



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Special Effects for Theatre

Unit code: FA02 35

Superclass: LE

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to introduce the candidate to the range and diversity of special effects for the theatre. The Unit will allow the candidate to gain practical experience of rigging and operating special effects equipment. Health, Safety and professional practice are prominent within the Unit.

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

- 1 Explain the range and diversity of special effects for theatre.
- 2 Explain environmental, health and safety issues for a range of special effects.
- 3 Set up and operate a range of special effects.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the delivering centre.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**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.*

General information (cont)

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

Candidates could be assessed by observation checklists for practical exercises, along with a report for Outcome 1 and a short report supported by completed risk assessments.

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

Explain the range and diversity of special effects for theatre.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Atmospheric effects
- ◆ Lighting effects
- ◆ Scenic and mechanical effects
- ◆ Pyrotechnics and smoke

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Explain a minimum of three different special effects
- ◆ Explain the application of a minimum of three different special effects.

Assessment Guidelines

This Outcome could be assessed through a short written or recorded oral report which requires the candidate to explain a range of special effects and briefly explain how they are used.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Special Effects for Theatre

Outcome 2

Explain environmental, health and safety issues for a range of special effects.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Health and safety regulations
- ◆ Environmental issues
- ◆ Premises
- ◆ Age and responsibility
- ◆ Competence
- ◆ Setting up
- ◆ Storage
- ◆ Application
- ◆ Performers
- ◆ Codes of practice
- ◆ Explosives act
- ◆ Risk assessment

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Explain health and safety regulations for a minimum of three special effects
- ◆ Describe environmental issues relevant to a minimum of three special effects
- ◆ Conduct risk assessments for a minimum of three special effects for use in given circumstances

Assessment Guidelines

This Outcome could be assessed by a short written or recorded oral report, of approximately 500 words or equivalent, and completed risk assessments.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Special Effects for Theatre

Outcome 3

Set up and operate a range of special effects.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Atmospheric effects
- ◆ Lighting effects
- ◆ Scenic and mechanical effects
- ◆ Pyrotechnics and smoke
- ◆ Health and Safety requirements

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Set up a minimum of three special effects in accordance with all relevant health and safety requirements
- ◆ Operate a minimum of three special effects in accordance with all relevant health and safety requirements

Assessment Guidelines

This Outcome could be assessed through the use of an observation checklist to record the candidates setting up and operation of the special effect. Where possible the same special effects could be used throughout Outcomes 1, 2 and 3, particularly in Outcomes 2 and 3 so candidates can undertake a risk assessment in Outcome 2 for the effects they will use in Outcome 3.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Special Effects for Theatre

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

Outcome 1

This Outcome is designed to provide the candidate with an introduction to a range of special effects and how they are used within theatres and other venues. Candidates should be introduced to as wide a range of special effects as possible; they could include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Smoke machine
- ◆ Fog
- ◆ Haze
- ◆ Projection
- ◆ Confetti/cannon
- ◆ Pyrotechnics
- ◆ Real flame
- ◆ Snow

Outcome 2

Candidates should be introduced to all relevant legislation in relation to a range of special effects and to their potential environmental impact. Candidates must also be made aware of the limitations on their use of special effects in relation to their level of competence. Candidates should be introduced industry standard risk assessments and how to complete them. Some guidance should be provided to candidates to ensure the three special effects chosen provide a range of Health and Safety and environmental issues.

Outcome 3

This Outcome should have a practical focus, allowing candidate's to develop the knowledge and skills to safely set up and operate a range of special effects. Where possible the content of Outcome 3 should be related to Outcome 2, to allow candidates to link the risk assessments carried out in Outcome 2 to the practical work they undertake in Outcome 3. It is recommended that Outcome 3 is delivered in the context of workshops, which will allow candidates to undertake the practical work in a safe and controlled environment.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Special Effects for Theatre

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Learning and teaching approaches can include professional workshops, lectures and tutorials, hands- on practical experience and independent research.

Outcome 1 and 3

Delivery of these Outcomes should be in an appropriate theatre/stage environment. Where effects involving smoke haze or fog the choice of venue will need to be researched carefully. It is recommended that Outcome 1 and 3 are delivered through a series of hands on workshops where demonstrations of special effects equipment take place to enable learners to become familiar with atmospheric effects for example how a snow machine works and where it could be used. A lighting effect such as gobo rotator, and a smoke or haze machine could be used.

Assessment for Outcome 1 could be a short report which requires the candidate to explain four different effects and briefly describe their main features and specific area of use. The candidate can use the same effect they have identified and described here for their practical work setting them up in Outcome 3.

Outcome 2

Delivery of this Outcome can be classroom based with exercises in how to assess risks and keep records up to date. The delivery of Outcome 2 should encompass a wide range of special effects and an investigation of the environmental impact some effects may have. The emphasis is on health, safety and the environment. Factors such as age and responsibility, safe storage, HSE regulations and relevant industry codes of practice will encompass the majority of delivery here.

Assessment for this Outcome could be a short written or recorded oral report of approximately 500 words. A completed risk assessment for setting up and operation of their chosen special effects could be carried out in Outcome 3.

Assessment for this Outcome could be a short report describing the setting up procedures combined with an observation checklist to record the candidates setting and operating the effects.

Opportunities for developing 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.

Outcomes 1 and 2 offer opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Communication* through the development of either written or oral reports.

Outcome 3 offers opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problems Solving* through the practical work on setting up and operating special effects.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Special Effects for Theatre

Open learning

The Outcomes in this Unit rely on developing practical skills through participation in workshops. Opportunities for distance learning are extremely limited. Centres however may find solutions, provided all Unit and Evidence Requirements are met in full. Advances in technology may make the possibility of such creative solutions more widespread in the future.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Special Effects for Theatre

This Unit is designed to enable you to understand the range and diversity of special effects and appropriate applications for them. It also enables you to gain practical experience preparing, rigging and operating a range of special effects.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

- ◆ Explain the range and diversity of special effects for theatre.
- ◆ Explain environmental, health and safety issues for a range of special effects.
- ◆ Set up and operate a range of special effects.

There are opportunities to be assessed through observation of your practical work and reports on the range of special effects used in theatres and their environmental and health and safety considerations.

There will be opportunities for you to develop your Core Skills in Communication and Problem Solving.