



Accredited

OCR LEVEL 3 CAMBRIDGE TECHNICAL CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA IN **PERFORMING ARTS**

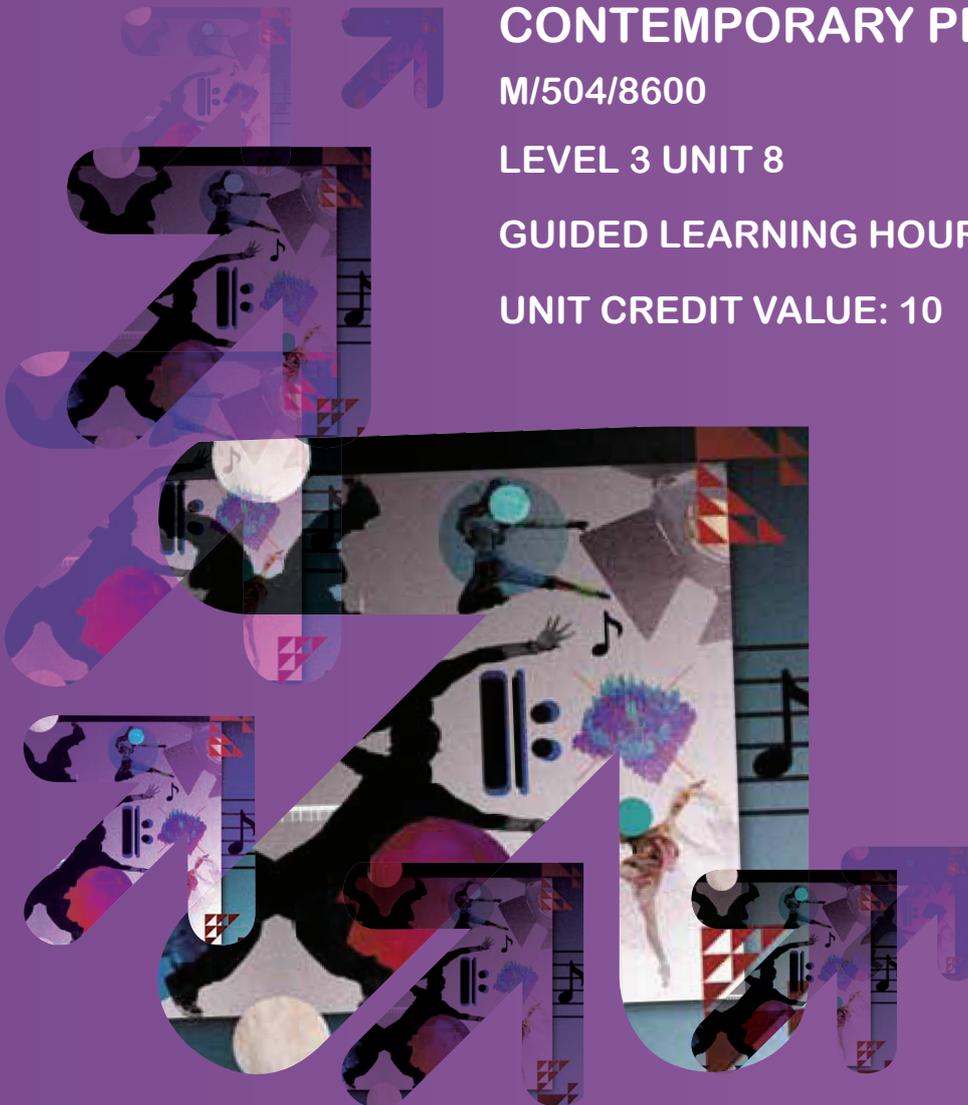
CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE

M/504/8600

LEVEL 3 UNIT 8

GUIDED LEARNING HOURS: 60

UNIT CREDIT VALUE: 10



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AIM OF UNIT

Contemporary performance is what is going on in theatres and art-centres now and there is a huge range. This could be theatre-based, dance-based or music-based or a combination of all three forms and more including visual and live art, circus and puppetry. The performance could be responding to social issues, politics or personal lives. It could be in a traditional space or site-specific. This combining and collaboration between artists, forms and content produces exciting and stimulating hybrid forms and performances that can leave audiences excited, emotional or sometimes bewildered. But contemporary performance is not just about new work; it can also be a way of approaching classical texts and understanding the needs of audiences in contemporary society and about bringing new audiences to live performance. This unit is about learners exploring this range of contemporary performance and then making decisions on what to focus on and where their own artistic techniques are in the mix.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING CRITERIA

Learning Outcome (LO)	Pass	Merit	Distinction
The learner will:	The assessment criteria are the pass requirements for this unit. The learner can:	To achieve a merit the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
1 Know characteristics of contemporary performance	P1 explain the range of factors that define contemporary performance		
2 Be able to make contemporary performances	P2 devise a contemporary performance	M1 devise contemporary performance, integrating the defining factors with some competence and cohesion	D1 devise contemporary performance with fluency, integrity and cohesion
	P3 adapt a classical performance piece for a contemporary audience	M2 adapt a classical performance piece with some relevance for a contemporary audience	D2 comment on the outcome of the performance in light of its original intention
3 Understand contemporary performance	P4 evaluate a contemporary performance work of self and others		

TEACHING CONTENT

The unit content describes what has to be taught to ensure that learners are able to access the highest grade.

Anything which follows an i.e. details what must be taught as part of that area of content.

Anything which follows an e.g. is illustrative, It should be noted that where e.g. is used, learners must know and be able to apply relevant examples to their work although these do not need to be the same ones specified in the unit content.

Know characteristics of contemporary performance

- Defining contemporary performance: the background and context to contemporary performance, e.g. The Avant-Garde, Symbolism, performance art, modernity
- Performance of its time, e.g. Absurd, 'happenings'. How and when 'contemporary' becomes 'historical'
- Combining arts: range, elements, different 'languages' of artists and art-form demands
- Contemporary performance companies, e.g. Wuppertal Dance Theatre, Complicite, DV8, Lumiere and Son
- Partnerships and collaborations, e.g. John Cage and Merce Cunningham
- The contemporary conditions for performance: zeitgeist, fringe festivals, political censorship and oppression
- Re-defining the boundaries of performance: site-specific and environment performance

Be able to make contemporary performances

- The factors of contemporary performance: skills and techniques of performer(s); body/physical issues and approaches, content, ideas, themes and issues; the processes of integration of art forms and approaches to make coherent performance; the desired impact on audiences
- Documenting the process, logs and annotation, sourcing and citing influences
- Structuring material for performance
- Making contemporary performance with classical and existing texts, relevance and notions of 'originality'

Understand contemporary performance

- Monitoring the process: adapting, responding to changing ideas and criticism, responding to audiences
- Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of own skills and techniques, process and performance
- Peer assessment and evaluation
- Evaluating the performance work of professional contemporary companies. Maintaining performance logs and documentation

DELIVERY GUIDANCE

Know characteristics of contemporary performance

Delivery of this outcome may be realised in a variety of formats. It could form the introduction to the unit and could include classroom presentations, lectures, seminars and demonstrations from performance companies. Learners should be given opportunities to see a range of contemporary performances; these could be on DVD as well as live work. What is paramount is the opportunities given for learners to see contemporary work, break it down into its component parts, e.g. art form, themes and content, use of design and technical elements, and then experiment practically with their own artistic and creative ideas. There should be few assumptions passed on to learners in the defining of contemporary performance; they should be given the opportunity to explore the definitions within the context of their chosen art form and their own perspective but the study of performances that made an impact in their own time could be useful in their research, i.e. Peter Brook's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Be able to make contemporary performance

Delivery of this outcome should be based on giving the learner time and space to build performance underpinned by the delivery content of **LO1**. Working in groups they could start by auditing their own set of skills and techniques and preferences in terms of themes and ideas and their perceptions of contemporary content and audience demands. This could be from their own sources of text and content or existing texts. Guidance could also come from workshops with practitioners in the field. Learners could be given structures and guidance on how to annotate texts and keep documentary evidence of practical sessions.

Understand contemporary performance

Learners should be given the opportunity to evaluate their own and the work of others. This could include delivering strategies and methods for on-going monitoring through logs and other forms of documentation as well as DVD accounts of devising and rehearsing processes. Learners should be encouraged to note the strengths and weaknesses of their work in class and in performance and use the results to adapt and change as they progress. Evaluating the performance work of contemporary companies, individual practitioners and other learners may be useful in developing critical awareness of practice.

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT SCENARIOS AND GUIDANCE ON ASSESSMENT

Assessment and Grading Criterion P1

Evidence for this criterion could consist of a presentation that sets out the factors defining contemporary performance, citing examples from the past and present context. Learners could also run seminars or illustrated workshops based on the work of a contemporary performance company unpicking the company's style and genre, their historical context and the impact they try to have on audiences. A more general research portfolio should also be produced.

To achieve **P1** learners should produce evidence of research into at least three performance companies outlining with some competence and accuracy what made them 'contemporary' within their own time and context.

Assessment and Grading Criteria P2, M1, D1

Learners will need to devise performances that are contemporary in the use and integration of skills and techniques, in their ideas and themes and in their impact on an audience. Evidence should consist of observations and accounts of the devising process and the level of engagement with an audience; this could be done with questionnaires and post-show discussions. Learners should also produce logs and DVD records and could consider blogs that record thinking outside of the studio.

To achieve **P2** learners should devise a performance to an audience that shows that they competently understand the key elements that define contemporary work. Length of pieces will depend on the art form but should be between 10 and 20 minutes long. They can work individually or in groups but must show individual evidence of their contribution.

M1 requires the learners to show that they are moving towards a more accomplished performance of the key elements of contemporary performance, showing some cohesion and fluency in their integration of form and content and having some of the desired impact on the audience.

D1 requires learners to produce accomplished performances that show understanding of contemporary performance methods, form and content and that has full impact on an audience.

Assessment and Grading Criteria P3, M2, D2

Annotations and logs that chart work on existing texts could be used as evidence. Evidence should be consistent with the nature of the art form, for instance in dance-based work, DVDs could highlight the original and then the re-invented motif, in music a score showing a new arrangement could be used as evidence. Adaptations could be tried out in front of a small workshop audience and could consist of significant extracts. DVD recordings should be made of performances.

To achieve **P3** learners should select significant extracts from classical performance and adapt them for contemporary audiences showing evidence of their understanding of the artistic processes involved.

M2 should be awarded when learners show evidence that they can competently adapt classical performance articulating some artistic rationale for the changes made based on making the piece relevant to a contemporary audience.

D2 requires learners to produce a clear artistic rationale for the changes made based on making the piece relevant to a contemporary audience. This should include a reflection on whether or not the original intention has been realised.

Assessment and Grading Criterion P4

As well as presenting their own monitoring logs and summative statements as evidence, learners should also produce critical accounts of the work of other contemporary artists and companies making comparisons and placing their own work into some kind of wider context. There could be evidence of continuous comparative process.

To achieve **P4** learners should provide written evidence of monitoring, commentaries and evaluations on the work that they have doing within the unit. This should show awareness of strengths and weaknesses in their own practical work as well as some comparisons in methods between themselves and others.

RESOURCES

Studio space. Recording facilities. DVD camera.

Further reading

Benedetto, S di, *The Provocation of the Senses in Contemporary Theatre* (Routledge, 2010), ISBN: 9780415872676

Brandt, G W, *Modern Theories of Drama* (Clarendon, 1998) ISBN: 0198711395

Bremser, M ed. and Jowitt, J ed. *Fifty Contemporary Choreographers: A Reference Guide* (Routledge, 2003), ISBN: 0415103649

Burns, L and La France, M, *Disruptive Divas: Feminism, Identity and Popular Music* (Childs, 2001), ISBN: 0815335547

Case, S, *Feminism and Theatre* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), ISBN: 0230521185

Cotterell, R and Carr, I, *Music Outside: Contemporary Jazz in Britain* (Northway Productions, 2008), ISBN: 0955090865

Huxley, M and Witts, N ed., *The Twentieth Century Performance Reader* (Routledge, 1996), ISBN: 0415116287

Kaye, N, *Art into Theatre* (Harwood 1996), ISBN: 3718657899

Oddey, A, *Devising Theatre* (Routledge, 1994), ISBN: 0415049008

Websites

www.contemporaryperformance.com

www.contemporaryperformance.org

LINKS TO NOS

Community Arts	Obtain and use research information
Community Arts	Keep up to date with developments in the arts
Community Arts	Contribute ideas for community arts projects
Community Arts	Assist in developing a community arts project
Community Arts	The use of feedback in the effective performance of teams and individuals
Community Arts	Understand how your community arts organisation can meet market needs and satisfy customer needs.
Cultural Heritage	Understand the sector in which you work and the wider creative and cultural heritage
Cultural Heritage	Evaluate the customer, audience or visitor experience of a creative or cultural experience
Freelancing in the Creative and Cultural Industries	Conduct research to develop your freelance work in the creative and cultural industries



CONTACT US

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