer to the section 'Course details - Approaches to Learning and Teaching: Unit 1 - Investigative Drama'.

It is at the discretion of the teacher/lecturer to devise their own learning and teaching framework for Investigative Drama but the process could be broken down into the following stages:

- Initial investigation of one or more issues, themes or topics - activities could include research of relevant source materials and exploration of attitudes and values through role play and improvisation supported by group discussion.
- Group decision making to choose possible overall message or purpose of drama presentation and basic outline of content - this may include discussion on and selection of the attitudes and viewpoints which the candidates would wish to communicate in a presentation, and the creating of some sort of outline for the drama. From this outline, candidates should try to identify sections of the presentation which would be suitable for individual responsibility. Candidates may possibly decide on overall staging and design concepts at this stage or this could be done once candidates have started working on their sections.
- Individual investigation of directorial sections - candidates should explore and record possible ideas for interpretation, form and content of the section for which they will have organisational and directorial responsibility. Candidates should be aware of the purpose and context of their section within the overall presentation; ideas for form and content should be selected and justified, then the candidate should translate the section into drama form(s); a detailed scenario or devised script should be written along with dramatic role cards and notes/diagrams about staging and design ideas.
- Group discussion to plan rehearsal schedule for individual sections and to think about casting - all candidates should direct at least one actor other than self.
- Directing and rehearsing of individual sections - candidates should block moves and make interpretative notes opposite the text of their detailed scenarios/devised scripts; candidates should prepare and set targets for each rehearsal of their own section and then evaluate the effectiveness of each rehearsal.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

### **UNIT**                      Investigative Drama (Higher)

- Final presentation to an invited audience with post-performance discussion or questionnaires to gauge the impact of the presentation on the audience.
- Evaluation of the final presentation.

For further details about the teaching of investigating, acting and directing skills, it is recommended that teachers/lecturers should read the section ‘Course details - Approaches to Learning and Teaching: General advice on learning and teaching’.

Throughout the investigative process, candidates should gather evidence of their work in a folio. The written work should help to inform and prepare the candidates for the practical work.

#### **Role of teacher/lecturer**

It is envisaged that, as far as possible, candidates should be responsible for their own learning in this unit. However, the teacher/lecturer will fulfil important roles in the investigative process. As facilitator, the teacher/lecturer should provide the overall framework in which the candidates will work. This framework should include an outline of the process to be followed and a clear indication of the time scale for this unit. The teacher/lecturer should be available to give advice and guidance as required. The candidates will negotiate with and have the approval of the teacher/lecturer for the performance venue, technical and material resources and the composition of the invited audience.

The length of the final presentation should reflect the size of the group. A minimum of 15 minutes is suggested for a group of 3 to 5 and a maximum of 60 minutes for groups of 10 to 12 candidates. Consideration might be given also to the subdivision of larger groups.

#### **GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT**

Each unit is assessed on a pass/fail basis. Candidates will be required to provide evidence of the achievement of the learning outcomes within this unit.

Teachers/lecturers may select instruments of assessment which they consider will provide a valid, reliable and practicable assessment of the candidates' work. However, if centres decide not to use National Assessment Bank materials for assessment, they should seek prior moderation of any alternative assessment materials by contracting the Qualifications Manager at SQA, **before** assessing candidates.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

**UNIT** Investigative Drama (Higher)

### **OUTCOME 1**

Take responsibility for an identifiable section of a presentation.

### **OUTCOME 2**

Contribute to the presentation process and final presentation.

### **OUTCOME 3**

Evaluate the effectiveness of the final presentation.

The following list describes materials which **may** be generated by pupils while working through this unit. These materials will then assist candidates in the completion of the unit assessment.

- notes on initial ideas for form and content - showing investigation of possibilities and justification for the ideas selected
- description of dramatic roles in own section - showing details about the background, characteristics and purpose of each dramatic role
- detailed scenario (may be used for play form or movement form) or devised script for own section - showing knowledge and understanding of one or more dramatic forms and dramatic structural devices
- notes/diagrams on technical and design ideas for own section - showing knowledge and understanding of, and ability to justify, basic design concepts
- rehearsal log for own section - showing ability to plan, prepare for and evaluate each rehearsal of own section.

The assessment of this outcome should be undertaken after the final presentation to an audience. The evidence for this outcome may be produced as either written or taped evidence..

## **National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

**UNIT**            Investigative Drama (Higher)

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

## National Unit Specification: general information

**UNIT** Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context (Higher)

**NUMBER** D197 12

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this unit is to develop competence in investigating a text in its historical, social and theatrical context in order to explore how the text could be communicated through performance from the perspective of both director and actor.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate awareness of the historical, social and theatrical context of a play.
- 2 Make an exploration of how a play could be communicated through performance.
- 3 Perform an acting role from a prescribed text.

### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following:

- Standard Grade Drama at Credit level
- Intermediate 2 Drama
- other appropriate prior experience in drama.

### CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher.

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## **National Unit Specification: general information (cont)**

**UNIT** Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context (Higher)

### **CORE SKILLS**

Core skills for this qualification remain subject to confirmation and details will be available at a later date.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards**

**UNIT** Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context (Higher)

Acceptable performance of 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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

### **OUTCOME 1**

Demonstrate awareness of the historical, social and theatrical context of a play.

#### **Performance criteria**

- a) Describes correctly the historical and social context of the play.
- b) Explains clearly the conventions and styles associated with the writing and staging of the text.

#### **Note on the range of the outcome**

Historical and Social Context: prevailing social background and conditions of the period in which the play was written and the playwright's intended audience.

#### **Evidence requirements**

Written or taped evidence which demonstrates that the candidate has met the above performance criteria. Candidates should demonstrate understanding of **one** from the range of conventions and styles. These are: (1) structure and language, (2) staging and architecture, use of theatrical effects associated with original production and (3) the characteristics of any recognised dramatic genre(s).

### **OUTCOME 2**

Make an exploration of how a play could be communicated through performance.

#### **Performance criteria**

- a) Describes accurately the themes, issues, action and characters of the play.
- b) Explains, clearly and with justification, own overall directorial interpretation of the play.
- c) Describes, with justification, staging, design and acting concepts to communicate own overall directorial interpretation.

#### **Note on the range of the outcome**

Themes and Issues: relevance to a modern audience and possibilities for individual interpretation.  
Characters: motivation and role in play, relationship to other characters, development within the action of the play, playwright's intention and candidate's individual interpretation.

Staging and Design: theatre spaces, forms of staging, actor/audience relationship, set, costume, lighting, sound, props and make-up.

#### **Evidence requirements**

Taped and/or written evidence that demonstrates that all the above performance criteria have been met.



## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**UNIT** Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context (Higher)

### **OUTCOME 3**

Perform an acting role from a prescribed text.

#### **Performance criteria**

- a) Interprets the character convincingly, showing use of textual clues.
- b) Uses a voice which is appropriate both to character and clarity of words.
- c) Uses movement which is both appropriate to character and makes effective use of the acting space in relation to the audience.
- d) Interacts effectively with other characters.
- e) Communicates effectively the overall portrayal of the character to the audience.

#### **Evidence requirements**

Performance assessed by staff checklist. The candidate is expected to sustain the role for around five minutes and to communicate with an audience which may comprise the other candidates in the teaching group. Where spoken language is not the candidate's main mode of communication, special arrangements will require to be made.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes**

### **UNIT** Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

#### **GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT**

A range of texts for study will be prescribed by the SQA each year. Candidates should explore the chosen prescribed text from the perspective of an actor and of a director in preparation for a production.

For further details on the content of this section, please refer to the course specification.

#### **GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT**

For advice about sequencing of this unit if taught as a course component and suggestions for integration, please refer to the section 'Course details - Approaches to Learning and Teaching: Unit 2 - Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context'.

It may be necessary to use a combination of exposition, resource-based learning and some self-supported study to investigate the social, historical and theatrical context in which the chosen text was written, but practical workshops should form the core from which other activities are derived. It may not be possible to workshop an entire text and therefore the focus for workshop activities may be key scenes which are identified as those which highlight one or more main themes or issues of the play and/or contain an important development in the plot/storyline and/or introduce or focus on one or more main characters and their relationships. Apart from significance in the content, key scenes should provide a good vehicle for exploring the conventions and styles associated with the dramatic genre(s) to which the text most closely belongs, experiencing the playwright's use of structure and language and experimenting with acting style, basic staging and design concepts.

Initially, the workshops will be teacher/lecturer-led, using some candidates as 'actors' and the rest as observers. During this time, the teacher/lecturer will be demonstrating the directorial process. However, the candidates should become increasingly involved as 'collaborative directors'. As the candidates become more familiar with the text, there may be more emphasis placed on acting skills in terms of identifying and using textual clues, developing characterisation and using performance skills.

Short extracts may be used to provide individual practical directorial assignments. The candidate would prepare for direction by investigating the context of the extract and the relationships of the characters in it. The candidate would decide on how the extract could be staged, and block in moves. Other candidates could be used as actors to try out the direction. It may be helpful to the candidate to have an evaluative tutorial with the teacher/lecturer afterwards. The culmination of knowledge and understanding gained from both practical and non-practical study of the text should result in the candidate being able to conceive and justify an overall directorial interpretation of the text. The candidates should investigate how their overall interpretations could be communicated to an audience through performance and design concepts.

Obviously, a theatre visit to see a production of the chosen prescribed text would be an excellent resource for learning and teaching. However, a production of another play by the same playwright or of a play from the same period and/or genre would also enhance study. All theatrical productions will assist the candidate in learning about directing, acting and design.

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Study of a Text in its Theatrical Context (Higher)

For further details about the teaching of investigating, acting and directing skills, it is recommended that teachers/lecturers should read the section 'Course Specification - Approaches to Learning and Teaching: General advice on learning and teaching'.

#### **GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT**

Each unit is assessed on a pass/fail basis. Candidates will be required to provide evidence of the achievement of each of the four learning outcomes. Teachers/lecturers may select the instruments of assessment which they consider will provide a valid, reliable and practicable assessment of the candidates' work.

In this unit, the candidates should be generating evidence for assessment which results from their investigation of how the chosen prescribed text could be presented to an audience. The two suggested forms of assessment are practical assignments and an assignment which requires an extended response.

#### ***Outcomes 1 and 2***

- 1 Demonstrate awareness of the historical, social and theatrical context of a play.
- 2 Make an exploration of how a play could be communicated through performance.

The suggested assessment instrument is an assignment based on a question requiring an extended response. The question should reflect the focus of the main areas of study appropriate to the chosen prescribed text. (See section 'Course details: Course Content'.) The assignment should involve the candidate in, firstly, demonstrating awareness of an aspect of the historical, social and theatrical context of the play and secondly, in demonstrating how this aspect could affect or be communicated through performance. Therefore, the candidate will be required to show both knowledge and understanding of the text and knowledge and understanding of the process of performance from the perspective of a director and actor.

#### ***Outcome 3***

Perform an acting role from a prescribed text.

The recommended assessment instrument is observation of a performance of the acting role within an interactive acting piece from the relevant prescribed text. The performance must involve the candidate in an acting contribution of around five minutes. An observational checklist listing the performance criteria should be used to record achievement.

This checklist will form the main evidence but teacher/lecturer notes and a video recording may be used as supporting evidence.

#### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

## National Unit Specification: general information

**UNIT** Contemporary Scottish Theatre (Higher)

**NUMBER** D198 12

**COURSE** Drama (Higher)

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this unit is to develop competence in analysing and appreciating specified trends and issues in contemporary Scottish theatre and in acting a character from a contemporary Scottish play.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of specified trends and issues in contemporary Scottish theatre.
- 2 Perform an acting role from a contemporary Scottish play.

### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following:

- Standard Grade Drama at Credit level
- Intermediate 2 Drama
- other appropriate prior experience in drama.

### CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher.

### CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

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## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards**

### **UNIT** Contemporary Scottish Theatre (Higher)

Acceptable performance of 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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

#### **OUTCOME 1**

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of specified trends and issues in contemporary Scottish theatre.

##### **Performance criteria**

- a) Analyses two texts/productions in terms of how each exemplifies one or more specified trends or issues.
- b) Discusses relevantly a specified trend or issue with reference to a minimum of two appropriate texts/productions.

##### **Evidence requirements**

Specified trends and issues: social, political and religious dimensions; use of history, nostalgia and popular tradition; issues of gender; and current productions and issues. One or more of the specified trends and issues should be studied. One written/taped assignment is required, demonstrating the investigation of a specified trend or issue and making reference to two or more texts/productions. At least 2 plays should be studied and this should be evident from the assignment. (See the section 'Course Specification: Approaches to Learning and Teaching - Contemporary Scottish Theatre' for advice on choice of play related to 'current productions and practice').

#### **OUTCOME 2**

Perform an acting role from a contemporary Scottish play.

##### **Performance criteria**

- a) Interprets the character convincingly, showing use of textual clues.
- b) Uses a voice which is appropriate to both character and clarity of words.
- c) Uses movement which is appropriate to character and which makes effective use of the acting space in relation to the audience.
- d) Interacts effectively with other characters.
- e) Communicates effectively the overall portrayal of the character to the audience.

##### **Evidence requirements**

Performance assessed by staff checklist. The candidate is expected to sustain the role for around five minutes and to communicate with an audience which may comprise the other candidates in the teaching group. Where spoken language is not the candidate's main mode of communication, special arrangements will need to be made.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes**

### **UNIT**                      Contemporary Scottish Theatre (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

#### **GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT**

For the purposes of this course, any post-1900 play which is set in Scotland and/or written by a Scottish playwright is considered to be Contemporary Scottish Theatre. Plays which have been performed by a Scottish theatre company using a Scots translation, a Scottish idiom or a Scottish setting are also appropriate for study. A minimum of three contemporary Scottish plays, which may be texts and/or productions, must be studied.

For further details about the content of this unit, please refer to the course specification.

#### **GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT**

For advice about sequencing of this unit if taught as a course component and suggestions for integration, please refer to the section 'Course details - Approaches to Learning and Teaching: Unit 3 - Contemporary Scottish Theatre'.

A minimum of two specified areas of study should be chosen from those listed. The teacher/lecturer should select at least three plays, each of which will exemplify one or more of the chosen specified areas of study. It is important for the selected plays to provide comparative as well as appropriate individual study. These plays may be studied as texts and/or productions. The candidate should explore the plays from the perspective of an audience and of an actor.

If choosing 'Current Productions and Issues' from the specified areas of study, it may be advisable to choose two or more plays which have been performed by the chosen theatre company or two or more plays written by the chosen playwright.

It may be necessary to use a combination of exposition, resource-based learning and some self-supported study to present an overview of contemporary Scottish theatre and to contextualise the study of the chosen areas and related plays, but practical workshops should form the core from which other activities are derived. It may not be possible to workshop an entire text and therefore the focus for workshop activities may be key scenes identified as those which provide particularly clear exemplification of one or more of the chosen areas of study. Workshops may also be used as a focus for further developing interpretation, characterisation and acting skills.

The workshops will focus on actively exploring how the playwright puts his/her message across through the text. The text will include both dialogue and any stage directions such as descriptions of set or costume which the playwright has included. The candidates should take the roles of both actors and audience appreciating the play.

If undertaking the study of an aspect of 'Current Productions and Issues', there will be a need for research and the provision of source materials for the candidates other than just related texts. These materials may include reviews and articles, leaflets published by theatre companies and reference books or information packs produced by the teacher/lecturer. This area of study could be handled as a project in class, integrated with textual workshops which focus also on another area of study.

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Contemporary Scottish Theatre (Higher)

A theatre visit to see a production of any contemporary Scottish play will enhance study. If the text is not available, the play may still be used for study if sufficient follow-up work is done in school/college so that the candidates have some related study materials.

Candidates will be required to study the interpretation and acting of one role from contemporary Scottish theatre. The acting role does not need to be taken from one of the plays which have been studied in class and it may be taken from any contemporary Scottish theatre text.

For further details about the teaching of investigating, acting and directing skills, it is recommended that teachers/lecturers should read the section 'Course Specification - Approaches to Learning and Teaching: General advice on learning and teaching'.

### GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Each unit is assessed on a pass/fail basis. Candidates will be required to provide evidence of the achievement of each of the learning outcomes. Teachers/lecturers may select the instruments of assessment which they consider will provide a valid, reliable and practicable assessment of the candidates' work

#### *Outcome 1*

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of specified trends and issues in contemporary Scottish theatre.

The suggested assessment instrument is a question requiring an extended response on a specified trend or issue. It is likely that this assignment will be undertaken towards the end of the teaching of the unit.

#### *Outcome 2*

Perform an acting role from a contemporary Scottish play.

The recommended assessment instrument is observation of a performance of the acting role within an interactive acting piece from any contemporary Scottish play. The performance must involve the candidate in an acting contribution of around five minutes. An observational checklist listing the performance criteria should be used to record achievement. This will form the main evidence but teacher/lecturer notes and a video recording may be used as supporting evidence.

### SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).