

Drama and Theatre Arts



Examination Board: Edexcel



■ What is the course about?

You will gain a deeper understanding of the creative process of theatre; the social, cultural and historical influences on drama writing, theatre production and performance, exploring how plays are brought to life by actors, directors and practitioners. You will have opportunities to develop your performance skills and will also learn to devise, direct, design and review a variety of live theatre productions.

■ For the two-year linear A Level you will study:

Component 1: Devising (40% of the A Level)

- You will devise an original performance piece, using one key extract from a first studied performance text and the methodology of an influential theatre practitioner as your stimuli.
- You will complete a 3,000-word explorative coursework portfolio.

Your practical performance and your supporting coursework portfolio is marked internally and moderated externally.

Component 2: Text in Performance (20%)

- You will study a second performance text and perform one key extract as a group performance.
- You will perform a monologue or duologue from a third performance text.
- Your performances are externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice (40%)

- You will respond to a statement question, which asks you to analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance you have seen during the course.
- You will also answer two extended questions about how you would interpret an unseen extract from a fourth performance text studied, focusing on how this scene can be effectively communicated as a performer and a designer.
- You will also answer one extended question based on a fifth performance text you have studied, in line with a chosen theatre practitioner, focusing on how you would creatively stage and communicate this text as a director.

■ How is the course assessed?

The Component 1 devised performance and portfolio is teacher-examined and externally moderated. The Component 2 performances are assessed by a visiting examiner. The Component 3 written examination (2 hours and 30 minutes) is externally assessed.

■ What skills will I need and develop in this course?

You need to be an enthusiastic performer who is passionate about drama and interested in developing a wider knowledge of all aspects of theatre and

production. You will develop your skills in acting, research, project management and discussion as well as the creativity, understanding and empathy needed to develop original drama through co-operative group work. You will also hone the leadership qualities needed to manage the production process and develop confident presentational skills through live performance.

■ Subject combination advice

English, art, psychology, history and classical civilization are subjects which complement drama; however, drama can enhance a broad spectrum of subject combinations because of the versatility of the practical and analytical skills studied.

■ What can the course lead to in terms of higher education and future careers?

Drama A Level can support a variety of degree courses; particularly English literature, the creative arts and humanities. It is also applicable to courses centring on project management, public relations and presentation, law, media, marketing, business, advertising, teaching and communications.

Drama courses at university vary from practical to entirely theoretical in content and can also be linked in dual honours or modular degrees with English, history, modern foreign languages, music, film, media, arts administration or dance.

There are opportunities for career paths in film, radio and television production, arts administration, education and training, in addition to specialist vocational careers in theatre as a performer, or in a variety of technical theatre roles such as stage management, scenography, lighting and sound design, prop-making, directing, producing and writing.

■ What are the formal entry requirements?

English GCSE at Grade 6 or above is essential. Grade 6 or above in drama GCSE is desirable, but not essential if there is a proven track record of practical involvement in theatre training or productions. LAMDA or Trinity speech and drama examinations are also desirable. Studying LAMDA in the school Sixth Form also provides extra technical support and a portfolio of performance pieces which can aid the practical requirements of the course and is therefore highly recommended.

■ What activities enrich this subject?

Mentoring and supporting the Year 10 Drama Directors during the Inter-House Drama Festival production process. Organising and participating in theatre events and trips to London's West End and Stratford-upon-Avon. Participating in workshops with theatre industry professionals and practitioners.