

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Twentieth-Century Theatre – Theories of Performance (Advanced Higher)
NUMBER	D200 13
COURSE	Drama (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

The general purpose of this unit is to develop competence in exploring and applying the theories of two leading 20th-century practitioners. Candidates should be able to use skills of research, supported self-study, acting, directing, review and evaluation.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theories of acting and directing of one of the two leading twentieth-century practitioners studied.
- 2 Explore aspects of theatre practice in one or two recent productions which you feel reflect the theories and/or practices of one of the two twentieth-century practitioners studied.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained Higher Drama or its component units.

Administrative Information

Superclass:	LC
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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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(Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced 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).

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theories of acting and directing one of the two leading twentieth-century practitioners studied.

Performance criteria

- (a) Describes correctly and in some detail the influences and key events that mark the emergence one of the two leading twentieth-century theatre practitioners studied.
- (b) Analyses in some detail the acting methodologies adopted/developed by one of the two twentieth-century theatre practitioners studied.
- (c) Describes correctly and in some detail the directorial theories and practices of one of the two twentieth-century theatre practitioners studied.
- (d) Uses texts appropriately to exemplify the performance theories of one of the two twentieth-century theatre practitioners studied.

Note on range for the outcome

All the performance criteria apply to the overall context in which the practitioner worked and include: the developing role of the director, influences (creative, political, historical and social), innovative acting and directing methodologies, innovative staging concepts, innovative playhouse architecture and actor-audience relationships.

OUTCOME 2

Explore aspects of theatre practice in one or two recent productions which you feel reflect the theories and/or practices of one of the two twentieth-century theatre practitioners studied.

Performance criteria

- (a) Analyses in detail one or two contemporary performances
- (b) Discusses the ways in which, within the candidate's interpretation, these performances may be related to the theories and/or practices of one of the twentieth-century theatre practitioners specified in the course of study.

Evidence requirements

Written or taped evidence which demonstrates that the candidate has met the performance criteria sampled across both outcomes.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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

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

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Candidates will be presented with an overview of 20th-century theories of performance in order to study and explore the theories and practices of leading 20th-century theatre practitioners. **Two** practitioners should be selected from a prescribed list. Candidates should be able to translate theory into practice from the perspectives of actor and director and should investigate the influence of these practitioners on current theatre practice within and outside Scotland.

Prescribed list of 20th-century theatre practitioners

Konstantin Stanislavski, Edward Gordon Craig, Max Reinhardt, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Jacques Copeau, Erwin Piscator, Antonin Artaud, Bertolt Brecht, Peter Brook, Augusto Boal, Jerzy Grotowski.

Texts will be used to provide a focus for workshop activities on acting and directing.

For further details of areas of study, knowledge, understanding and skill to be covered in this unit, please refer to the section ‘Course Content’ in the course specification.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

For advice about the sequencing of this unit if taught as a course component of Advanced Higher and for suggestions about integration, please refer to the section ‘Approaches to Learning and Teaching’ in the course details.

The main focus of this unit will be on the candidate’s development in knowledge and understanding of the theories and practices of 20th-century theatre practitioners. **Two** practitioners should be chosen from a prescribed list. (See Contents section.) It is likely that the teacher/lecturer will make this choice according not only to the needs of candidates but also to areas of teaching expertise and the availability of a range of suitable teaching materials and resources. The theories and practices of each chosen practitioner should be studied in detail. The candidate should be able to translate theory into practice from the perspectives of an actor and a director.

It may be necessary to use a combination of exposition, resource-based learning and supported self-study to present an overview and to explore and apply the performance theories and practices. Resources for this unit may include reference or source books, information packs, videos, tape/slide programmes, relevant schools programmes, texts and productions.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Workshop activities using text will provide the framework for exploring and experimenting with the conventions, styles, theories and practices of the chosen practitioners. Initially, the workshops may be teacher/lecturer-led but the candidates should become increasingly involved and eventually take charge of the workshops by identifying and illustrating the performance theories and practices.

Appropriate texts which appear on the prescribed list for Higher Drama or have been used for contemporary Scottish theatre may provide a suitable text for one or more workshops. Extracts from appropriate texts may be used to provide individual acting/directorial assignments. The candidate could prepare for acting/directing by investigating the theories and practices of their chosen 20th-century theatre practitioners. The candidate could decide on how and/or the extent to which the presentation of the extract could be used to reflect and imitate studied theories of acting/directing/performance style. The candidate could then lead a workshop, using other candidates in the teaching group as actors and/or audience.

As supported self-study is likely to be a feature of this unit, it will be important to ensure that candidates have access to a suitable working space for tasks which may involve a practical element, such as workshops. It will be important also to ensure that candidates record and evaluate the results of their research and workshops.

Throughout the unit, candidates should be undertaking a series of assignments which will increasingly require an extended response. This will allow for the formative assessment of learning and also help to prepare candidates for the requirements of the unit assessment.

Obviously, theatre visits to a variety of ‘styles’ of presentation would be an excellent resource for learning and teaching. All theatrical productions will assist the candidate in learning more about directing, acting, texts, staging, playhouse architecture, actor/audience relationship, use of technology and theatrical effects used to enhance presentation.

Time should be allocated for giving extra support to candidates who are very challenged by one or more of the performance criteria. All candidates should have the opportunity to improve on any areas of weakness through strategies such as extra practice in individual skills and revising or redrafting of formative written or taped work.

For advice on preparing for external assessment and general advice on learning and teaching, please refer to the course details ‘Approaches to 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 two outcomes, through sampling of the performance criteria across both outcomes.

Teachers/lecturers may select instruments of assessment which they consider will provide a valid, reliable and practicable assessment of the candidates’ work.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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In this unit, candidates will be generating evidence which may assist in completion of the unit assessment as an integral part of their investigation of the two chosen 20th-century theatre practitioners. Candidates should find out the nature of the performance theories and practices of the practitioners, why they adopted their theories/techniques and how they used them in practice. The main form of assessment is likely to be an assignment which requires an extended response, usually in the form of an essay.

Outcome 1

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theories of acting and directing of one of the two leading 20th-century practitioners studied.

Outcome 2

Explore aspects of theatre practice in one or two recent productions which you feel reflect the theories and/or practices of one of the two twentieth century theatre practitioners studied.

The suggested instrument of assessment for both outcome 1 and outcome 2 is an assignment which requires the candidate to present an analysis of current theatre practice in terms of the influence of **one of** the two studied theatre practitioners. All viewpoints should be justified. General reference may be made to current directors and/or actors and/or designers and/or theatre companies and/or playwrights and/or texts and/or productions. However, it is recommended that candidates are able to make detailed reference to at least one production which they have seen, in order to analyse the extent of the influence of the studied practitioner.

The results of the analysis may be communicated through an extended response, usually in the form of an essay.

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).