

Next Generation Higher National Unit Specification

Performance Skills: Movement (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: J8NM 47

SCQF level: 7 (16 SCQF credit points)

**This unit is available in a restricted delivery
model from academic session 2025**

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 enables learners to develop skills in movement, specifically in:

- movement sequences
- movement skills and techniques

Entry is at your centre's discretion; however, we recommend the unit to learners who have an interest in developing their movement skills and have completed one or more of the following:

- Acting and Performance at SCQF level 6
- Acting and Theatre Performance at SCQF level 6
- Higher Drama
- Advanced Higher Drama

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

Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

1. demonstrate understanding of movement techniques in warm-ups
2. demonstrate movement techniques in a range of materials
3. demonstrate movement skills in the process of creating character through to performance

Evidence requirements

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

Outcome 1

Learners demonstrate their understanding of movement techniques in warm-ups. They must:

- participate in a series of activities demonstrating clear understanding of movement techniques for warm-up.
- demonstrate an appropriate physical warm-up in sequence

To assess learners' competence in the knowledge and skills for the outcome, you observe and assess their participation in regular warm-ups. You assess their movement techniques in warm-up activities.

You also assess learners' physical warm-up demonstrations, in which they evidence their knowledge of appropriate movement activities and sequences in preparation for rehearsal and performance.

Learners' warm-ups may be filmed as evidence.

Outcome 2

Learners demonstrate movement techniques in a range of materials. They must:

- demonstrate performance evidence (solo or group) in a movement sequence lasting a minimum of 1 minute, after being given 1 hour to explore a given stimulus
- perform, in a pair or group, a movement sequence showing clear evidence of movement techniques. This can be a movement piece of approximately 2 to 3 minutes, or can be longer in length if integrated with a devised or other unit

In their performances, learners must:

- select and refine movement ideas
- apply appropriate compositional devices
- make effective use of dynamics to either add variation and/or underpin intention
- make a meaningful contribution to the movement sequence

To assess learners' competence in the knowledge and skills for this outcome, you observe and assess their participation in two performances, in which they demonstrate the knowledge and skills required.

Learners' performances may be filmed as evidence.

Outcome 3

Learners demonstrate movement skills in the process of creating character through to performance. They must:

- demonstrate a minimum of three appropriate physical techniques in the development and performance of a character
- justify physical techniques in their creation of a character
- identify character motivation, given circumstances, status, objectives, and any obstacles and how they had an impact on the physicality of the character

To assess learners' competence in the knowledge and skills for this outcome, you observe and assess their movement skills in the portrayal of a character in a performance. This can be in a solo performance of a monologue or as part of a scene with others. You assess their understanding of movement skills for character work in a professional discussion or written submission.

Learners' performances must be filmed as evidence.

Knowledge and skills

Knowledge	Skills
Outcome 1 Learners should understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• warm-up techniques, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ exercises that raise the heart rate○ aerobic warm-ups○ conditioning and strength exercises○ controlled warm-ups, such as yoga, Pilates and the Alexander technique○ exercises that relieve tension in the body• warming up the body in sequence	Outcome 1 Learners can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• demonstrate a variety of warm-up techniques• demonstrate an appropriate physical warm-up in sequence to prepare for rehearsal and performance

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of dynamics and movement improvisation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ weight: level of tension, changes in force of gravity ○ space: direct movement, flexible movement ○ time: fast, slow, accelerated, decelerated, long duration, short duration ○ flow: successive, simultaneous, bound, free • compositional devices, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ motifs ○ repetition ○ canon ○ mirroring ○ matching ○ unison • various types of movement stimulus, and selecting and refining ideas 	<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a short movement sequence from stimulus • respond to stimulus • perform a movement sequence (solo or group and pair or group) • apply compositional devices in a movement sequence

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 3</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical techniques in creating a character, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ physical tensions ○ gestures ○ mannerisms and idiosyncrasies ○ body language ○ physical tempo rhythms ○ posture ○ weight balance • the motivation, given circumstances, status, objectives, and obstacles of a character 	<p>Outcome 3</p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate physical techniques in character development and performance • justify physical techniques used in character development

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
- integrity:
 - being a reliable member of a cast
 - respecting others
 - being punctual and attending rehearsal
- adapting:
 - working with others as part of an ensemble
 - taking direction
 - developing materials
 - reacting to audiences
- initiative:
 - creating and developing ideas

Social intelligence

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

- communicating:
 - interacting through devising, performing, and presenting
- feeling:
 - empathy with, and respect for, fellow cast members
 - empathy with characters
 - empathy with a story
 - showing inclusivity in practice
- collaborating:
 - working in a team
 - being part of a cast
 - taking direction

Innovation

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

- curiosity:
 - learning about new materials and stimuli
 - understanding characterisation
- creativity:
 - being artistic in devising, rehearsing, and developing character and storylines

- sense-making:
 - researching
 - analysing text
- critical thinking:
 - reviewing and reflecting on work of self and others

Literacies

This unit provides opportunities to develop the following literacies.

Communication

Learners develop communication skills by:

- working with others
- collaborating with a team
- being part of an ensemble
- devising, presenting and performing

Digital

Learners develop digital skills and computer literacy by researching and communicating with others in a group or cast.

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

We suggest that the following SDGs are identifiable in the unit:

- good health and well-being (SDG 3)
- quality education (SDG 4)

Delivery of unit

This is a mandatory unit in the Higher National Certificate (HNC) Acting and Performance.

We recommend that you deliver the unit throughout the duration of the HNC Acting and Performance course.

There are opportunities to integrate and cross-assess with the other mandatory units at SCQF level 7:

- Performance Skills: Acting
- Performance Skills: Voice
- Performance Skills: Application
- Industry and Audition Skills

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

You can integrate these outcomes with Performance Skills: Acting at SCQF level 7, Performance Skills: Voice at SCQF level 7, and Performance Skills: Application at SCQF level 7.

Demonstrate understanding of movement techniques in warm-ups (outcome 1)

Learners demonstrate appropriate physical warm-up techniques. The warm-up should cover:

- aerobic and anaerobic exercises
- exercises targeting and preparing the upper body for movement
- exercises targeting and preparing the lower body for movement
- conditioning and strengthening exercises, including balance and core
- exercises for enhancing flexibility and readiness of the spine for performance
- appropriate cooldown exercises and stretches

You can explore various types of physical warm-ups, from group games and exercises that raise the heart rate, to aerobic warm-ups, conditioning and strength exercises, and more controlled warm-ups, such as yoga, Pilates and the Alexander technique.

Learners should take part in exercises that relieve tension in the body and prepare them for performance.

For their assessment of warm-up, learners should demonstrate a sequential warm-up. They should begin with an initial exercise to increase the heart rate and engage the

breath, move through the body from the head down to the feet, and finish on finding focus and centring the breath to a state of readiness.

The warm-up should be appropriate to performance spaces and text requirements.

Demonstrate movement techniques in a range of materials (outcome 2)

Learners demonstrate a short movement sequence from stimuli. You can introduce learners to various stimuli, from visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and ideational, and you should explore movement improvisations and sequences from these. Learners should also develop an understanding of dynamics and qualities in movement and explore a range of techniques, such as Rudolf von Laban's techniques, Michael Chekhov's psychological gesture, and Jacques Lecoq's seven levels of tension. Learners should also develop an understanding of compositional devices, such as motifs, repetition, canon, mirroring, matching and unison.

Demonstrate movement skills in the process of creating character through to performance (outcome 3)

Learners demonstrate physical techniques in the development of a character. Learners should explore physical traits, including:

- facial expressions, from relaxed and soft to revealing tensions in furrowed brow
- tensions in the face, jaw and mouth, shoulders and hands
- gestures
- mannerisms and idiosyncrasies
- body language (open, closed, aggressive, confident, assertive, deceptive or attentive)
- physical tempo rhythms
- posture
- weight balance

Learners must justify the physical techniques used in the development of a character. They must understand the character's given circumstances, status, objectives and obstacles, and identify how they have an impact on the physicality of the character.

Approaches to assessment

You use your professional judgement when observing learners in class, rehearsals and performances, to ensure all knowledge and skills are evidenced and are consistent with the SCQF level of the unit. Evidence can be collated in a portfolio.

Demonstrate understanding of movement techniques in warm-ups (outcome 1)

Learners evidence their understanding of movement techniques for the actor through participation in regular warm-ups. You observe and assess as they demonstrate the movement techniques required in a sequential warm-up.

Assessment should ensure that learners are secure with their understanding of movement techniques and sequential warm-up. Practical activities might include:

- aerobic warm-ups
- conditioning and strength exercises
- controlled warm-ups
- professional dialogue
- oral questions

You can assess outcomes using assessors' checklists.

Demonstrate movement techniques in a range of materials (outcome 2)

Learners demonstrate their movement techniques in two performances. One should be a movement sequence lasting a minimum of 1 minute, after having 1 hour to explore a given stimulus. The second should be a movement sequence, working in a pair or group, showing clear evidence of movement techniques. This can be a movement piece of approximately 2 to 3 minutes, or can be longer in length if integrated with a devised or other unit. Learners should demonstrate:

- dynamics
- movement improvisation
- compositional techniques

You observe and assess their performances.

You can assess outcomes using assessors' checklists.

Demonstrate movement skills in the process of creating character through to performance (outcome 3)

Learners demonstrate movement skills in the process of creating character. They should demonstrate appropriate physical techniques as stated in the 'Knowledge and skills' section. Learners must demonstrate a minimum of three appropriate physical techniques. They can do this in a solo performance of a monologue or as part of a scene with others. You observe and assess their performances.

Learners can present their knowledge for assessment through:

- a blog
- a journal
- a slide presentation, using appropriate software
- a written submission

- an oral presentation
- a question-and-answer session (which can be recorded in an online blog, logbook, journal or online portfolio)
- professional discussion

Learners' performances must be filmed as evidence.

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

Performance Skills: Movement (SCQF level 7)

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

This unit enables you to develop skills in movement. It provides opportunities for you to develop skills in movement sequences and in movement skills and techniques, allowing you to perform in a range of materials.

Entry is at your centre's discretion; however, we recommend that you have completed one or more of the following (before you start the unit):

- Acting and Performance at SCQF level 6
- Acting and Theatre Performance at SCQF level 6
- Higher Drama
- Advanced Higher Drama

During the unit, you:

- learn techniques for warming up the body for performance
- learn about use of dynamics and movement improvisation (weight, space, time and flow)
- learn about compositional devices (motifs, repetition, canon, mirroring, matching and unison)

- apply physical techniques in creating character (physical tensions, gestures, mannerisms and idiosyncrasies, body language, physical tempo rhythms, posture, weight balance)
- explore and perform a range of roles and characters
- engage creatively in practical exercises, rehearsals and performance opportunities

You may be assessed by:

- observation in class, rehearsals and performances
- slide presentations followed by question-and-answer sessions
- a written test
- oral questions

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

- integrity:
 - being a reliable member of a cast
 - respect for others
 - punctuality and attendance at rehearsal
- adapting:
 - working with others as part of an ensemble
 - taking direction
 - developing materials
 - reacting to audiences
- initiative:
 - creating and developing ideas

Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes:

- communicating:
 - interacting through devising, performing, and presenting
- feeling:
 - empathy with, and respect for, fellow cast members
 - empathy with characters
 - empathy with a story
 - inclusivity in practice

- collaborating:
 - working in a team
 - being part of a cast
 - taking direction

Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- curiosity:
 - learning about new materials and stimuli
 - understanding characterisation
- creativity:
 - being artistic in devising, rehearsing, and developing character and storylines
- sense-making:
 - researching
 - analysing text
- critical thinking:
 - reviewing and reflecting on work of self and others

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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Superclass: LC

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

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

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