



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Drama: Voice Skills (SCQF level 6)

CODE F5LF 12

SUMMARY

This Unit will introduce candidates to the principles of voice production and the practical application of vocal techniques. Candidates will explore the basic anatomy and physiology of the voice and participate in vocal exercises designed to develop vocal control. In addition, candidates will explore a range of texts, which will be used to develop creative expression through the use of the voice. This Unit provides candidates with the opportunity to evaluate their own voice skills.

This is a mandatory Unit within the National Certificate in Acting and Theatre Performance (SCQF level 6), but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit is suitable for candidates who have some previous drama experience and have an interest in developing voice skills and exploring vocal technique.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Identify and explain the basic anatomy and physiology of voice production.
- 2 Use vocal exercises to develop vocal techniques.
- 3 Use and evaluate own voice skills in a variety of texts.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

Administrative Information

Superclass: LC

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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CREDIT VALUE

2 credits at Higher (12 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*).

**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.*

CORE SKILLS

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

This Unit provides opportunities for candidate to develop aspects of the following Core Skills:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Working with Others

These opportunities are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

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.

OUTCOME 1

Identify and explain the basic anatomy and physiology of voice production.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify the basic anatomy and explain the physiology involved in the breathing process.
- (b) Identify the basic anatomy and explain the physiology involved in pitch, tone and resonance.
- (c) Identify the basic anatomy and explain the physiology involved in the articulation process.

OUTCOME 2

Use vocal exercises to develop vocal techniques.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Develop and demonstrate effective breath control.
- (b) Develop and demonstrate a range of pitch, tone and resonance.
- (c) Develop and demonstrate effective articulation skills.

OUTCOME 3

Use and evaluate own voice skills in a variety of texts.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Interpret each text creatively.
- (b) Use appropriate vocal techniques within each text.
- (c) Evaluate strengths and areas for development of own voice skills.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Outcome 1

Written and/or oral evidence is required for Outcome 1. Candidates must identify and explain the anatomy and physiology of voice production, including: diaphragm; intercostal muscles; respiration process; larynx; pharynx; vocal folds; pitch; resonators; speech organs.

The evidence for this Outcome must be obtained under supervised conditions on one assessment occasion. The assessment will be closed-book.

Outcome 2

Performance evidence, supplemented by an Assessor Observation Checklist, is required to show that the candidate has developed and can demonstrate effective breath control, pitch, tone, resonance and articulation using vocal exercises.

Evidence must be gathered in supervised conditions at appropriate points in the Unit.

Outcome 3

Performance evidence, supplemented by an Assessor Observation Checklist, is required to show that the candidate is able to use voice appropriately to portray style, mood and character and can demonstrate appropriate intonation, vocal energy, clarity and projection.

The candidate must interpret two contrasting solo pieces from a selection of poetry, prose or a monologue from a dramatic text. Each piece will last a minimum of three minutes and can be assessed on separate occasions, or together in one performance. In addition, each candidate must present in groups a dramatic text involving two or more characters of a minimum of five minutes which shows evidence of character development through vocal skills. The group piece must be assessed on one occasion.

Written and/or oral evidence is required for Performance Criteria (c). Candidates must identify individual strengths and areas for development in their vocal skills and abilities, including pitch, tone, resonance, articulation, breath control, interpretation of text and delivery of performance.

This evaluation must be based on one of the solo pieces and the group piece and this evidence will be gathered in supervised conditions after the final presentation. The minimum word count is 500 words.

Evidence must be gathered under supervised conditions throughout this Outcome.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides sample assessment material including assessor checklists. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

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 exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This is a mandatory Unit within the National Certificate in Acting and Theatre Performance (SCQF level 6), but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This is a mainly practical Unit, designed to encourage candidates to view and appreciate the voice as integral to the training and development of the actor. This Unit will provide candidates with a basic understanding of the anatomy and physiology of the voice. From here, candidates will practise and explore vocal technique, using a range of vocal exercises. The development of vocal skills will allow candidates to perform with vocal energy and creativity. The exploration of creative expression such as this will contribute to the development of the actor as a whole.

The delivery of this Unit may be integrated with *Drama: Acting Skills* (SCQF level 6) and *Drama: Theatre Skills in Performance* (SCQF level 6).

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It is recommended that Outcome 1 include tutorials/lectures on the anatomy and physiology of the voice and that these are delivered at the start of the Unit. This will provide candidates with a theoretical understanding of voice production, which will provide a background to the practical study of voice skills, for example during practical warm-ups, rehearsals and presentations.

Outcome 2 should include vocal exercises which should take place at the start of each class and which may also be included in acting and production rehearsals. Whole class warm-ups should be used to create a positive, focused and energised working environment. These should cover breath control, providing support for the voice, followed by pitch, tone and resonance exercises. Articulation exercises should be practised and developed. Vocal energy should be encouraged in all voice activities. Tutor feedback and recommendations for vocal development should be provided on an ongoing basis.

Outcome 3 should involve the application of all that is learned in Outcomes 1 and 2, to allow the candidate to demonstrate effective and creative use of voice using texts. A range of material should be selected to creatively explore vocal techniques through practical vocal delivery. For solo pieces this could include poetry, prose, monologue, song lyrics etc. For the group extract, possible texts could come from radio plays, dramatic texts or poetry involving more than one voice. The rehearsal process of preparing vocal presentations will involve the candidate working individually and in small groups.

Where appropriate, candidates should be encouraged to work in groups as well as individually to evaluate their own strengths and areas for development, as well as those of other group members.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Candidates will be producing written and/or oral evidence for Outcome 1 as part of the assessment. This offers ideal opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill *Communication*.

Candidates would also have the opportunity to develop aspects of the Core Skill *Working with Others*, if Outcomes 2 and 3 are undertaken on a group basis.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

A suitable method of assessment for Outcome 1 could be a written question paper in which candidates will demonstrate their understanding of basic vocal physiology and anatomy.

Outcome 2 could be assessed through practical exercises, which would be recorded by the assessor on observation checklists. The ASP for this Unit provides useful checklists and guidance for assessing candidate performance against Performance Criteria detailed in the statement of standards. This assessment should be on-going throughout the Unit.

The performance evidence for Outcome 3 should be gathered from the presentation of two contrasting solo pieces and one group piece. Each solo piece should last a minimum of three minutes and the group piece should last a minimum of five minutes. Assessor checklists should be used to supplement the performance evidence. It is also recommended that the final performances be recorded on video, DVD, or another suitable recording device. For Performance Criteria (c), a suitable method of assessment for the evaluation could be a written or oral evaluation.

Time should be allowed for any necessary re-assessment.

Opportunities for the use of 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 communications technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

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