

New A Level Performance Studies

H148 and H548 replacing 3873 and 7873

Information for OCR centres transferring to **new specifications for first teaching in September 2008**

This document maps the current A Level Performance Studies specification to the new specification for first teaching in September 2008. It includes information on the changes, support available and an outline of the new specification. It is intended to help ease the transition for Heads of Department and Teachers involved in the teaching of Performance Studies.

The full specification is available online along with a short questionnaire enabling you to share your comments on the specification and help shape the materials developed to support it. For more information including answers to frequently asked questions visit www.ocr.org.uk/14-19alevels

Current specification – mapping the changes **pages 2-3**

Outline specification for first teaching September 2008 **page 4**

QCA have stipulated that:

- Number of units required to achieve GCE A level Performance Studies is to be reduced from six to four
- Stretch and Challenge style questions to be introduced into A2 assessment



Mapping the changes to the A Level Performance Studies specification for first teaching September 2008

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Candidates must complete six mandatory units

Existing specification					
Current unit title	Unit code	What remains the same?	What is changing?	Why is it changing?	
AS	Language of Performing Arts	2556 Mandatory 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) Coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills based workshops and short pieces in each art form. Candidates still assessed on a written commentary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Unit title. Will now be called Creating Performance. The longer 4th combined art form piece is now based on the old 2559 community project. Candidates will also now be assessed on practical performance skills.. New unit code G401. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the reduction of six to four units it was sensible to combine current elements of coursework. It was also important to retain the assessment of practical performance skills at AS, so assessment of the performance of the community piece has been introduced to achieve this and in response to centre feedback about the current unit 2559.
	Contextual Studies 1	2557 Mandatory 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure and length of exam remains the same. Candidates still study one work from two practitioners each in a different art form. One practitioner in each section will remain the same in the new specification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Unit title. Will now be called Performance Contexts 1. Each section will now contain three practitioners, two of which will be different from the old spec. New unit code G402. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and Names of practitioners have been changed to give Centres more variety and choice.
	Performance Realisation	2558 Optional 40% (AS) 20% (A Level) Visiting examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The repertoire element of this unit will remain and be combined with elements of the Student Devised Performance and will be assessed at A2 level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This visiting examined unit will no longer exist at AS level. The new repertoire performance piece can now be from any work studied in the AS or A2 Performance Contexts units. New unit code G404. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The practical performance skills at AS level will now be teacher assessed in the Creating Performance unit. Repertoire performance is still an important element and has therefore been combined in one of the A2 units.

Guidance

- Training**
OCR offers a full range of INSET courses for both new and experienced teachers.
- Endorsements**
Teacher Support Material endorsed by Hodder.
- Resources**
Exemplar work for all elements of the specification will be provided. For example sample coursework commentaries, sample candidate responses for written papers and DVD material of practical work. The Performance e-community is also a good resource for teachers – it is designed to help teacher’s help each other and share resources which can be posted to the member website attached to the community.
- Schemes of Work**
Suggested approaches to the units will be covered in the Teacher’s Guide.
- Website**
There is a Performance Studies section on the main OCR website and a member website linked to the Performance Studies e-community.
- Sample Assessment Material**
Specimen question papers and mark schemes for the written examination papers and the practical unit commissions will be available.
- Teacher Guidance**
A detailed Teacher’s Guide will be produced and updated annually.

Existing specification					
Current unit title	Unit code	What remains the same?	What is changing?	Why is it changing?	Guidance
A2 Community Performance Project	2559 Mandatory 15% (A) Coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates will still perform a piece which integrates the art forms and is based on a situation specific to a Community. Candidates will still write a written commentary but this will now be integrated with the commentary on the shorter pieces derived from the old unit 2556. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Unit will not exist in its current form but is combining with elements of the old unit 2556. The performance skills of candidates in the community piece will now be assessed. New unit code G401. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to Centre feedback that it would be good to assess candidates' performance skills of this piece. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training OCR offers a full range of INSET courses for both new and experienced teachers. Endorsements Teacher Support Material endorsed by Hodder. Resources Exemplar work for all elements of the specification will be provided. For example sample coursework commentaries, sample candidate responses for written papers and DVD material of practical work. The Performance e-community is also a good resource for teachers – it is designed to help teacher's help each other and share resources which can be posted to the member website attached to the community.
A2 Contextual Studies 2	2560 Mandatory 15% (A) Written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure and length of the exam remains the same. The three current topics will still remain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unit title. Will now be called Performance Contexts 2. There will an additional 4th topic called Approaches to Performance in the Far East. New unit code G403. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create more choice for Centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes of Work Suggested approaches to the units will be covered in the Teacher's Guide. Website There is a Performance Studies section on the main OCR website and a member website linked to the Performance Studies e-community. Sample Assessment Material Specimen question papers and mark schemes for the written examination papers and the practical unit commissions will be available. Teacher Guidance A detailed Teacher's Guide will be produced and updated annually.
A2 Contextual Studies 2	2561 Mandatory 20% (A) Visiting examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will still be externally examined by a visiting examiner. This unit will now be combined with elements of the old unit 2558. Candidates will still devise in response to a commission set by OCR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates will now be assessed on repertoire performance skills at A2 level, from any practitioner studied in Performance Contexts 1 or 2. The number of set commissions will be reduced but the nature of the commissions may vary from year to year. Where the commissions are based on pictures or poems etc these items will be reproduced in the question paper. New unit code G404. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was important to retain the external visiting examination element and this is most appropriate at A2 level. Performance of repertoire has been widened out to any practitioner studied at AS or A2 to give centres and candidates more choice. Changes to the number and nature of the commission paper is to help achieve greater variety year on year. 	

New A Level Performance Studies specification for first teaching September 2008

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Candidates must complete four mandatory units



	New unit title	New unit code	Benefits to me and my learners	Support
AS	Creating Performance	G401 Mandatory 70% (AS) 35% (A Level) Coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates will learn and develop an approach to the Performing Arts which is multi-disciplinary and develop their imagination, sensitivity and artistic knowledge and understanding in Dance, Drama and Music. The specification contains extensive practical work and candidates will perform both existing pieces and create their own devised material. Practical performance skills are assessed at both AS and A2 level and an examiner will visit the centre at A2 level. The practical performance of the community piece will now be assessed. Candidates performance of repertoire can now be from any practitioner studied at AS and A2 level. New practitioners and topics give candidates more variety and choice. The burden of assessment has been reduced as there are now only four units, only one of which is coursework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training OCR offers a full range of INSET courses for both new and experienced teachers. Endorsements Teacher Support Material endorsed by Hodder. Resources Exemplar work for all elements of the specification will be provided. For example sample coursework commentaries, sample candidate responses for written papers and DVD material of practical work. The Performance e-community is also a good resource for teachers – it is designed to help teacher's help each other and share resources which can be posted to the member website attached to the community. Schemes of Work Suggested approaches to the units will be covered in the Teacher's Guide. Website There is a Performance Studies section on the main OCR website and a member website linked to the Performance Studies e-community. Sample Assessment Material Specimen question papers and mark schemes for the written examination papers and the practical unit commissions will be available. Teacher Guidance A detailed Teacher's Guide will be produced and updated annually.
AS	Performance Contexts 1	G402 Mandatory 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) 2hr written paper		
A2	Performance Contexts 2	G403 Mandatory 15% (A Level) 2hr written paper		
A2	Performance Project	G404 Mandatory 35% (A Level) Visiting examination		