



A Level Drama and Theatre

Key contacts: Mrs Reddy (Head of Performing Arts)
and Mr S Ellis (Head of Drama)

Exam Board: WJEC Eduqas

Overview of the course:

The WJEC Eduqas GCE in Drama and Theatre offers a practical and challenging course of study which encourages you to develop and apply an informed, analytical framework for making, performing, interpreting and understanding drama and theatre. Through the study of this highly practical course, you will develop your understanding of how theoretical approaches inform the processes and practices involved in creating theatre, and develop an appreciation of the place of practical exploration in informing theoretical knowledge of drama and theatre. This course will hone your analytical and creative skills, and will develop your researching skills in order to enable you to better appreciate the impact of social, cultural and historical conditions upon performance and theatrical storytelling. This subject is an excellent choice at A Level because it is a respected and acknowledged broad-based course, which develops many practical and useful transferable skills; chief amongst these being the ability to communicate and express yourself effectively. Whether or not you are looking to further your academic and/or professional career in this field, studying the A Level equips you with the necessary skills and knowledge in order to be prepared for study in Higher Education.

The aims of the course are to:

- develop your interest, knowledge and enjoyment of drama and theatre both as a participant and an informed audience member, fostering an enthusiasm for and appreciation of the subject;
- deepen your knowledge and awareness of contextual influences upon the development of drama and theatre;
- experience a range of opportunities to develop your own dramatic and theatrical skills, be it through performance, direction, or technical design/support;
- participate as a theatre maker and as an audience member in live theatre;
- learn the skills required to focus on delivering a project and working in collaboration with others;
- grow creatively and imaginatively, enabling you to think in a novel, critical and engaging way; and to
- integrate theory and practice through your understanding of critical concepts, the theories of practitioners, and the use of specialist terminology.

What will you study?

The A Level incorporates assessment through a blend of practical performances, coursework and written examinations. During the course you will have the opportunity to develop your own pieces of theatre, study particular texts and practitioners, and witness professional productions of live theatre.

Assessment

• **Component 1 – Theatre Workshop.**

Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated

20% of qualification.

Learners will be assessed on either acting or design.

Students participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of theatre based on a *reinterpretation* of an extract from a text chosen by your teachers. The piece will be developed using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company.

Learners must produce:

- a realisation of the performance or design;
- a creative log.

• **Component 2 – Text in Action**

Non-exam assessment: two performances externally assessed by a visiting examiner

40% of qualification

Students will be assessed on either acting or design.

Students participate in the creation, development and performance of two pieces of theatre based on a stimulus supplied by WJEC:

1. A devised piece using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company.
2. An extract from a text in a contrasting style chosen by the learner.

Continued



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All students must submit a process and evaluation report within one week of the performance.

Students choosing design must also give a 5-10 minute presentation of their design to the examiner.

- **Component 3: Text in Performance**
Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes
40% of qualification

Sections A and B

Three questions, based on *As You Like It*, by William Shakespeare, and *Love and Information* by Caryl Churchill.

Section C

A single 40 mark question based on a specified extract from: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, by Mark Haddon, adapted by Simon Stephens.

Possible career path?

If you choose to move on to a Drama-related degree programme, you will find that the study of Drama and Theatre at A Level equips you with the specific skills, knowledge and experience that you will need to succeed on such a course. Many past students who have entered into Drama schools have chosen to combine their study of Drama at A Level with a BTEC in Performing Arts, and this route has been a popular and lucrative choice. Likewise, if you choose not to progress in a Drama-related programme, the skills, knowledge and experience that you acquire will complement your studies and additionally equip you with the invaluable ability to communicate and express yourself effectively. The formal study of Drama, especially at Level 3, crosses into other disciplines including Psychology, History, Sociology, Philosophy, English, and many others. The breadth of knowledge and critical enquiry that is required on this course makes it a really attractive option for a student who is preparing themselves for study in Higher Education, either within a Drama-related discipline or within an alternative discipline.

Owing to the skills and experience of our staff, and the high standards of the extra-curricular opportunities that link to this course, year after year, a consistently high proportion of students actually go on to a Drama related course at University, including at the top institutions in the UK.

Entry requirements

Five GCSEs Grade 9-5, including English and Mathematics **and** Grade 6 in GCSE Drama.

It is not a requirement that you have studied GCSE Drama or equivalent in order to study it at A Level, but in the absence of a Level 2 qualification in the subject, we would expect you to have some extra-curricular experience from which you can build your levels of competence.

Above all, you must be willing to develop your ability to focus, and to participate in practical Drama work; performance through workshops or involvement in productions is a core feature of this qualification. There is a significant amount of assessment through writing, be it as a traditional written examination or in the form of reflective evaluations. You can therefore expect to be working continually throughout the course to develop your knowledge and ability to research effectively, and to develop your analytical and evaluative skills. Whilst your experience in lessons will be largely practical, your learning is led by your knowledge, understanding and application of the theory of Drama and Theatre.

You will be expected to take yourself to see live theatre as much as you are able, in addition to attending the organised theatre visits with the course.

Enrichment Opportunities

In the Drama Department, Enrichment within the subject is a key feature of what we offer and we believe that engagement in Drama Enrichment leads directly to a better outcome and experience for the student. We are proud of the range of Enrichment that we offer to sixth formers, which include:

- Spotlight Theatre Company (producing full length theatrical works as an ensemble)
- Musical Theatre Group (offering training and experience within this exciting genre)
- Technical Theatre Group (offering apprentice-style training within non-performance roles, and operating experience).
- LAMDA coaching (private tuition with an expert acting coach).
- Whole College Musical (bi-annual production involving many students from all ages).
- Performing Arts Show (bi-annual, original gymnastics, dance and pantomime show involving many students from all ages).