



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Theatre Stage Sound Operations (SCQF level 6)

CODE F694 12

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to provide candidates with the knowledge and skills to operate and maintain sound equipment for a theatre production. Although this Unit may be delivered in conjunction with other Technical Theatre Units, it may be offered on a free-standing basis and is suitable for candidates who have an interest in and/or some previous experience in technical aspects of theatre.

The candidate will interpret and implement a given sound plan and will rig, connect, test, control and operate sound equipment. Throughout the Unit the candidate will apply knowledge and understanding of theatre sound equipment and awareness of relevant health and safety issues.

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

OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of theatre sound.
- 2 Prepare and set up theatre sound equipment and effects according to a given plan.
- 3 Plot and run sound cues.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

Administrative Information

Superclass: LE

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CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at SCQF level 6 (6 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
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ 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

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of theatre sound.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Describe a range of theatre sound equipment.
- (b) Explain theatre sound terminology accurately.
- (c) Identify relevant health and safety issues.

OUTCOME 2

Prepare and set up theatre sound equipment and effects according to a given plan.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify sound requirements.
- (b) Select appropriate resources and equipment.
- (c) Source, record and edit sound effects.
- (d) Rig and connect sound equipment.
- (e) Adhere to relevant health and safety requirements.

OUTCOME 3

Plot and run sound cues.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Carry out sound checks.
- (b) Plot sound cues.
- (c) Run the sequence of sound cues.
- (d) Adhere to relevant health and safety requirements.

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 to reflect the candidate's ability to:

- ◆ identify a minimum of five items of sound equipment and describe their use
- ◆ demonstrate knowledge of theatre sound terminology
- ◆ identify knowledge of a range of key health and safety issues

This evidence must be obtained under closed-book conditions at a point early in the delivery of the Unit.

Outcome 2

Performance evidence, supported by an Assessor Observation Checklist is required to demonstrate that the candidate can interpret the sound requirements from a given plan. The plan will be provided by the tutor and will be derived from a short dramatic extract. The plan must allow sufficient breadth and focus to allow the candidate to prepare a minimum of eight sound cues, including a minimum of four sound effects. A minimum of two loudspeakers must be incorporated within the plan. The candidate must rig and connect sound equipment according to the plan. The candidate must demonstrate an ability to follow health and safety procedures and guidelines.

The evidence for this Outcome should be gathered on an ongoing basis in supervised conditions at appropriate points during the delivery of the Unit.

Outcome 3

Performance evidence, supported by an Assessor Observation Checklist, is required to show that the candidate has acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to:

- ◆ carry out sound checks
- ◆ plot and document sound cues
- ◆ run the sequence of sound cues
- ◆ adhere to relevant health and safety requirements

The evidence for this Outcome must be gathered in supervised conditions on an on-going basis at appropriate points during the delivery of the Unit.

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 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

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

This is a predominantly practical Unit providing the candidate with knowledge and skills in theatre sound operations. Throughout, the implementation of safe working practices should be a focus. This focus should not be in detailed knowledge of health and safety legislation, but on the practical application of safe work and an understanding of where to access health and safety information. Where possible, this Unit may be integrated with other Units within the National Certificates in Technical Theatre (SCQF level 6) and Acting and Theatre Performance (SCQF level 6).

In Outcome 1 the candidate will have the opportunity to learn and use appropriate terminology specific to sound within the context of technical theatre. Sound terminology and equipment may be drawn from the following, as appropriate:

- ◆ sound: wavelength; frequency; amplitude; octaves; frequency response; decibels; human voice and hearing
- ◆ microphone types; pick-up patterns; selection and use; loudspeaker types; baffles; connectors and cables
- ◆ microphone technique: stands; positions; instruments; cabling
- ◆ mixers: analogue/digital equipment; gain; polarity-phase; auxiliaries; meters; monitoring
- ◆ amplifying: power supply; power output; impedance matching; levels; distortion
- ◆ equalising: parametric; band pass; graphic; feedback reduction
- ◆ rigging: setup/placement; line checks; monitors; sound-check
- ◆ operating: sound operating in performance; cue sheets; documentation; fault-finding
- ◆ systems: recording process; analogue/digital recording; signal processing; storage media; hardware/software systems; radio microphone systems
- ◆ products: backing tracks; sound effects; scene setting music/effects; information/safety announcements; house music

For Outcome 2 candidates should be given time and opportunity to develop practical skills in rigging and connecting sound equipment. The opportunity should be given to cover as wide a range of sound effects as time permits.

For Outcome 3 rehearsal time should be allocated for operating the sound plan and correcting any problems that arise.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

A possible sequence of learning and teaching might be an introduction to technical equipment and health and safety procedures, instruction on the correct procedures for maintaining and storing the equipment, practice in the use of equipment and interpretation of sound plans and practice in operating equipment according to a plan.

The learning and teaching environment should be mainly practical to allow for the on-going acquisition of the knowledge and skills required. Throughout, tutor feedback is invaluable in order to inform next steps and candidates should be encouraged to offer feedback to others as an effective way of developing, learning and working as part of a small group or team.

The candidate should be guided in the ability to match the sound plan to the constraints of the performance/teaching space, especially with regards to the availability of sound equipment. Solutions to any identified problems should be appropriate and practical and agreed in consultation with the tutor.

One approach could be that candidates keep a folio of their work during the Unit. This could include background information, notes on sound ideas, written/graphic work, preliminary and agreed sound plans and cue sheets.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

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

Candidates will also have the opportunity to develop aspects of the Core Skill *Working with Others* if the practical assignments for Outcomes 2 and 3 are delivered in a class/group environment.

Candidates are required to demonstrate that they can interpret the sound requirements from a given plan for Outcome 2. This presents opportunities for developing aspects of the Core Skill *Problem Solving*.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Formative assessment should operate as an integral part of the learning and teaching in this Unit. It should include discussion, observation of the candidate's work, supported by detailed checklists.

An awareness of assessment requirements and arrangements at the outset of this Unit will lend purpose to candidates' learning. In addition, it may be possible to integrate this Unit with other Units in the National Certificate in Technical Theatre (SCQF level 6), providing a realistic and practical framework for assessment.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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A suitable method of assessment for Outcome 1 could be short answer questions.

A suitable method of assessment for Outcomes 2 and 3 is a practical assignment.

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