

# Unit A1: Performing Arts Production Process

NQF Level 2: BTEC First

Guided learning hours: 60

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## Unit abstract

This unit could be subtitled ‘Showtime’ as it gives learners the chance to understand the process that is essential when putting on a public performance from initial idea to first night. It allows the learner to apply skills, knowledge and understanding specific to their discipline, through involvement in, and contribution towards the working process and realisation of a public performance. Professional performers are required to know, understand and be able to contribute to this process. Learners will come to appreciate that the production process can only be conducted in the context of a working team. It is likely that learners will not only be involved in a job concerned with the production process but may also contribute as performers. This is particularly the case when practitioners are employed in a small company where a limited number of personnel are available to complete all the requirements.

Learners will undertake production roles such as technicians, administrators or designers, often multi-tasking. This gives a realistic experience of how a professional company works, particularly if the company is small.

As the performing arts production process provides the learner with a realistic vocational experience, they are encouraged to reflect industry practise in the scope, management and resourcing of the project. While it is not always possible to access professional venues with state-of-the-art equipment, it is important that this unit still presents opportunities to work in a professional context. Work from this unit should culminate in a performance for a public audience, with facilities appropriate to the scope and scale of the production, and the technical and administrative requirements of the job(s) the learner is undertaking.

## Learning outcomes

### On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know how to carry out planning requirements for a performing arts product
- 2 Be able to take part in the developmental process for a performing arts product
- 3 Understand the purpose of the planning and preparation process in the creation of a performing arts product.

## Unit content

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### 1 Know how to carry out planning requirements for a performing arts product

*Planning:* agendas; minutes; action plans; contingency plans; job allocation and interview; planning; instructions and meetings; organisation of production period; identifying health and safety requirements; communication methods; technical requirements of equipment; venue requirements target audience, eg age, gender, socio-economic, race

*Planning requirements for marketing:* target audience eg age, gender, socio-economic, race; marketing strategy, eg posters, flyers, press release, radio advertising, TV advertising

*Product:* artistic intention eg performance, play, physical theatre, street theatre, community theatre, dance, concert, circus, gig

### 2 Be able to take part in the developmental process for a performing arts product

*Development:* rehearsals; exploration of performance material; research into performance material; playwriting; composition; choreography; workshops, text explorations; technical rehearsals; dress rehearsal

*Technical:* venues, eg theatre, arts centre, school hall, village hall; venue resources, eg entrances, exits, power supply, auditorium space, seating; stage organisation; stage layout; accuracy in handling and operation of equipment; responding to cues and instructions; safe working practise; communications with team members and performers; equipment audit; maintenance; transit of equipment; get-in, set-up and get-out; rigging; communications; health and safety; reports; following technical plans and instructions; technical rehearsals, dress rehearsal

*Production team:* team meetings; planning; schedules; health and safety; communications; preparations specific to individual role(s), eg following design briefs, design meetings, presentation of design ideas, organisation of properties, sound, light and set, FOH organisation, setting-up box office

### 3 Understand the purpose of the planning and preparation process in the creation of a performing arts product

*Evaluation:* strengths/weaknesses; effectiveness of rehearsal/production processes and techniques; professional relationships; use of resources; individual contribution; team contribution; audience response; suggestions for improvement/development

*Product:* eg performance, play, physical theatre, street theatre, community theatre, dance, concert, circus, gig

## Grading grid

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all of the learning outcomes for the unit. The criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

<b>Grading criteria</b>		
<b>To achieve a pass grade, the evidence must show that the learner is able to:</b>	<b>To achieve a merit grade, the evidence must show that the learner is able to:</b>	<b>To achieve a distinction grade, the evidence must show that the learner is able to:</b>
P1 identify the necessary planning requirements for a performing arts product	M1 describe the necessary planning requirements for a performing arts product	D1 explain the necessary planning requirements for performing arts product with insight, foresight and confidence
P2 identify appropriate material/equipment suitable for a performing arts product	M2 describe appropriate material/equipment suitable for a performing arts product with some attempt at shaping the nature of the work in development	D2 explain appropriate material/equipment suitable for a performing arts product in a way that shows a positive and/or artistic contribution to the work in development
P3 communicate with other team members and/or event personnel as appropriate	M3 communicate with other team members and/or event personnel using appropriate channels and methods to ensure communication achieves its objective	D3 communicate clearly with other team members and/or event personnel with a degree of confidence to ensure communication achieves its objective
P4 carry out a role in the development process showing a grasp of the task requirements and with some commitment	M4 carry out a role in the development process showing that the task requirements are handled with some thought and attention to detail and with some commitment	D4 carry out a role in the development process showing that the task requirements are handled with efficiency, commitment and independence
P5 evaluate the product with reference to the planning and preparation process, identifying personal effectiveness and suggesting opportunities for improvement.	M5 evaluate the product with reference to the planning and preparation process, describing personal effectiveness and suggesting opportunities for improvement.	D5 evaluate the product with reference to the planning and preparation process, making judgements about personal effectiveness and suggesting opportunities for improvement.

Guidance to support the assessment of this unit is available on page 20.

## Essential guidance for tutors

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### Delivery

The work for this unit should be part of a logical process that begins with planning and proceeds through a research and development stage. As the development proceeds it will almost invariably require revisiting the planning ideas on a number of occasions. It may be useful to use these times to evaluate progress.

It is essential that learners fully appreciate the necessity of team-work and that they remain constantly aware of the contribution made by other members of their group.

It is advised that this unit concentrates on a specific performance plan where a particular venue, target audience and purpose for the performance are the focus of the planning and development. It may be advantageous to begin with placing a specific commission in front of learners so that they know the performance context that will be the results of their efforts.

The integration of other specialist units is recommended. This unit deals with planning and organisation. Where the learners are also the performers they could produce evidence for the learning outcomes of other suitable units where their performance skills are under scrutiny.

It is particularly appropriate that *Unit A2: The Performing Arts Business* is placed, as far as possible, in a realistic context and much of it can be applied to this unit. A budget, real or imagined, could be allocated to a group of learners so that they appreciate the financial restrictions that might be imposed on a project. As well as learners having to research costs of any materials and other resources it might be useful to ‘charge’ them for rehearsal and performance space, even if this is the centre studio or hall. Transport costs could also be considered even if the centre has its own vehicle. Even where the teacher/tutor is the director/choreographer of the performance, perhaps their services could be ‘contracted’ and ‘charged’.

### Assessment

Learners should submit a Learner Assignment Proposal (LAP), detailing their roles and anticipated tasks during the production process and performance. This document will guide progress and completion of tasks, ensuring learners can address all the unit assessment criteria. The LAP can also inform the learner’s evaluation of their roles. The unit outcomes and assessment criteria highlight the importance of the individual’s contribution throughout the stages of preparation and rehearsal. A minimum of two ‘milestone’ assessment stages will be built into the production process, for interim assessment and opportunity for tutors to give formative feedback. Learners are required to evaluate the project, both in terms of their contribution and professional development, as well as summary evaluation judging the artistic merits of the production as a whole.

Assessment evidence might be in the form of note books, logbooks, tutor observation, peer observation, witness statements, audio and video, plans, drawings, sketches etc.

**Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications**

*Unit A2: The Performing Arts Business.* All other units within the specification may be integrated but care should be taken not to make an assignment too complex.

**Indicative reading for learners**

Materials that illustrate the level of learning required and that are particularly relevant.

Freakley V and Sutton R — *The Essential Guide to Business in the Performing Arts* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1996)

Fredman R and Reade I — *The Essential Guide to Making Theatre* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1995)

Palmer S — *The Essential Guide to Stage Management, Lighting and Sound* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2000)

## Key skills

Achievement of key skills is not a requirement of this qualification but it is encouraged. Suggestions of opportunities for the generation of Level 2 key skill evidence are given here. Staff should check that learners have produced all the evidence required by part B of the key skills specifications when assessing this evidence. Learners may need to develop additional evidence elsewhere to fully meet the requirements of the key skills specifications.

Application of number Level 2	
When learners are:	They should be able to develop the following key skills evidence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>calculating requirements of materials for set/costume, working out auditorium seating plans and potential box office income</li> <li>recommending material purchase, calculating potential box office returns.</li> </ul>	<p>N2.2 Use your information to carry out calculations to do with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a amounts and sizes</li> <li>b scales and proportion</li> <li>c handling statistics</li> <li>d using formulae.</li> </ul> <p>N2.3 Interpret the results of your calculations and present your findings.</p>
Communication Level 2	
When learners are:	They should be able to develop the following key skills evidence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>making a contribution to planning meetings</li> <li>reporting research findings back to the group</li> <li>reporting research findings back to the group.</li> </ul>	<p>C2.1a Take part in a group discussion.</p> <p>C2.2 Read and summarise information from at least <b>two</b> documents about the same subject. Each document must be a minimum of 500 words long.</p> <p>C2.3 Write <b>two</b> different types of documents each one giving different information. One document must be at least 500 words long.</p>

<b>Information technology Level 2</b>	
<b>When learners are:</b>	<b>They should be able to develop the following key skills evidence:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>researching performance material</li> <li>creating a box office database</li> <li>creating a programme.</li> </ul>	<p>ICT2.1 Search for and select information to meet your needs. Use different information sources for each task and multiple search criteria in at least one case.</p> <p>ICT2.2 Enter and develop the information to suit the task and derive new information.</p> <p>ICT2.3 Present combined information such as text with image, text with number, image with number.</p>
<b>Working with others Level 2</b>	
<b>When learners are:</b>	<b>They should be able to develop the following key skills evidence:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>working on planning requirements</li> <li>processing the development stage including rehearsal, set building and organising technical requirements</li> <li>giving rehearsal notes and reporting back research findings.</li> </ul>	<p>WO2.1 Plan straightforward work with others, identifying objectives and clarifying responsibilities and confirm working arrangements.</p> <p>WO2.2 Work cooperatively with others towards achieving identified objectives, organising tasks to meet your responsibilities.</p> <p>WO2.3 Exchange information on progress and agree ways of improving work with others to help achieve objectives.</p>