NextGen: HN unit specification

Industry and Audition Advanced Skills (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: J87N 48

SCQF level: 8 (16 SCQF credit points)

Valid from: August 2026

This unit specification provides detailed information about the unit to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It is for lecturers and assessors, and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver and assess the unit.

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Unit purpose

This unit helps learners to understand the requirements for entering the performing arts industry as a self-employed actor. It offers learners the opportunity to develop an understanding and awareness of sustainability in performing arts. Learners also reflect on their own personal development and development of meta-skills.

We recommend the unit to learners who have completed Higher National Certificate (HNC) Acting and Performance (SCQF level 7) and who want to further advance and develop their acting skills.

Learners who complete the unit may wish to progress to further studies and/or seek work in the performing arts industry.

Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

1. prepare for work as an actor
2. produce an up-to-date and relevant self-tape for a stage or screen audition
3. prepare material for a live audition piece
4. perform material for a live audition piece
5. research sustainability in performing arts

Evidence requirements

The standard of evidence for all outcomes should be consistent with the SCQF level of the unit.

Learners must provide the following evidence:

Outcome 1

Learners prepare for work as an actor. They must:

- produce a portfolio, demonstrating understanding of:
  - the personal strengths and skills suited to various types of employment
  - marketing and self-promotion
  - casting type within industry
  - the influences of social media
  - pay as you earn (PAYE) and tax requirements for self-employment
- produce an up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV)

Learners can present their portfolios in digital format or as an oral presentation. Oral presentations should last a maximum of 10 minutes and should be recorded for evidence.

Outcome 2

Learners produce an up-to-date, appropriate and relevant self-tape for a stage or screen audition to meet professional standards. Learners must:

- produce a self-tape, lasting no more than 2 minutes, that meets current audition requirements in terms of performance material and technical requirements
- demonstrate the performance or performances to the constraints of self-tape audition requirements, including:
  - audience and camera awareness
  - emotional and physical authenticity of characterisation
  - appropriate use of vocal qualities
- engage in critical reflection to self-reflect on the audition process and their self-tape performance or performances. This includes a justification of their selected material

Learners can present their reflection as a written or oral presentation. The written reflection should be a maximum of 500 words. Oral presentations should be a maximum of 5 minutes.

Outcome 3

Learners must prepare material for a live audition to meet professional standards, under audition conditions. They must:

- select two contrasting pieces, appropriate for casting type, either two monologues or one monologue and one duologue that meet current live audition requirements. Monologues should last no more than 2 minutes, duologues 3 to 4 minutes
- rehearse pieces for a mock audition
- critically reflect throughout the rehearsal process

This outcome is assessed with outcome 4.

Outcome 4

Learners must perform material for a live audition piece that meets professional standards, under audition conditions. They must:

- perform two contrasting audition pieces that meet current live audition requirements
- perform two contrasting live audition pieces that meet the constraints of the live audition requirements, in terms of:
  - audience awareness
  - appropriate vocal qualities
  - stage and spatial awareness
  - sustained emotional and physical authenticity of characterisation
- participate in a question-and-answer session. Learners should self-reflect on their selection, rehearsal and performance of the audition material. Learners should justify their selection of material. The question-and-answer session should last approximately 5 minutes

Learners should be guided by the audition requirements in terms of time for each contrasting piece.

Outcome 5

Learners must research sustainability in performing arts. They must:

- produce a portfolio, demonstrating understanding of:
  - United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)
  - the interconnection and comparison between two UN SDGs and performing arts education
  - the interconnection and comparison between two UN SDGs and live performance
  - improvements to performing arts education and live performance where two UN SDGs could be further achieved

Learners can present their portfolio as a written or oral presentation. The written reflection should be a maximum of 500 words. Oral presentations should be a maximum of 5 minutes.

Knowledge and skills

Knowledge	Skills
Outcome 1 Learners should understand: • the self-reflection process for personal strengths and skills • the importance of recognising their casting type in the industry • various types of employment as an actor • the influence of social media • self-employed finance • the requirement to maintain an up-to-date CV	**Outcome 1** Learners can: • identify their own strengths and skill set as an actor • describe methods of marketing and • self-promotion • describe influences of social media • explain PAYE and tax requirements for self-employment • produce an up-to-date CV
Outcome 2 Learners should understand: • what constitutes contrast and range in audition material • the technical requirements for recording a self-tape with updated and relevant material • audience and camera awareness • use of voice • spatial awareness • emotional and physical authenticity of characterisation • strengths and weaknesses within their final product	**Outcome 2** Learners can: • select, with justification, appropriate audition material • prepare and rehearse audition material • produce an up-to-date self-tape for stage or film, in accordance with audition requirements • critically reflect on their self-tape • select appropriate audition material

Knowledge	Skills
Outcome 3 Learners should understand: • what constitutes contrast and a range in audition material • appropriate material to suit audition type • what constitutes classical and contemporary audition material • the process of self-reflection	**Outcome 3** Learners can: • select, with justification, appropriate audition material • prepare and rehearse audition material • critically reflect on the rehearsal process
Outcome 4 Learners should understand: • the importance of adhering to audition requirements • audience awareness • use of voice, where appropriate, in an audition piece • stage and spatial awareness • emotional, vocal and physical authenticity of characterisation • the critical reflection process	**Outcome 4** Learners can: • perform to the constraints of audition requirements • demonstrate audience awareness • sustain emotional, vocal and physical authenticity of characterisation • critically reflect on their performance (through professional dialogue)
Outcome 5 Learners should understand: • general principles of sustainability • UN SDGs in terms of their aims and interconnectivity • incorporation of sustainability in performing arts • inclusion of sustainability in their training	**Outcome 5** Learners can: • review the UN SDGs • compare the interconnection between two sustainability goals and live performance or performing arts education • describe improvements to performing arts education or live performance where sustainability goals could be further achieved

Meta-skills

You must give learners opportunities to develop their meta-skills throughout this unit. We have suggested how to incorporate the most relevant ones into the unit content, but you may find other opportunities.

Self-management

This includes focusing, integrity, adapting and initiative. The most relevant are:

- focusing:
    - remaining focused throughout rehearsals and performances, both live and filmed
- integrity:
    - being reliable and meeting deadlines
- adapting:
    - working in two different mediums — live and filmed
    - responding to an audition panel
- initiative:
    - selecting appropriate audition pieces
    - developing ideas

Social intelligence

This includes communicating, feeling, collaborating and leading. The most relevant are:

- communicating:
    - through the mediums of live performance and screen work
    - with audition panels

- feeling:
    - having empathy with characters
    - having empathy with the story
- collaborating:
    - taking direction during the audition process

Innovation

This includes curiosity, creativity, sense-making and critical thinking. The most relevant are:

- curiosity:
    - learning about sustainability
- creativity:
    - in rehearsing and preparing for both live and filmed audition work
- sense-making:
    - researching
    - analysing texts
    - understanding different types of audition requirements
- critical thinking:
    - reviewing and reflecting on work and self-reflection

Learning for Sustainability

Throughout this unit, you should encourage learners to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of sustainability.

This includes:

- a general understanding of social, economic and environmental sustainability
- a general understanding of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- a deeper understanding of subject-specific sustainability
- the confidence to apply the skills, knowledge, understanding and values they develop in the next stage of their life

Delivery of unit

This is a mandatory unit in the Higher National Diploma (HND) Acting and Performance.

There are opportunities to integrate and cross-assess with other mandatory units at SCQF level 8:

- Advanced Performance Skills: Acting
- Advanced Performance Skills: Voice
- Advanced Performance Skills: Movement

There are also opportunities to integrate and cross-assess with optional units.

Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

Content and context for this unit

The unit focuses on preparing learners for the audition process and for entering the performing arts industry. Learners must use the knowledge and skills they developed in the Advanced Performance Skills: Acting, Advanced Performance Skills: Voice, and Advanced Performance Skills: Movement units, so that they understand their playing range, capabilities, and which type of roles are suitable for them. Learners can market themselves and learn the financial implications of being self-employed.

The portfolio required in outcome 1 can be presented in oral or digital format.

Learners must meet the demands of the professional industry or higher-level courses when they prepare and perform their audition. They should choose material that relates to the current audition requirements that best reflect their skills, while adhering to the critical requirements of the audition in terms of requested time constraints and performance material. Learners can research the performing arts landscape in the UK in terms of small or large-scale production companies. Learners should demonstrate the appropriate etiquette at an audition.

The unit has two practical projects — preparing and producing a self-tape; and preparing for and performing in a live mock audition. Learners must not choose the same material that they selected in the HNC Acting and Performance (SCQF level 7). They should select material that is informed by the audition requirements. This can include classical, contemporary or devised work. You should encourage learners to explore a range of material within their skills base. Learners must justify their choice of material in relation to their strengths and skills. They must produce their self-tape with reference to current opportunities for actors that are available online. Self-reflection is an important part of the process. Throughout their preparation, rehearsals and performances, learners should critically reflect on their progress.

Learners should focus on ‘acting for screen’ and not filming techniques or editing when they prepare their self-tape. The self-tape should adhere to the current audition requirements and instructions given by the performing arts organisation. A mobile phone is likely to suffice for filming; however, the end product should look professional in that, for example, backgrounds are appropriate, the camera is steady, and lighting is appropriate. Learners must use professional acting techniques, such as the use of voice, eyeline, playing of subtext, and reactions.

We expect your centre to set the final audition parameters clearly, for example an audition for Lyceum season, a TIE company, or a drama school audition. This allows a clear metric on which learners can base their preparation criteria.

For the live audition, two contrasting pieces should be selected. This could be two monologues or one monologue and one duologue.

The live audition should take place in an appropriate space so that you can assess movement, spatial awareness and vocal qualities.

Learners prepare and perform their material for audition to demonstrate a level of vocal, physical, and psychological awareness, consistent with required skills for employability.

You should encourage peer group and tutor feedback during the process of preparation.

You can authenticate learners’ work in their reflections and professional dialogues.

Learners should research sustainability in performing arts. This helps them to identify sustainability issues in their own experiences of live performance and training. Of particular interest are the UN SDGs and the Theatre Green Book.

Approaches to assessment

Learners can present their evidence for outcome 1 in digital format, or as an oral presentation. You must record the presentation for evidence.

The self-tape and critical reflection form the assessment for outcome 2. The critical reflection can be oral or written.

Outcome 3 is evidenced in the final assessment for outcome 4, the ‘live’ audition.

For outcome 4, we recommend that learners perform their live audition to a panel consisting of at least two people, one of whom should be you, the assessor. You must record both the audition and the question-and-answer session for evidence. You can use assessment checklists for the assessments of the self-tape (outcome 2) and the live audition performance (outcome 4). You should support assessor checklists with commentary, where appropriate, on how learner evidence has met the required criteria.

Learners can present their evidence for outcome 5 as a written or oral presentation. The written reflection should be a maximum of 500 words. Oral presentations should be a maximum of 5 minutes.

Equality and inclusion

This unit is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You must consider the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page.

Information for learners

Industry and Audition Advanced Skills (SCQF level 8)

This information explains:

- what the unit is about
- what you should know or be able to do before you start
- what you need to do during the unit
- opportunities for further learning and employment

Unit information

In this unit, you develop the audition skills you need to enter the performing arts industry. It helps you to prepare for auditions — both self-taped and live.

We recommend the unit if you have an interest in developing your acting skills and if you have completed HNC Acting and Performance (SCQF level 7).

You learn about marketing and self-promotion, and PAYE for self-employment.

You develop research skills in searching for audition requirements in conjunction with your strengths as a performer.

You produce a portfolio in which you demonstrate your understanding of requirements for entering the performing arts industry.

You have two practical tasks — to produce a self-tape for an audition and to perform in a live mock audition. Throughout the unit, you critically reflect on your progress.

You critically reflect on the process, the choices you made, and the performances of your two (self-taped and live) audition tasks.

When you finish the unit, you can audition for work in the performing arts industry. You can also produce content and perform appropriately at auditions for drama schools and universities.

Meta-skills

Throughout this unit, you develop meta-skills that are useful for the performing arts sector.

Meta-skills are transferable behaviours and abilities that help you adapt and succeed in life, study and work. There are three categories of meta-skills: self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

Self-management

This meta-skill includes:

- focusing:
    - remaining focused throughout rehearsals and performances, both live and filmed
- integrity:
    - being reliable and meeting deadlines
- adapting:
    - working in two different mediums — live and filmed
    - responding to an audition panel

- initiative:
    - selecting appropriate audition pieces
    - developing ideas

Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes:

- communicating:
    - through the mediums of live performance and screen work
    - with audition panels
- feeling:
    - having empathy with characters
    - having empathy with the story
- collaborating:
    - taking direction during the audition process

Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- curiosity:
    - learning about sustainability
- creativity:
    - in rehearsing and preparing for both live and filmed audition work

- sense-making:
    - researching
    - analysing texts
    - understanding different types of audition requirements
- critical thinking:
    - reviewing and reflecting on work and self-reflection

Learning for Sustainability

Throughout this unit, you develop skills, knowledge and understanding of sustainability.

You learn about social, economic and environmental sustainability principles and how they relate to the performing arts sector. You also develop an understanding of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
1.1	'Valid from' date on front cover updated to ‘August 2026’ and ‘This qualification is available in a restricted delivery model’ line deleted. On 1 February 2026, Qualifications Scotland replaced SQA as the new national awarding body. We have updated the logo and ‘SQA’ throughout the document to reflect this. **What you need to do differently** There is no change to learning, teaching and assessment.	August 2026

Please check our website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this unit.

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