

Drama in Key Stage 4

We follow EDEXCEL at GCSE which we believe enables us the freedom to explore plays and themes that we believe will engage our students. The extracts below are from the specification and outline each of the Unit's overall content:

Unit 1: This unit requires students to engage in a programme of work that will help them appreciate how a variety of drama activities can be used to deepen their understanding of drama form. Students will learn that it is through practical engagement that understanding might be enriched.

The unit requires students to explore a theme, topic or issue through the application of learning from the Programme of Study. Stimuli, chosen by the teacher, will allow students to deepen their understanding of the central aspects of the chosen theme, topic or issue and come to appreciate how the dramatic medium and strategies can be used to create drama form and communicate meaning.

Students will have the opportunity to make connections between different stimuli which support the theme, topic or issue and explore the creative potential of the material. The work produced for this unit is intended to have meaning for the participants and is not intended for performance to a theatre audience.

The process of teaching this unit will be based on the Programme of Study and include sharing work with others and responding to constructive feedback. This will offer students the opportunity to:

- engage in a range of drama activities
- explore a range of stimuli chosen across different times and cultures
- make connections and comparisons between different stimuli. (From the Spec.)

Coursework: Students are graded by their teacher (their examiner) within the practical workshops that they take part in. Students also write about all of the workshops that they take part in and bring these notes into their examination. They write up their notes under controlled conditions. (2000 words.)

Unit 2: This unit introduces students to the content of plays written for the theatre. They will learn how to interpret a play in various ways and understand how a play works in performance.

The play text to be studied will be chosen by the centre to ensure that it is suitable for students' interests and abilities. It must be a complete and substantial play text that has been published professionally.

The exploration process should make reference to the experience gained through the Programme of Study. There should be a focus on the communication of meaning in the play through:

- the interpretation of a complete and substantial play text
- recognition of the ways in which playwrights, directors, designers and performers communicate meaning through the medium of drama
- the selection of appropriate elements of drama through the exploration of a complete and substantial play text
- gaining a practical understanding of the medium of drama through a complete and substantial play text
- evaluating the effectiveness of different interpretations of a complete and substantial play text
- developing performance skills and rehearsal techniques
- developing and realising ideas in response to a play within a group
- using the language of drama to communicate ideas to others
- recognising the ways in which playwrights record their instructions in a script
- applying drama skills to the realisation of extracts from a complete and substantial play text
- approaches to developing characters and/or roles
- exploring different staging methods
- understanding the social, cultural and historical context of a complete and substantial play text.

Students must have experience of live theatre as a member of the audience. The live theatre could be a performance of:

- the play chosen for exploration
- any other play
- a play performed by peers within a centre (From the Spec.)

Coursework: Students are graded by their teacher (their examiner) within the practical workshops that they take part in. Students also write about all of the workshops that they take part in and bring these notes into their examination. They write up their notes under controlled conditions. (1000 words)

Students also write a review of a professional performance that they have seen in London. They make notes either during or after the performance and can bring these notes into their examination. They write up their notes under controlled conditions. (2000 words)