

Performing Arts

I. Course description and aims

These courses are intended as an Applied General qualification for post-16 learners who want to continue their education through applied learning, and who aim to progress to higher education and to employment in the performing arts sector.

The content of this qualification has been developed in consultation with academics to ensure that it supports progression to higher education. In addition, employers and professional bodies have been involved and consulted in order to confirm that the content is also appropriate and consistent with current practice.

Students will study mandatory units covering the following content areas:

1. performance – practical exploration and application of specialist skills and techniques, individual and group performance
2. research, analysis and commissioning – aims to develop skills that are essential for further study of performing arts, including research methodology, independent learning, extended writing, sourcing, idea generation, evaluating information and drawing conclusions from it
3. knowledge and skills for employment in performing arts – including self-promotion and marketing

Students choose optional units which have been designed to support progression to the range of sector-related courses in higher education and to link with relevant occupational areas.

They cover content areas, such as:

1. acting
2. dance
3. musical theatre

In addition to the performing arts sector-specific content, this qualification provides learners with the opportunity to develop all-round performance skills and transferable skills such as self-confidence, self-presentation, personal discipline, time management and organisational skills which are highly regarded by higher education and employers. Learners will acquire transferable skills, such as personal management and collaborative skills, which are necessary when working in a performing arts ensemble.

II. Curriculum model overview

Assessment:

Assessment is specifically designed to fit the purpose and objective of the qualification. It includes a range of assessment types and styles suited to vocational qualifications in the sector. There are three main forms of assessment that you need to be aware of: external, internal and synoptic.

Externally-assessed units

The styles of external assessment used for qualifications in the performing arts suite are:

- set tasks – learners take the assessment during a defined window and demonstrate understanding through completion of a vocational task
- performance – learners prepare for assessment over an extended window and demonstrate skills that generate some non-written evidence.

Internally-assessed units

Most units in the sector are internally assessed and subject to external standards verification. Learners could be given opportunities to:

- write up the findings of their own research
- use case studies to explore complex or unfamiliar situations
- carry out projects for which they have choice over the direction and outcomes
- demonstrate practical and technical skills using appropriate techniques and processes

Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires learners to demonstrate that they can identify and use effectively, in an integrated way, an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge from across the whole sector as relevant to a key task. Synoptic assessment must take place after the teaching and learning of other mandatory units in order for learners to be able to draw from the full range of content. The synoptic assessment gives learners an opportunity to independently select and apply learning from across their programmes in the completion of a vocational task.