



Advanced Higher  
Course  
Specification



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# Advanced Higher Drama Course Specification (C721 77)

**Valid from August 2015**

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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## Course outline

**Course title:** Advanced Higher Drama

**SCQF:** level 7 (32 SCQF credit points)

**Course code:** C721 77

### Mandatory Units

**H231 77 Drama Skills (Advanced Higher) 12 SCQF credit points**

**H232 77 Drama: Production Skills (Advanced Higher) 12 SCQF credit points**

**Course assessment 8 SCQF credit points**

This Course includes eight SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

### Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ Higher Drama Course

### Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ a range of drama-related Higher National Diplomas (HNDs)
- ◆ degrees in drama and related disciplines
- ◆ careers in the creative industries

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

### Equality and inclusion

This Course 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. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes* and the *Course Assessment Specification*.

## **Rationale**

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities, as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

## **Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles**

The Course is practical and experiential. Learners will develop and apply skills in devising and performing theatre. They will develop skills in acting, directing and design. The Advanced Higher Course extends the study of the art of theatre, its forms and its practices, by exploring and analysing the work of leading theatre practitioners. The Course provides scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, learners are encouraged to explore, analyse and take an imaginative approach. The Course encourages learners to be creative and to express themselves in different ways, allowing them to develop important skills, attitudes and attributes. Learning through drama helps learners to develop an appreciation of aesthetic, social and cultural values, identities and ideas.

Learning in the Course will include active involvement in devising, creating, appreciating and using theatre to communicate with an audience. It will also include the analysis of texts and the study of key theatre practitioners.

The Course also provides opportunities to continue developing the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities. Learners will develop perseverance, independence and resilience as they draw on their critical understanding of how theatre practice has been shaped by key practitioners when developing, realising, and refining their skills in acting, directing or design. They will reach informed creative decisions in their work and manage and direct their learning. They will become more creative, self-assured and adept at expressing and communicating their ideas through their work.

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

This Course should encourage learners to be inspired and challenged through the provision of a range of learning experiences which will develop important skills that focus on the creative exploration of the art of theatre, its forms and its practices, and practical aspects of theatre. It also provides opportunities to develop transferable skills for learning, life and work.

The Advanced Higher Drama Course allows learners to explore both the practical and analytical aspects of the subject. It provides opportunities for learners to develop skills through practical aspects of theatre, the creative exploration of the art of theatre and its forms and practices.

Learners will investigate how theatre practice has been shaped by key practitioners. They will expand and develop their own skills within their chosen area of acting, directing or design. Learners will also develop their skills in devising and interpreting text. Further, they will explore means of using theatre and performance skills to communicate effectively with an audience and investigate how key practitioners have influenced the theatre today. Learners will also develop problem solving and critical thinking skills as they analyse theatre practice and interpret text. They will also learn to analyse their performance and the performance of others.

The aims of the Course are to enable learners to:

- ◆ develop autonomy and independent thinking skills
- ◆ develop skills in performing within their chosen area of acting, directing or design
- ◆ develop individual creativity when applying skills in problem solving, analysis and evaluation
- ◆ analyse current theatrical performance
- ◆ develop analytical skills in the interpretation of texts
- ◆ develop knowledge and understanding of theatre practice and key practitioners
- ◆ develop knowledge and understanding of social and cultural influences on drama

This Course would provide opportunities for progression to a variety of other qualifications in other related fields, including HNCs/HNDs in Acting and Performance, Musical Theatre, and the HNC in Technical Theatre.

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

This Course is a broad-based qualification, suitable for all learners with an interest in drama. It is suitable for learners with a general interest in the subject, or for those wanting to progress onto higher levels of study within the field of drama and theatre. This qualification will allow learners to develop and extend their skills in their chosen specialism of acting, directing or design.

Learners will explore, develop and communicate ideas and performance concepts in theatre, either through acting, directing or design. Learners will devise drama and interpret texts, using understanding of form, style, structure, genre, and study the work of key theatre practitioners to inform and communicate their performance concepts to an audience.

On completing the Course, learners will be able to apply skills in acting, directing or design to a piece of theatre which may be influenced by a theatrical practitioner. They

will be able to communicate thoughts, ideas and meanings in a theatrical context and work independently and collaboratively with others to create theatre. Learners will also be able to interpret texts, analyse and appreciate theatre and have cultural and social awareness of a broad range of drama and production techniques. Learners will also be able to analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

The learning experiences in the Course are flexible and adaptable, with opportunities for personalisation and choice. This makes the qualification highly accessible, as it can be contextualised to suit a diverse range of learners' needs and aspirations. The Course is largely learner-centred, with practical and experiential learning opportunities.

# Course structure and conditions of award

## Course structure

The Course has an integrated approach to learning, with a mix of practical learning and exploration of theatre practice. The Course allows learners to further develop and apply skills in their acting/directing/design roles to make a creative and coherent theatrical statement.

Learners will analyse the work of key theatre practitioners and in doing so will develop their own practical skills. They will explore the ways in which meaning can be communicated to an audience. Reflective skills will also be developed as they evaluate their own performance and that of others. Learners will also consider the social and cultural influences on drama.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

### **Drama Skills (Advanced Higher)**

This Unit will focus on learners developing their knowledge of methodologies, theatre practices and texts to progress their devising skills. Their knowledge and skills will be informed by the work of a key theatre practitioner.

They will independently create a devised drama production. This will explore how meaning can be communicated to an audience through practical realisation of their own theatrical concepts. Learners will also evaluate the effectiveness of their concepts.

### **Drama: Production Skills (Advanced Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will focus on a study of a key theatre practitioner, and explore in depth the influences on and the theory and practice of their chosen practitioner. They will explore and analyse key productions that reflect their acting or directing or design methodologies through both research and practical experimentation. They will take on the role of the actor or director or designer in the exploration of a textual extract.

## Conditions of award

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding

Further information on the assessment of skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course is given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section.

These are:

- ◆ interpreting the historical, social and cultural contexts of complex drama texts
- ◆ analysing and interpreting the role and craft of the actor, director, and designer
- ◆ working independently to produce a theatrical concept
- ◆ applying skills in performing and directing and design
- ◆ creating and presenting their own theatrical concepts
- ◆ investigating how meaning can be communicated to an audience
- ◆ using a range of complex creative problem solving, planning and evaluation skills within the creative process
- ◆ exploring and investigating the influence, theory and practice of key theatre practitioners
- ◆ analysing and evaluating the impact of key productions by theatre practitioners

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.sqa.org.uk/scqf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/scqf)).

## Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

### Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*.

They can be assessed on a Unit-by-Unit basis or by combined assessment.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows.

#### **Drama Skills (Advanced Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in devising, directing and performing through the exploration of a key practitioner. They will use their skills to create and present a devised drama. Learners will evaluate their work.

#### **Drama: Production Skills (Advanced Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of drama through the exploration of a key practitioner. They will view and analyse a live theatrical event, considering performance concepts and effectiveness. They will develop and apply production skills in their chosen role as either an actor or director or designer.

A minimum of two practitioners should be studied, with each Unit exploring a different practitioner.

Exemplification of possible assessment approaches for these Units is provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

### Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)<sup>1</sup>. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course rationale. It will do this by addressing one or both of [challenge](#)<sup>2</sup> or [application](#)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html>

<sup>2</sup> See link above for definition.

<sup>3</sup> See link above for definition.



In the Advanced Higher Drama Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

The learner will draw on, extend and apply the skills they have learned during the Course. This will be assessed through a drama performance and a project. The drama performance will involve analysing their chosen text (historical, social and cultural contexts, previous productions and their own concept) to create and present drama. The project will require demonstration of a depth of knowledge and understanding from the Units in the Course.

As part of the performance, learners will be required to produce a preparation for performance. This will focus on the process which the learner undertook in order to arrive at the concepts for the performance.

The project adds value by requiring integration and application of knowledge and skills from across the Units. Learners will demonstrate their knowledge of relevant performance theories and practice in the form of a dissertation.

# Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

## **1 Literacy**

1.3 Listening and talking

## **3 Health and wellbeing**

3.1 Personal learning

## **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

4.3 Working with others

## **5 Thinking skills**

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

5.5 Creating

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

# Administrative information

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## History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	<p>Page 4: 'Purposes and aims of the Course' section — minor change to wording for clarification. '20th century' removed to allow work from the 21st century to be included.</p> <p>Page 6: 'Course structure and conditions of award' section and page 8: 'Assessment' section — minor changes to wording to clarify devising skills for the Drama Skills Unit and production roles for the Production Skills Unit.</p> <p>Page 9: 'Assessment' section — change to terminology in Course assessment. 'Report' amended to 'preparation for performance' and the project classified as a dissertation.</p>	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2015

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