



## Higher National Unit specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Theatre History in Performance

**Unit code:** F385 34

**Unit purpose:** This Unit is designed to enable candidates to explore theatre history through research and practical application. The Unit will encourage candidates to research into, and reflect upon, a variety of theatre styles and their relevant characteristics and conventions. Candidates will develop a deeper understanding of a particular theatre style through rehearsal and presentation of a selected relevant text. The Unit is primarily intended for candidates who expect to enter the professional world of acting and/or theatre after completing a Diploma or Degree at Further or Higher Education level. It would also be relevant to those with appropriate experience of acting and theatre performance who wish to develop their knowledge and understanding of theatre.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Research a variety of theatre styles and their characteristics and conventions.
- 2 Explore the acting practicalities required within a particular theatrical style through text.
- 3 Perform selected text in the theatre style.

**Credit points and level:** 1 HN credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7\*)

*\*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** It would be beneficial, although not essential, if candidates had some experience of theatre performance or had participated in an NQ Theatre Arts or equivalent performance related programme. Candidates will find added value if they have completed, or are currently undertaking, the HN Unit DG3K 34 *Acting 1: Developing Skills*.

**Core Skills:** There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communication and Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

**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.

**Assessment:** This Unit could be assessed by three instruments of assessment which require candidates to produce evidence of knowledge, understanding and practical application of a variety of theatre styles and conventions.

## **General information for centres (cont)**

Outcome 1 will be assessed by a research assignment.

Outcomes 2 and 3 are assessed by practical assignments. The practical evidence for Outcome 2 will be supported by a play review and extract of text which is developed in Outcome 3.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

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. Candidates 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**

Research a variety of theatre styles and their characteristics and conventions

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Theatre styles in historical context
- ◆ Conventions of theatre styles
- ◆ Research skills
- ◆ Presentation skills

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explore theatre styles in a historical context
- ◆ explore the conventions of theatre styles
- ◆ research one particular style from a given list
- ◆ present research findings

Evidence should be generated by candidates responding to a research assignment that explores one theatre style from a given list created by the lecturer. Candidates will be required to work in pairs or small groups if necessary. The results of the assignment should be presented to the rest of the group in a practical environment in the form of a short presentation. Time should be allowed for post presentation group discussion.

A candidate's response can be judged to be satisfactory where the evidence provided is sufficient to meet the requirements of the remit.

Evidence of the research presentation should be recorded through observation checklists and/or video.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Theatre History in Performance

### **Assessment Guidelines**

One particular topic from a given list may be assigned by the tutor to each pair (or group). Each group should research this theatre style and create a 1,000 word summary (or equivalent) of the key factors related to their topic which will be made available to the cohort group. This summary could be presented in the form of bullet points. The length of time that each group take to present their findings may vary according to the topic allocated but it is recommended that no group make their presentation last longer than ten minutes.

Expectations are that the group that undertakes the research should be able to discuss the facts that they have found in more detail in a post presentation feedback session. The tutor should be satisfied that each candidate within each group can demonstrate a specific understanding of their assigned topic either through the research presentation or through group discussion following the presentation.

### **Outcome 2**

Explore the acting practicalities required within a particular theatrical style through text

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Selection of appropriate text to effectively demonstrate theatre style
- ◆ Rehearsals
- ◆ Acting techniques applicable to dramatic conventions
- ◆ Physical requirements applicable to dramatic conventions
- ◆ Vocal requirements applicable to dramatic conventions
- ◆ Structure of text and style of language
- ◆ Play reviews

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can, through the selection and rehearsal of appropriate text, explore:

- ◆ acting techniques
- ◆ physical requirements
- ◆ vocal requirements
- ◆ structure of text and style of language

Evidence should be generated through practical exercises, as appropriate, and rehearsal of text selected from the theatre style researched in Outcome 1. The selected text should have a minimum running time of three minutes and a maximum running time of five minutes. The practical evidence should be recorded on observation checklists.

Candidates should continue to work in small groups in the selection and rehearsal of text. The practical evidence should be supported by the submission of a play review, which makes reference to the structure of text and style of language, of the chosen text and a copy of the extract of text to be developed. This material should be compiled into a booklet and made available to the cohort group.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Theatre History in Performance

### **Assessment Guidelines**

Evidence for this Outcome may be recorded through observation checklists that indicate that the candidate has played an active role in the selection and rehearsal of appropriate text. A checklist could also indicate that the candidate has produced a satisfactory play review.

It is recommended that the play review contains a synopsis of the play, issues and themes contained in the play, the setting, time and genre of the play, details of characters and reviews of some productions. It could also include candidate's opinion of the play and notes on potential monologues for audition use.

### **Outcome 3**

Perform selected text in the theatre style

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Intellectual and emotional understanding of text
- ◆ Imaginative and creative interpretation of text
- ◆ Characterisation: in appropriate action according to theatre style
- ◆ Character in relationships
- ◆ Conventions of theatre style in relationship to an audience

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can effectively take part in rehearsal and performance of a selected text related to the relevant theatre style. Candidates should demonstrate:

- ◆ intellectual and emotional understanding of text
- ◆ imaginative and creative interpretation of text
- ◆ characterisation appropriate to theatre style
- ◆ character in relationships
- ◆ conventions of theatre style in relation to an audience

Evidence should be recorded on an observation checklist/video.

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

The assessment of this Outcome should build on the text and acting practicalities explored in Outcome 2. Evidence for this Outcome should be recorded through observation checklists that indicate that the candidate has demonstrated effective and appropriate participation in performance of the selected text.

## Administrative Information

**Unit code:** F385 34  
**Unit title:** Theatre History in Performance  
**Superclass category:** LC  
**Original date of publication:** August 2008  
**Version:** 01

### History of changes:

| Version | Description of change | Date |
|---------|-----------------------|------|
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## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

### **Unit title:** Theatre History in Performance

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**

This Unit is intended as an optional Unit with the HNC/D Acting and Performance Group Award. This Unit is primarily intended for candidates expecting to enter the professional world of acting and/or theatre. It would be beneficial if candidates were undergoing, or had completed, the HN Units: DG3K 34 *Acting 1: Developing Skills*; DG4N 34 *Voice 1: Developing Skills*; and DG44 34 *Movement 1: Developing Skills*. The experience would be further enhanced if the candidate had some broad knowledge of Theatre History at NQ level. Although it is a stand-alone Unit there are opportunities here for it to operate in conjunction with other Units that explore approaches to text, acting and acting methods.

The tutor should pre-determine the list of theatre styles that should be explored and it should broadly reflect the history of theatre through a full range of theatre styles. If the group have already undertaken a theatre history Unit at NQ level then the tutor may select to exclude particular areas already explored. Alternatively it may be an opportunity to further develop the candidates understanding. Candidates who are undertaking the Unit DG4M 34 *Theatre Styles* should avoid repeating an exploration of that style of theatre in this Unit. Topics for consideration might include Naturalism, Epic Theatre, Symbolism, Surrealism, Expressionist Theatre, Theatre of Cruelty, Existentialist Theatre, Absurd Theatre, Ritualistic Theatre, and Contemporary Theatre.

### **Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit**

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to develop an understanding of theatre history through research, examination and performance of a variety of theatre styles.

Wherever possible, handouts relating to all the Outcomes should be discussed, explored and demonstrated in a practical environment. It is recommended that candidates receive feedback and guidance on their progress throughout the Unit and the tutor offers the candidate recommendations for the development of the research project and support throughout the practical rehearsal. Group discussion throughout the process should be actively encouraged.

Candidates will undertake a research project in small groups to explore a particular theatre style and present their findings and an extract of text of the selected period of theatre history to the remaining cohort group. It will allow candidates to develop a deeper understanding of one theatre style and, through observation of other presentations, a general understanding of a variety of other styles of theatre.

It would be possible for the tutor to determine that the research presentations and practical presentations take place on the same day with all the research materials gathered in advance and compiled into a booklet for candidates' use. If this is the case, the tutor should ensure that the research work is completed in advance of the rehearsal of the extract of text and check that there is a satisfactory understanding of the topic before rehearsals commence.

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Theatre History in Performance

Candidates should create a play review of the selected text. It is recommended that the play review contains a synopsis of the play, issues and themes contained in the play, the setting, time and genre of the play, details of characters and reviews of some productions. It could also include candidate's opinion of the play and notes on potential monologues for audition use.

#### *Opportunities for developing Core Skills*

Skills will be developed in analysing and evaluating a range of sources of complex information, issues and ideas, as candidates research theatre styles, characteristics and conventions. They will further demonstrate in depth understanding of text by applying knowledge to performance. Exploration of the impact of tone, pace and voice projection while using a range of active listening strategies will be integral to formative work, as a sophisticated level of oral skills will be needed to interpret a role in the most appropriate way. Analysing and responding to identified needs will involve using a complex range of verbal and non-verbal techniques critical to successful performance and best practice in communicating with others. Although skills in written communication are not formally assessed, candidates could be provided with examples which review theatre style coherently, using accurate conventions and appropriate language.

Problem Solving, that is, critical thinking, planning, organising, reviewing and evaluating, will be naturally enhanced as the Unit is undertaken. Candidates analyse in depth the nature of the role to be undertaken, and consider potential theoretical and practical problems and issues impacting on performance management. All variables, including the external and internal environment, resources, and potential barriers have to be considered, and the significance of each determined before appropriate approaches are selected and applied. Problem solving skills could be enhanced by review and evaluation of performance.

### Open learning

The Outcomes in this Unit rely on developing skills through interaction with a lecturer and/or fellow candidates, and so the opportunities for distance learning are very limited. Centres may, however, find it possible to develop solutions, provided all Unit and verification requirements are met in full. Technological advances may make the possibility of such creative solutions more widespread in the future.

Because of the intensive nature of the training and rehearsal requirements for this Unit when taken as part of a Course, part-time provision would be most unusual and difficult to achieve.

For further information and advice please refer to the SQA document *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* which is available on SQA's website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

### Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Theatre History in Performance

This Unit is designed to enable you to develop an understanding of theatre history through research, examination and performance of a variety of theatre styles. You will undertake a research project, in small groups, to explore a particular theatre style and present your findings and an extract of text of the period to the remaining cohort group. It will allow you to develop a deeper understanding of one theatre style and, through observation of other presentations, a general understanding of a variety of other styles of theatre.

This Unit will:

- ◆ enable opportunities to explore a variety of theatre styles and their characteristics and conventions
- ◆ enable demonstration of a research and practical assignment to the remaining cohort group
- ◆ enable development of particular acting styles through exercises, rehearsal and performance
- ◆ enable a broader knowledge of plays from a variety of theatre styles
- ◆ enable the exploration of character and relationships

There are three main assessments:

Outcome 1 will require you to work within a group and respond to a research assignment that explores a particular theatre style. The results of this work should be demonstrated or shared with the rest of the group in a practical environment in the form of a short presentation.

Outcome 2 requires you to explore different acting styles and rehearse these. The practical assessment will be supported by a play review together with an extract of text relevant to the theatre style under examination.

Outcome 3 is assessed by the performance of selected text within the relevant theatre style.

Evidence for the practical elements of assessment will be recorded on observation checklists/video.