

# AQA

# REVISION

# BOOKLET

# KS4



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_

## Introduction to the Technical Award:

You have just started this Performing Arts course, you are probably wondering what it's all about? This course will be different to the Drama course you were studying. You will be asked to perform using a variety of disciplines and then you will need to complete a 1 hour 30-minute written exam at the end of the year. You will be required to work very well in groups because you will be marked on your communication skills.

## What will I study?

### Unit 1: Unlocking creativity (internally assessed)

You will be asked to come up with a performance idea based on guidance from a range of practitioner DVDs. Learners will understand, plan and deliver the activities required to put on a successful performance including business planning and pitching. Learners will produce a portfolio of research, planning and ideas to enable them to put on a performance. They will then go on to pitch this idea as a group to camera. The pitch must include short extracts of the performance idea will to be presented.

### Unit 2: The production/performance (internally assessed)

You and a group will work towards producing a performance to an audience based on a list of five briefs. Learners will choose a minimum of two disciplines from either a list of performance roles including *acting, dancing, singing, instrumental musician, musical theatre, physical theatre and circus skills* or a list of production roles including *costume, set design, properties, make-up, lighting, sound, stage, original writing, directing, choreography, PR and film production*.

### Unit 3: The performing arts experience (externally assessed)

This will be examined as a written exam in 1 hour 30 minutes. The exam will be based on the following:

- Roles and responsibilities within the performing arts industry
- the role of performing arts in society
- approaches to rehearsal and Health and safety
- working as a deviser/performer/director
- marketing and public relations
- design and technical elements
- reviewing performances.

## Unit 1: Unlocking Creativity

### Unit 1: Unlocking creativity

**What's assessed** This unit assesses the theoretical content of the learner's chosen discipline (performance or production). Learners will demonstrate core knowledge and understanding of: the following:

- Research
- Idea development
- Planning and budgeting
- Presentation (skills and content)
- Transferable skill of communication.

#### How it's assessed

- Internally assessed
- 36 GLH (guided learning hours) approx
- 60 marks
- 30% of Technical Award

#### Evidence

Core knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Portfolio of supporting evidence (30 marks)
- The recorded pitch (25 marks)
- Transferable skill (5 marks).

## Unit 2: The Performance

### Unit 2: The production/performance

#### What's assessed

This unit provides the opportunity for learners to be assessed on the theoretical content of a holistic production or performance, both as an individual and as a member of a group.

- A key performance or production role in a performance based on one of five performance briefs
- Transferable skill of teamwork

#### How it's assessed

- Internally assessed
- 36 GLH approx
- 60 marks
- 30% of Technical Award

#### Evidence

- DVD of final performance/production (55 marks): where production skills are nominated a short DVD demonstrating the learner's ability to work within their nominated skills area. The work demonstrated must be for the performance given by the group.
- Transferable skill (5 marks).
- Logbook outlining their contribution to the final performance/production with details of nominated skill chosen for assessment.

## Unit 3: The performing Arts experience

### Unit 3: The performing arts experience

#### What's assessed

Core knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Roles and responsibilities within the performing arts industry
- The role of performing arts in society
- Approaches to rehearsal
- Working as a deviser/performer/director
- Marketing and public relations
- Health and safety
- Design and technical elements
- Reviewing performance
- Theatre/film in education.

#### How it's assessed

- Externally assessed
- Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- 48 GLH approx
- 80 marks
- 40% of Technical Award

#### Questions

A combination of multiple choice questions, short answers, extended responses, design/devising questions.

## Transferable Skills, what are they?

### Transferable skills

These valued skills are an integral element within the design of our Level 1/2 Technical Awards.

As a result of discussions and collaborations with schools, colleges and stakeholders such as post-16 education providers and professional/trade bodies, we have included the following transferable skills within the subject content:

- teamwork
- communication
- research
- problem solving.

### Transferable skill: team building (A02) (5 marks)

Mark	Description
5	Team building with group is exceptional and enables an outstanding performance to take place.
4	Team building with group is advanced and enables a smooth and effective performance to take place.
3	Team building with group is secure and enables the group to perform with confidence.
2	Team building with group is sufficient to enable the group to work together.
1	Team building with the group is limited and therefore self-limited.
0	Insufficient evidence is provided for a mark to be awarded.

## UNIT 2: Guidance for the logbook

The logbook should be completed during the planning and rehearsal stages with the final evaluation to be written following the performance/production. Its purpose is to provide evidence for the skills development, planning and evaluation that take place during the work on the chosen brief.

### **Key points:**

- The logbook should be completed throughout the process – Section 1 Auditing your current skills and Section 2 The performance brief (pages 8-10 only) at the start of the unit and all other parts of section 1 and 2 at appropriate points throughout the development stage. Section 3 Performance review and evaluation should be completed after the performance.
- Students should aim to be concise, it is not necessary to fill every box – they should focus on the key decisions and evaluative points.
- Although some reference will be made to group work, the focus should remain on the individual – what I have done/thought etc.
- It is not necessary to make re-drafts if ideas change during the process – students can simply explain in the next self-assessment what has changed and why.
- Students should use appropriate technical language wherever possible.
- Students should recognise that self-criticism is not an admission of failure but an opportunity to show their capacity for further improvement.
- If appropriate, it is permissible for students to sketch their ideas/use diagrams etc... Design/technical students may wish to add pages to the logbook showing designs/cue sheets etc.

## REVISE FOR UNIT 3:

### In unit 3 you will need to revise the following sections:

Roles and responsibilities within the performing arts industry

The role of performing arts in society

Approaches to rehearsal

Working as a deviser/performer/director

Marketing and public relations

Health and safety

Design and technical elements

Reviewing performance

Theatre/film in education.

You will need to learn these things through experience and research. You will not cover all of these topics during lesson time but you will gain experience of them in a practical sense.

You will need to watch many pieces of theatre and talented actors in films to discuss in the exam. You will need to talk about Practitioners you have studied in your time at school. The key practitioners are:

- **Stanislavski – Naturalism in theatre.**
- **Frantic Assembly – Physical theatre**

**The local theatre you will speak about is Queens theatre in Hornchurch. You may be asked to know about their programme and their schemes for audiences.**

**You must research the above practitioners if you are not aware of their work.**





## **Practitioner 1: Frantic Assembly founded by Scott Graham**

**Frantic Assembly** creates thrilling, energetic and unforgettable theatre. The company attracts new and young audiences with work that reflects contemporary culture.

**Frantic Assembly's** unique physical style combines movement, design, music and text. It is known to you as Physical theatre. You have experienced Frantic Assembly during lesson time where we have explored Chair duets, Round-by-through sequences and physical dances.

### **How has this practitioner influenced your work?**

You have used this practitioner many times during devising performances. You can discuss this in your exam. You may choose to say that this practitioner influenced you to use chair duets and movement to convey stories between characters. You can discuss examples from your performances:

*“During a performance I devised called ‘Apologies’, we used Chair duets to show how two people feel about each other. For example, we were using physical movements such as pulling and pushing to show a love/hate relationship.”*

If you look at the work to the right, you can see titles of their productions. You can **research** these and watch video clips of their work. This will help you understand their style even further.

The main things to remember with Frantic Assembly is that they use a lot of movement to show their story. They also use a lot of music to help their performances.

## **OUR WORK**

The company is led by Artistic Director and co-founder [Scott Graham](#)

Our productions include [\*The Unreturning\*](#), [\*Fatherland\*](#), [\*Things I Know To Be True\*](#), [\*Othello\*](#), [\*Beautiful Burnout\*](#), [\*Lovesong\*](#), [\*Stockholm\*](#) and [\*The Believers\*](#).

We have commissioned and collaborated with writers such as Anna Jordan, Simon Stephens, Andrew Bovell, Mark Ravenhill, Abi Morgan and Bryony Lavery.

Our distinct creative approach has influenced contemporary theatre-making and foregrounded the use of movement directors and choreographers in new dramatic works. It has inspired writers to embrace new creative processes and opened up actors and dancers to new techniques. This is a matter of great pride as we continue to do something different and to do it differently.

We also collaborate on other productions and provide the movement direction on the award-winning National Theatre of Great Britain production [\*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time\*](#) as well as for other projects such as the BAFTA nominated British/American TV series *Humans* (AMC, Channel 4 & Kudos).

## Practitioner 2: Stanislavski – Naturalism

Stanislavski's real name was Konstantin Sergeevich Alexeyev but he adopted the stage name of Stanislavski in 1884. Born in 1863 to a life of considerable comfort as a member of one of the most affluent families in Russia, he died in 1938 at the age of 75.

His family loved the theatre and he was able to indulge in amateur theatricals as a boy. But when he took a stage name it was to conceal his theatrical work from his family. However, in 1887 he had his father's approval and eventually became an established figure.

### What is the METHOD Stanislavski believed in?

- It's very easy to over-simplify the **method** of Konstantin Stanislavski, one of the greatest and most influential of modern theatre practitioners.
- The main thing to remember is that he takes the approach that the actors should really **inhabit the role** that they are playing. So the actor shouldn't only know what lines he needs to say and the motivation for those lines, but also **every detail of that character's life** offstage as well as onstage.
- In this way we can establish Stanislavski as a director and practitioner whose productions are naturalistic.

### What techniques have we used before?

- To develop the internal character, we normally use the technique 'the magic if'
- Konstantin Stanislavski. Stanislavski's "**Magic If**" describes an ability to imagine oneself in a set of fictional circumstances and to envision the consequences of finding oneself facing that situation in terms of action.
- This technique allows you to put yourself in the shoes of the character, this will obviously impact the way in which you perform the character; Making it more believable.

### Role on the wall

- A role on the wall allows you to annotate your character on paper. You can write down the internal personality as well as what your character looks like externally.

### Influences on your own work:

You may have chosen to use this style in your devising performances. You may like the way Stanislavski wants to keep the audience engaged in the characters so they feel the emotions with the characters. If you were completing a naturalistic style piece you would need set/props ect to make it seem as natural as possible on stage.

**TASK 1:**

**Write down how one of the chosen practitioners from above has influenced your own work?**

**You must give two examples of ways the practitioner has influenced your work:**

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In the question above you must outline what practitioner you have been influenced by and then you must discuss how and what you have done with that practitioner: for example, saying how you have devised a performance/what scenes you created and how the practitioner influenced you to create those scenes.

If you want to choose a different practitioner such as Artaud or Brecht you may do this as long as you have enough information about the practitioner.

**Artaud** – theatre of cruelty – likes to violate audiences senses and create shock. Uses lots of lighting/music/sounds.

**Brecht** – believed in reminding the audience that the performance is just a show. He always wanted a message behind the performance. He would use things such as Alienation and placards.

**Devising with stimuli:**

**What is devising?** – creating your own piece of work depending on a stimulus. You would rehearse and create your own script. You would usually have a chosen style for your performance.

**What do you look for when you have a stimulus?** – Themes and ideas that you think about immediately. You should be able to create storylines from things that you see or hear. A stimulus could be a photo/documentary/poem/drawing/painting/song. You should annotate your stimulus and derive your ideas from this.

**Task:** Look at the stimulus below and write an outline of a possible story for a performance you would create. **(6 marks)**



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### Key words/definitions you may not know:

<b>Target Audience</b>	A target audience is who you are aiming your performance at. You want this age group or type of audience to benefit from your performance the most. If you were designing a show about fairytales you may want to aim this at younger children because they can relate to the storyline. If you are creating a show that is educational about drugs you would choose a group that may need this education more than others such as teenagers or young adults.
<b>Posters in advertising</b>	There are several things you must include when creating a poster: <input type="checkbox"/> price <input type="checkbox"/> time <input type="checkbox"/> venue <input type="checkbox"/> contact details <input type="checkbox"/> dates <input type="checkbox"/> interesting presentation – e.g. colour, images, font size. You want your poster to advertise the show and be appropriate but also interesting.
<b>Marketing Strategy</b>	You will have various ways of marketing a show. A strategy is the way you are doing it. For example, you may decide to use bus posters or radio advertising.
<b>Staging</b>	Creating the set for a scene. You may include big pieces of staging or lighting.
<b>Devising</b>	Creating your own scene or performance based on a brief or stimulus. There are many different devising techniques to help you do this.
<b>Choreography</b>	This is movement that has been created and then rehearsed. It can be a part of physical theatre or dance.
<b>Atmosphere</b>	Atmosphere can be created using lighting and sound. Atmosphere is the way in which you are making the audience feel. You may say 'we want to create a forbidding atmosphere as the audience take their seat. We will do this using dim lighting, sounds and stillness from actors'
<b>Promenade theatre</b>	This is where the audience will follow the actors to different performance spaces.

## Health and Safety in Performing Arts:

<b>Risk Assessment</b>	This is where you assess what risks there are in a particular situation. You want to keep everyone as safe as possible and put precautions in place if you feel there are any safety issues. Please see example below:
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<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Description/activity</b>	<b>Action taken</b>
Risk of injury due to fall	Set/props sticking out or sharp edges. Strength of set to stand on. Falling objects.	Edges smoothed and checked. Weight bearing objects checked. Set accessories secured tightly.
	Accessories on set/props not secure.	
Slipping or tripping	Wires/cables not secure. Curtains/costumes a trip hazard.	Wires/cables secured. Material used check length and adjust.
Spillage	Liquids or food used on stage	Spillages wiped as soon as happens.
Pyrotechnics	Are any used.	Ensure performers are clear; no fire hazards in the way; clear stage area.
Impact	Any stage fighting or fast movement involved.	Enough room for performers. Clear stage.

### How do we make a rehearsal space safe?

- You must ensure there is enough space for your performers with nothing on the floor to trip actors up.
- Have water available if actors are working for a long time. This is to prevent exhaustion.
- Ensure you allow actors rest breaks to prevent exhaustion.
- Temperature of the space, it shouldn't be too hot or cold.
- Ensure your actors know where the fire exits are in the space.
- Secure all wires and cables by using tape or other means necessary.
- Ensure all the set is secure on the stage.

If you are an actor it is your company's responsibility to ensure these risks are assessed.

## THEATRE MAKERS job roles and their responsibilities:

**Playwright** The person who writes and creates the play. If the play is also a musical, then it may also have a composer and lyricist.

**Understudy** An actor who studies another's role so that they can take over when needed

**Dancer** Responsibilities of a dancer: • learn correct performance technique and warm up • learn dance movement • attend all rehearsals when called and be prepared • respond to and take direction • take responsibility for own equipment, costume and clear up • choreography if small company.

**Actor** Follow director's notes. Attend all rehearsals. Learn lines provided from the script.

**Director** The director is responsible for realising the production on stage and leads the creative vision of the whole production. The director leads the rehearsals, collaborates with the designer, the musical director and the production team to make sure the production is the best it can be. Responsibilities of a Director: • decide on an interpretation of the play and characters • liaise with all production, technical and design staff • hold auditions and select cast • lead the rehearsals, blocking in the actions with SM and give notes • monitor all design and technical elements • carry out dress and technical rehearsals • deliver notes to actors/performers.

**Set Designer** The designer is responsible for all aspects of the look and feel of the production. Working closely with the director to complement or realise the vision of the production, the Designer creates set designs and works with the production team to make sure the physical sets which are created are exactly as they should be. In smaller productions, the designer may also act as the costume designer.

**Technician** A person who works backstage either setting up technical equipment such as microphones or rigging lights before a production or operating technical equipment during a performance.

**Lighting Designer** Lighting plays a crucial role in the look of a production. The lighting designer works closely with the designer and the production team to design and set up the lighting and lighting effects of the show.

**Sound Designer** Depending on the production, some may use a sound designer who creates the sound effects for the production, works to create soundscapes, or mixes the music to ensure it sounds as good as it can.

**Costume Designer** The costume designer designs all the costumes for the production. They work with a costume team to source, make and fit costumes which are perfect for each character.

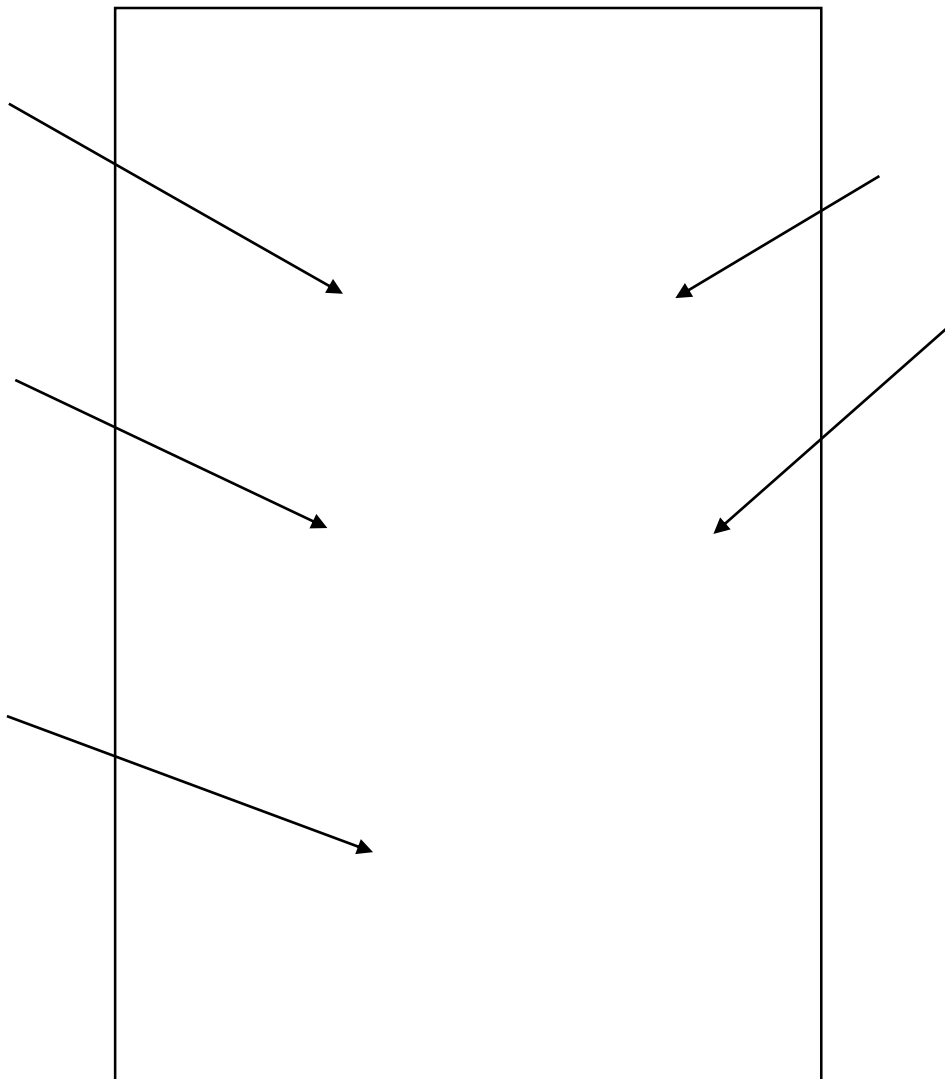
**Producer** The producer is the champion of the project, who raises money to stage the production and brings on board key members of the creative team to bring the production to life.

**Puppet designer** The person who designs the puppets for a performance


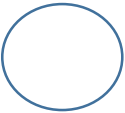


**Stage manager** The Stage Manager is in charge of all aspects of backstage, including the backstage crew. They will oversee everything that happens backstage before, during and after a performance. During the rehearsal period, the Stage Manager and their team will make sure that all props are found or made, scene changes are rehearsed and smooth, and all other aspects of backstage are prepared. They are also in charge of the rehearsal schedule. They will organize call sheets, props lists and cue sheets.

**Theatre manager** This is the person who is responsible for and manages the front-of- house team who deal with the audience during the production (for example, the box office manager, ushers and similar staff).

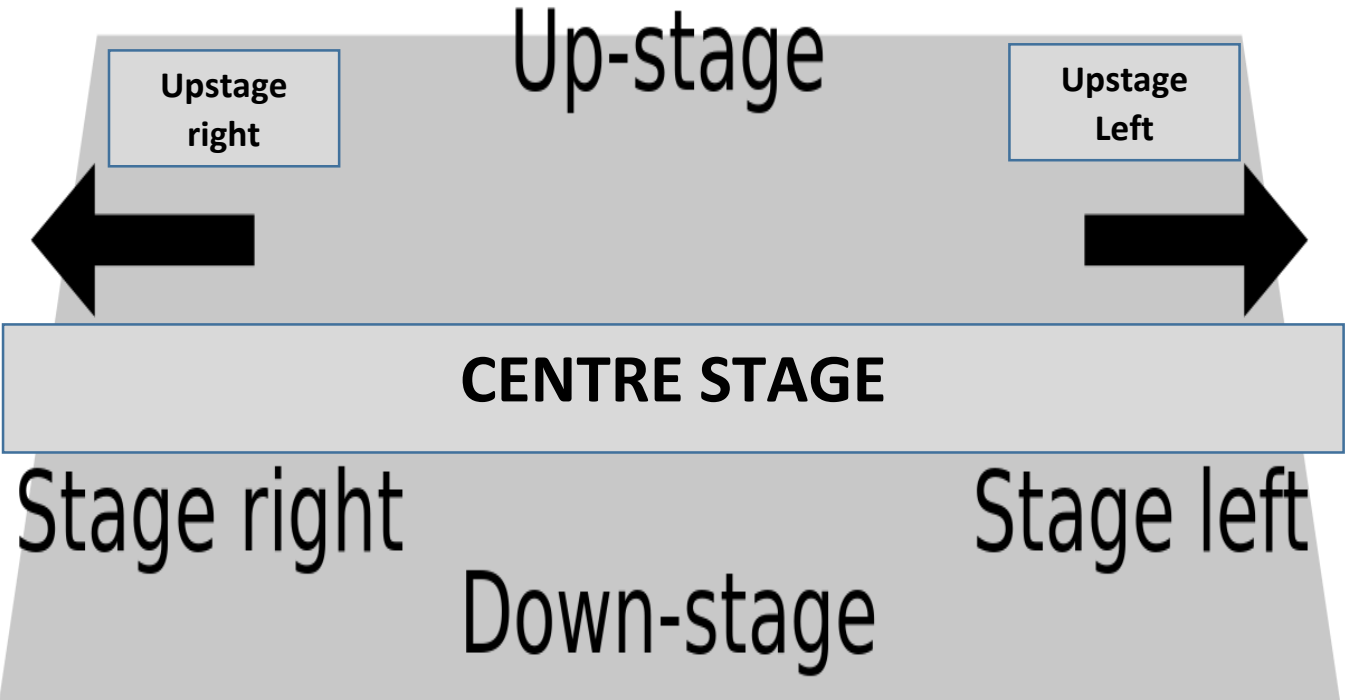
**Task:** Design a costume for a pirate in a play about a boat called the 'black pearl' – You must include annotations about the costume and why you chose those materials.





<b>STAGE TYPE</b>	<b>ADVANTAGES</b>	<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>
<p><b>THRUST – 3 SIDES OF THE AUDIENCE</b></p> 	<p>Audience can feel somewhat involved with the theatre Can still have an elaborate set design in one place.</p>	<p>Audience will not always be able to see actors – backs to audience. Actors must remember to move around often.</p>
<p><b>IN THE ROUND – AUDIENCE ALL AROUND THE STAGE</b></p> 	<p>Audience have a 360 view of the actors and set. It can feel very intimate.</p>	<p>Audience will not always be able to see actors – backs to audience. Actors must remember to move around often. Have limited set due to entrances and exits.</p>
<p><b>TRAVERSE – A CATWALK LIKE STAGE WITH TWO SIDES OF AUDIENCE</b></p> 	<p>Interesting stage type, actors can walk further along the stage. Intimate performances.</p>	<p>Limited set design which can't block the view of one side of the audience. Actors must move around often.</p>
<p><b>PROSCENIUM ARCH – CLASSICAL STAGE WITH 1 AUDIENCE SIDE</b></p> 	<p>Classical stage type used in history. Elaborate set designs can be built. Actors have many exits stage left and right.</p>	<p>Audience can feel further away from the actors and the action on stage. Not as intimate.</p>

ALWAYS imagine you are the **performer** when asked about a stage position. It is from your perspective whether it is LEFT or RIGHT.



**Audience**

## Production Information:

### **How do you create your own production?**

You need to make sure you have a clear vision for what you want to do. You should find a venue that is suitable for the show and choose a target audience. You will then need to assign various job roles for both production and performance. You will then need to think about budgeting costs in terms of paying the staff and theatre in addition to costumes ect. You will need to make sure you can advertise your performance in various ways to ensure ticket sales are successful.

Different ways a production company could advertise their performance:

- posters/ leaflets/ flyers
- tv & radio ads
- billboards
- taxis & buses
- merchandise
- website
- email
- text
- social media

## Theatre Funding:

In terms of theatres there are many ways of them getting money to keep the theatre running.

These are some ways a theatre can gain funding:

- they receive grants/funding
- they fundraise – they could hold events and ask for donations to their cause.
- they have a “Friends” scheme – Where people can become members to a theatre where they pay a set amount towards the running of the theatre.
- they (charge for) holding activity days
- ticket sales
- The Arts Council/National Lottery.


## Finding a venue

You must find venues that suit your requirements. Some theatres have very large auditoriums which means the audience will be quite far away from the action. Some smaller theatres mean you can get a more intimate feel. You may decide to find a location such as a forest or seaside setting for your performance, this will mean getting permission and hiring chairs for the location.

Every theatre will charge you a cost for hiring it and may charge you for using a technical team during the hire. You will need to enquire with the theatre to know how much they charge.

## Getting into the industry

To get into the Performing Arts industry can be difficult therefore you want to ensure you are as prepared as possible.

An illustration of an iceberg. The tip of the iceberg, which is above the water line, is a small blue pyramid with a yellow stick figure standing on it. The much larger part of the iceberg, which is below the water line, is a grey, jagged shape representing the hidden part of an actor's career.

### ACTOR CAREERS BASICS

Actors audition for roles and, if selected, perform those roles to bring the characters to life. Their work might be on a movie or television set, in a theater, during a live event or any other place where performance is needed. They might work on any level of the profession, from being an extra in a larger cast to appearing in starring roles.

### ACTOR CAREERS IN-DEPTH

Much of an actor's time is spent rehearsing their part, working with directors and producers, meeting with agents or casting directors, reading scripts, attending meetings and otherwise attending to behind-the-scenes necessities. Some might spend grueling hours on set, while others might tour with a group to perform in many different cities. Some might move across the world to film on location. The work is often not steady – many actors will perform scores of characters during their careers.

### SKILLS



#### Excellent communication

Since much of acting is conveying emotion, setting a scene and otherwise connecting with the audience, top-notch speaking and reading skills are imperative.



#### Wild creativity

Actors are in a very creative profession, and they have to be able to keep up with other creative types. That means letting ideas flow like water, offering unusual points of view, and keeping their creativity going with other mediums, including writing or singing.



#### Great memorization

Memorizing a script in order to perform long, unbroken scenes is a must for any actor in any area of entertainment.



#### Physical stamina

Acting may entail being on set for many long hours or handling several hours of stage work without a break, especially during live performance. Being in good physical condition is the key to handling it.



#### Persistence

There are many actors out there and far too few roles for them. It can be easy to give up when faced with near-constant rejection; the best actors learn early on to simply keep on trying.

## ACTING SCHOOL AND CAREER RESOURCES

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### [Ace Your Audition](#)

This site connects actors with monologue for auditions.

### [Actors Equity Association](#)

This labor union for actors provides help with benefits, working conditions, contract negotiations and more.

### [The Actors Fund](#)

This organization helps actors with common issues, including housing, healthcare, social services and financial assistance.

### [Backstage](#)

A clearinghouse of pertinent, up-to-date information for actors, including casting calls, news, advice and resources.

### [National Association of Schools of Theatre](#)

This organization of schools, colleges, universities and conservatories strives to provide a top-notch educational experience through proper accreditation.

### [National Endowment for the Arts](#)

This independent federal agency offers funding for a variety of arts across the United States, including theater productions.

### [SAG-AFTRA](#)

The Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists brings together two powerful unions to provide important protections and information to those in the entertainment industry.

## **What promotional materials do I need?**

To market yourself as a serious actor, you'll need a headshot, a CV, a showreel, and an online presence.

### **Headshots**

This is one of the main components you'll need to invest in. Even though, you'll rarely be expected to turn up to auditions with expensive prints these days, you will need to make sure the quality of the photographs are high. If you're fortunate enough to know someone who can shoot you for free, or for a low price, make sure you're still happy with the outcome or else it's a fruitless exercise.



- Make sure your headshots do you justice, as they're the first thing a casting director sees.
- Don't rely solely on black and white shots; they're aesthetically pleasing, but people want to see you look like, so make sure you have colour shots also, if not entirely.
- Overly flattering photos are also a bad idea – you may be tempted to edit your photos on Photoshop or wear a ton of makeup, or even submit photos from 15 years ago, but don't! You'll create a dishonest impression, plus you might count yourself out of a job that you're suited to if a casting director deems your photo too generic.



## **CV**

Approach your acting CV as you would any job CV: keep it clear, concise, and professional. List project details transparently and don't over-do the detail. Bear in mind your showreel is where the casting director will get a sense of your personality; your résumé is a reference document. Looking at your CV, a casting director will want to establish:

- What acting jobs you have done (preferably listed in chronological order)
- If you have any training
- A list of special or unique skills (if any)
- How to contact you

If you're new to the game you might need to pad it out a bit with school plays or amateur dramatics, which is absolutely fine. Just make sure to edit as you develop and eventually you can take these off when you have more experience to add.

You don't need to list your date of birth – your age range (or 'playing age') is important, as is your height, eye colour and hair colour. We also want to know what accents you can do, and if you're a singer, what your vocal range is.

Be sure to keep your CV down to a single A4 page, which you can staple to the back of your headshot.

## **Showreel**

Your showreel is crucial. Make sure you keep it up-to-date, exhibiting only work that you feel represents you well, and remember to keep it under three minutes. Often, people disagree on what is acceptable and what isn't in a showreel; they question whether montage intros (an edit together of quick clips of yourself as a way of introducing your showreel) are dated, for example, but as someone who works in casting, I personally feel there's room for a bit of creative flair as long as the main point is correctly communicated, and that is your acting ability.

## **Online Presence**

Having your own website can be a very useful way of collating everything you want a CD or the public to know about you, and you can be in charge of what to include and what you would rather forget! [Squarespace](#) is a good option, as it's user-friendly, has professional-looking templates, and offers reasonable monthly rates (between £10 and £20). You can expect a free trial as a new customer, and you can find discount codes by listening to podcasts, which they rely on heavily for advertising (I can always hear Squarespace promoted on the Adam Buxton podcasts for example, worth listening to in their own right as he often interviews actors).

You should give plenty of thought to your social media presence. Twitter or Facebook can be great ways of engaging with the public and expressing your personality, but make sure you are representing yourself professionally. Always

bear in mind you're offering information about yourself publicly, so don't let yourself down. It's never a bad idea to share updates about what productions you're in (if you have permission) and you can increase viewership of programs if you Tweet your followers to remind them to tune in.

Always be extremely careful about your social media use on set – a lot of sets are very private and cast members have been reprimanded and sometimes even removed if they take pictures on set and post them to social media.

Mr John Baker  
134 Spencer Court  
London  
W1 6XX

### **Romeo & Juliet Auditions**

Dear John


I am very interested in putting myself forward for the upcoming auditions for *Romeo and Juliet* at the Royal Theatre, which I saw advertised in *The Stage* this week.

Six months ago, I played the part of Richmond in *Richard III* where the director was Bob Fleming, whom you have worked with on a number of occasions. I'm currently studying stage combat at the Actor's Centre and also taking a Shakespeare study course twice a week which has been very inspiring. My passion is for the theatre, especially Shakespeare and the classics.

At present I am playing Orsino in *Twelfth Night* at BAC in London. It will be running for the next three weeks. It would be such a privilege to have you watch me work. Please find two enclosed tickets. Let me know if you can make it and I will organise some refreshments at the interval bar.

Lastly, please find my enclosed my headshot and CV for your files. You will see that I have done my fair share of Shakespeare in the past, but that I've also had a broad range of theatre experience. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give me a call. You can also contact my agent, ABC Talent, on 0207 888 3333.

Sincerely,



Benjamin Goodwin

Enclosures (3): Headshot, CV, Business Card, 2 Tickets to BAC's Twelfth Night

### **What makes a good letter of application?**

- Enclose all your documents and credentials for the role – showreel, headshots and CV.
- Speak about a performance you took part in recently or a part you are playing at the moment to get directors or producers to come and see you in actions.
- Be professional in your manner of writing – sign with yours sincerely.



## What are some key terms I should know for the acting industry?

**Slate:** If you're filming a self-tape, a slate, or ident, is really useful for a casting director. It's a short intro in which you state your name, agent (if applicable) and height, and often other information the casting director might have asked you to include like profiles (see below), shots of your hands, and possibly experience or skills that you have that are relevant to the project (eg if the role involves being on a wire, you could mention any aerial experience you have, or if the part requires you to speak another language you could demonstrate your fluency level with a sentence or two). These are often recorded at the beginning or end of your audition also.

**Profiles:** Shots of one side of your face and then the other, so the director can see what you look like from different angles.

**Sides:** The lines or information you're given to prepare for the audition. Most of the time it will be text pulled from the script, unless the contents of the script is heavily protected (you would find this mainly with major studio productions like Warner Bros) and you're given text from another source. It might also contain the outline of a scenario rather than text, and you'll be expected to improvise some action or dialogue around the scenario.

**Optioned:** This applies most commonly to TV, where production teams have yet to schedule the project but wish you to stay available for a certain period of time in case it does get green-lit. It might be that the first series you participated in is yet to air and therefore they haven't yet been able to gauge its success, and won't know if they wish to make a second season. It might be that the series will go ahead, but they're still deciding upon their schedule or trying to secure a location. There are many reasons, but traditionally you will be given a "pick-up date" (a date by which they have had to decide by), and you should be financially compensated for remaining available throughout this period.

**Generals:** These are invaluable for actors climbing the ladder. An actor and a casting director have a casual chat with the intention of putting said actor in a casting director's mind's eye. If you are set up on a general with a Casting director, make sure you research them and their work first, read their signals as to when is an appropriate time to wrap up the conversation, and make sure you show an interest in them and their work – you never know what journey will be kick-started from a short chat. A general will not cost you anything other than whatever you spend on travel to see the Casting director, and you should not be expected to part with any money for the meeting. You should only expect to part with money at an organised, informative event like a workshop where you would receive some form of coaching.



## Reviewing live theatre or films

In your exam you may be asked to speak about a performance or film you have seen over the course of the last 2 years. You must speak about one you feel passionate about as this will help you with your review.

Look below at some of the examples of a live theatre review:

**'Waitress'** – The Adelphi Theatre *Waitress* opened on Broadway in the same 2015/16 season as *Hamilton* - so, hardly surprisingly, lost out in the Tony Awards race, including for best musical and best original score. Yet, nearly three years on from its premiere there, it is still running - a block away from *Hamilton* (and the only shows from that season still be doing so).

It has obviously struck a chord with theatregoers - and now it has come to London (with an international roll-out still to follow in Australia and Japan). It is in an altogether lower-key, folk-rock register to *Hamilton's* blast of hip-hop energy, and an absolutely lovely contrast to it. There is, or at least should be, room for both.

Again, while *Hamilton* takes bold steps while re-telling a giant chapter in the birth of the American nation and the constitutional papers that are its bedrock, *Waitress* is more domestically-scaled - and all the more heartfelt and personal for it.

Here is an intimate everyday story of the power of workplace friendships and the joys of pie-baking - but not, as you might fear, full of sugar but also containing quite a lot of spice. There are real notes of anguish and entrapment felt as we follow the experiences of a diner waitress called Jenna, who can bake multiple varieties of pies - but also finds herself unexpectedly with a bun in the oven.

So far, so familiar; especially if you've seen the 2007 film of the same name, originally written and directed by the late Adrienne Shelly. But what the all-female writing and lead creative team have done here is to add texture and tension through a series of gorgeous songs by folk-pop writer Sara Bareilles, making her musical theatre debut, that pulse with melody and feeling, and tender comedy notes expertly channelled by book writer Jessie Nelson.

Under the guiding eyes of director Diane Paulus and choreographer Lorin Latarro, this story about a woman's life, told entirely from her point of view, is beautifully championed - and gets a sterling boost from American import **Katharine McPhee**, reprising the role of Jenna that she has also performed on Broadway, who has an effortlessly natural acting style and an alternately soaring and throbbing singing voice, not least in the show's Act Two power ballad "She Used to Be Mine".

She is ideally partnered by **Marisha Wallace** and **Laura Baldwin** as her two work colleagues, each of whom get their own songs to shine in; and while all the male roles are, unusually for a musical, supporting ones, there are characterful contributions from **David Hunter** as Jenna's gynaecologist who takes more than a passing professional interest in her, **Peter Hannah** as her abusive husband and **Shaun Prendergast** as the fatherly owner of the diner.

This is a small show with a big heart; it may have been better served by a more intimate house than the Adelphi for its London debut, but I loved it.

