



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Vocal Techniques for Musical Theatre 2 (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: H90E 35

Superclass: LC

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

The purpose of this Unit is to equip learners with the theoretical and practical means/skills to extend and apply voice and speech production to complex aspects of presentation and performance.

This Unit is intended to develop skills covered in *Vocal Techniques 1* and to give learners more detailed knowledge and understanding of voice and speech production. It is primarily intended for learners who wish to work as performers/practitioners in the musical theatre/entertainment industry.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Develop and present a range of accents.
- 2 Prepare and present a range of contrasting dramatic texts to performance standard.
- 3 Evaluate own vocal technique.

Credit points and level

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

Recommended entry to the Unit

Access will be at the discretion of the centre and the following recommendations are for guidance only. It is recommended that the learner has successfully completed *Vocal Techniques for Musical Theatre 1* or an equivalent performance-related Unit. This Unit develops the work explored in the Unit *Vocal Techniques for Musical Theatre 1*.

Higher National Unit specification: General information (cont)

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Core Skills

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

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

Context for delivery

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

Equality and inclusion

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

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

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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

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

Outcome 1

Develop and present a range of accents.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Practical methods of producing a range of accents
- ◆ Vocalisation of a range of accents from a negotiated range of texts

Outcome 2

Prepare and present a range of contrasting dramatic texts to performance standard.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Preparation and presentation of contrasting dramatic texts
- ◆ Delivery of appropriate vocal choices informed by detailed analysis and interpretation of text
- ◆ Appropriate extension and use of vocal technique
- ◆ Application of rehearsal process to preparation for performance

Outcome 3

Evaluate own vocal technique.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Analysis of vocal development
- ◆ Analysis of strengths and weaknesses
- ◆ Strategies for development

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Outcome 1

Evidence will be required to demonstrate all aspects of Knowledge and/or Skills in this Outcome, showing that learners have an accurate understanding of the practical methods of producing a range of accents. The learner should also accurately demonstrate the pronunciation of a minimum of two accents from negotiated texts lasting a minimum of one minute each. Learners will be assessed using an observation checklist.

Outcome 2

Learners are required to present two contrasting texts which last for a total of five to six minutes. The pieces should be vocally challenging and delivered to performance standards. The learner will be assessed using an observational checklist.

Outcome 3

The learner should produce a report of approximately 1,000 words in which they evaluate the whole experience of developing their voice skills and the process of preparation for the final performance. The evaluation must include all items in the Knowledge and/or Skills list.

Higher National Unit specification Support notes

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

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

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is primarily intended to equip learners with the practical means/skills to extend and apply voice and speech production to more complex aspects of presentation and performance.

This is a mandatory Unit within the framework of the HNC/HND Musical Theatre Group Award and is intended to consolidate and extend the skills covered in the Unit *Vocal Techniques for Musical Theatre 1* and to give learners more detailed knowledge and understanding of voice and speech production which they will be able to apply in performance.

Learners who wish to work as practitioners/performers in the musical theatre/entertainment industry would benefit considerably from the more complex aspects of vocal skills which are developed in this Unit.

Learners should be encouraged to consider the Unit as part of the essential training required as a performer in musical theatre. It should be integrated, where possible, with other Units, eg *Acting 2: Applying skills in Performance*, *Performance 2: Applying Skills for Musical Theatre* and *Musical Theatre: Graded Unit 2*.

In Outcome 1, the learner will develop and present a range of accents, indigenous and non-indigenous. They will work through a series of short exercises in which they will develop an understanding of the best ways to produce accents. The exercises might be speeches taken from dramatic texts which have been written to be performed in particular accents, eg *The Slab Boys* by John Byrne (Glasgow, Scotland), *Under Milk Wood* by Dylan Thomas (Welsh) or *Bold Girls* by Rona Munro (Belfast, NI), *A Street Car Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams ('Deep South', USA). These examples are only suggestions, as each centre would choose appropriate texts. Learners should be encouraged to work practically on these exercises, analysing the characteristics of the accents which will be practised in order to develop accuracy in production of the accent.

One approach might be to encourage learners to listen to professionally produced versions of the selected accents, analysing the characteristics of each accent prior to practising the accent. Textbooks about accents which have accompanying CDs would be a useful resource, eg *Accents* by Blumenfeld. Learners should also listen to their own versions of accents by having audio recordings of their work produced. This will help the analytical process.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Learners might be introduced to The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) where the application of phonetic symbols to descriptions of vowels and consonants would clarify the exact positioning of these sounds within the vocal mechanism and would enhance the learner's learning experience. Frequently, the IPA is referred to and used in standard voice, speech and accent training textbooks and learners might be placed at a disadvantage if they were to have no understanding of the IPA (Reference book: *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English* by A C Gimson). However, it is not necessary to assess learners on their knowledge of the IPA as a separate skill.

In Outcome 2, the learner will prepare and present a range of contrasting texts/materials to performance standards. This assessment will demonstrate the culmination of the learner's vocal development throughout the Unit and it is important that the learner prepares the texts to performance standard, ensuring that the pieces are vocally challenging and appropriate to their ability.

The learner will select, with help from the tutor, the most appropriate pieces to perform, bearing in mind that a time limit of five to six minutes is recommended for the presentation. Learners may wish to select dramatic texts which may be used for future audition purposes or for use in the final showcase (Graded Unit) where this could be successfully integrated, or for use in the final production (if this is not the Graded Unit). The final presentation of the text will be performed to an appropriate audience and the learner should demonstrate sensitivity and awareness to both the audience and the performance space.

The most appropriate pieces might be chosen from the following categories:

- ◆ A classical speech (principal character and appropriate accent)
- ◆ A modern speech (principal character and appropriate accent)
- ◆ A song (from a musical/Scottish/standard/character)

The learner must ensure that the texts chosen demonstrate sufficient contrast.

It is recommended that learners avoid the selection of speeches/texts which are over-performed. Nor should they choose speeches/songs from audition speech textbooks unless they can put the speech/text into context. Learners should not choose unpublished work unless approved by the tutor, and it is not recommended that they choose speeches/texts for the opposite sex unless it is the playwright's intention to have the character performed that way.

It is recommended that workshops for Outcome 2 include the exploration of sight reading techniques designed to develop appropriate analysis, interpretation and delivery of text within a limited time frame. For example, a text could be given to the learner no more than 5 minutes before their reading. Whilst it is not necessary to assess sight reading as a separate skill, it may be beneficial to learners to have an understanding of this area.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

Although this Unit can be delivered on a free-standing, standalone basis it also forms part of a Group Award, which is primarily designed to provide learners with technical and professional knowledge and skills related to working as performers in the musical theatre or entertainment industry. It would be expected that those who successfully complete the Group Award would be likely to progress to looking for work as performers or practitioners. In these circumstances, the Unit is likely to be delivered in year two of the Group Award by which time learners will have a good appreciation of the training in voice and acting skills which would inform the delivery of this Unit. This should allow the Unit to be delivered in a way that enables learners to appreciate its relevance to the musical theatre/entertainment industry.

Three instruments of assessment will be used throughout the delivery period of the Unit at times when the tutor decides that the learner is ready to be assessed, bearing in mind the recommendation to integrate some assessments with those of other mandatory Units. The assessment of this Unit requires tutor observation and support as each learner progresses through the stages of development. Practical exercises may be supported by audio recordings.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

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

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

This Unit could be assessed by three instruments of assessment, which require learners to produce evidence of complex aspects of vocal development.

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. Learners should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Assessment Guidelines

For Outcome 1, a practical exercise is the instrument of assessment in which the learner demonstrates a range of accents from a negotiated range of dramatic texts.

For Outcome 2, learners will be assessed by a practical exercise whereby learners perform two contrasting speeches.

For Outcome 3, learners will be assessed by a written and/or oral report.

Learners must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified for each Outcome, in order to pass the Unit.

Opportunities for e-assessment

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

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Learners carrying out research online for Outcome 1 may have opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

Learners will be producing written and/or oral evidence for Outcome 3, offering ideal opportunity to develop aspects of the Core Skill *Communication*.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

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This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This Unit is designed to equip you with the theoretical and practical means/skills to extend and apply voice and speech production to more complex aspects of presentation and performance. It is primarily intended to prepare you to extend your vocal skills in order to assist you to work as a performer in the musical theatre or entertainment industry. On completion of this Unit, you will have gained a wide range of practical/performance and theoretical experiences which you can apply to acting and production.

To begin with, in Outcome 1, you will learn how to how to produce different accents.

In Outcome 2, you will prepare and present a range of contrasting texts/materials which you will deliver to performance standard. These dramatic texts should be vocally challenging and should be selected to show your individual strengths as a performer. They may be used for audition purposes in the future.

Finally, you will evaluate your individual vocal technique.

In order to complete this Unit successfully, you will be required to complete three different types of assessment.

The first one will be a series of practical exercises in which you demonstrate a range of accents as well as produce evidence that you understand the practical methods of producing different accents.

The second assessment will be a practical exercise in which you perform two contrasting texts.

The third assessment will be a written or oral report in which you evaluate your individual vocal technique.