



Accredited

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

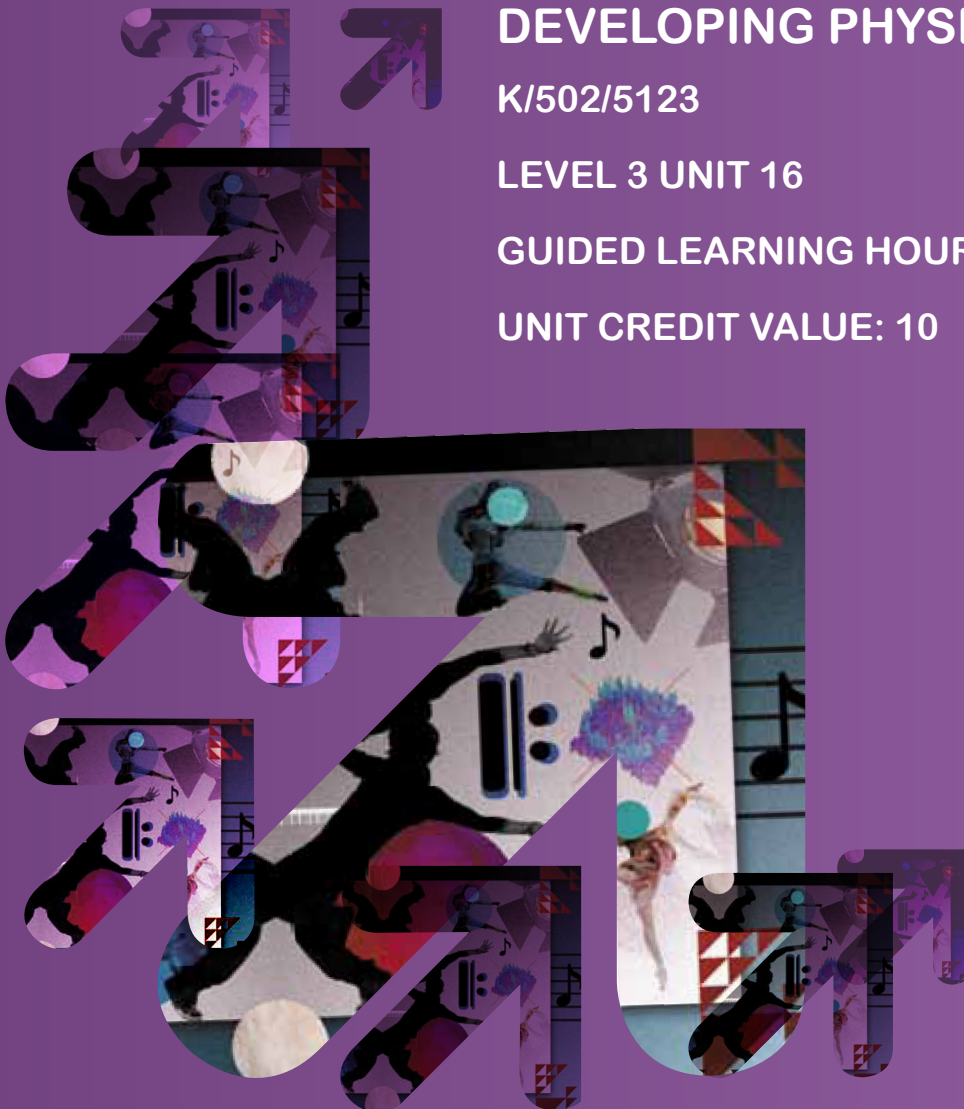
DEVELOPING PHYSICAL THEATRE

K/502/5123

LEVEL 3 UNIT 16

GUIDED LEARNING HOURS: 60

UNIT CREDIT VALUE: 10



DEVELOPING PHYSICAL THEATRE

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LEVEL 3 UNIT 16

AIM OF UNIT

This unit will look at how different kinds of performers, from different sorts of backgrounds, interpret and make physical theatre. Learners will develop their physical theatre skills, make their own performances and begin to understand how form, other practitioners and their own physicality makes performance possible. The unit will explore a range of physical theatre and explore how the distinctive artistic genre has developed. Dancers and actors often come together to make physical theatre and when they do, they come with different backgrounds and influences. They have different technical starting points and they refer to different practitioners but in making physical theatre they are using a common language to have maximum impact on an audience.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING CRITERIA

Learning Outcome (LO)		Pass	Merit	Distinction
The learner will:		The learner can:		
1	Understand key influences in physical theatre	P1 explain contemporary developments of physical theatre, recognising key features, influences and working methods		
2	Be able to develop skills and techniques associated with physical theatre	P2 demonstrate the use of physical theatre skills in performance	M1 physical theatre skills and techniques are developed and honed in performance	D1 physical theatre skills and techniques show fluency and a developing virtuosity
3	Be able to select, develop and refine materials	P3 respond to stimulus material, recognising performance possibilities		
		P4 use ideas, resources, research and materials to find and shape an appropriate form	M2 material is shaped and refined effectively to realise a physical theatre piece	D2 comment on success of the performance piece in light of its original intention

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.

Understand key influences in physical theatre

- The range of physical styles, genres and techniques and their characteristics: commedia, melodrama and stock characters and situations. Comic mime, clowning, exaggeration and grotesque characters. The use of masks.
- Physical Theatre as a distinct genre of performance: art-form and practitioner influences on development, e.g., Brecht and gestus, Dario Fo and the travelling story teller, Pina Bausch and choreographic theatre, Biomechanics, LeCoq and Steven Berkoff. Artaud and impact on audiences. Physical interpretations of classical texts.
- How Physical Theatre is defined and articulated by contemporary companies and practitioners, e.g., DV8, Complicite, Told by an Idiot, Kneehigh and other contemporary physical theatre companies.

Be able to develop skills and techniques associated with physical theatre

- Ensemble work: teamwork, games, trust exercises, physical problem solving and story telling. Health and Safety issues.
- Physical development: fitness, stamina and extending physical range. Exploration of dance vocabularies, timing, spatial awareness.
- The use of music, voice and choral technique to enhance performance. Improvisation and the devising process: narrative and non-narrative forms. Characterisation, mood, pace and rhythm. How audiences can be manipulated and impacted upon.

Be able to select, develop and refine materials

- Performance starting points: narrative, textual or physical beginnings. The use of artefacts and physical objects.
- The making of music and soundscapes to enhance physical theatre.
- How Physical Theatre can be documented and reproduced.

DELIVERY GUIDANCE

Understand key influences in physical theatre

Physical theatre has had many influences on its place in contemporary performance. There are as many definitions of the form as there are practitioners of it and learners need to be equipped with the tools to be able to define their own artistic and physical aesthetic. As part of this it is suggested that learners are given a wide account of the context of physical theatre. For LO1 a delivery strategy that embraces the combination of theory and practice is encouraged. The exploration of mask work for instance could develop physical expression as well as give clear contexts to their original use and purpose and this could be a good place to start. Masks ask questions of performers and these cannot be answered fully without reference to their place in Greek and Roman Theatre. In exploring the range of physical theatre, it may also be useful to explore those genres that are traditionally excluded from the definition such as Naturalism and the place of small physical actions to denote an emotional state (or to counter-point an emotional state). The physicality of silent characters in decision-making moments such as can be found in Ibsen, can be useful as a 'threshold' for the building of action. Observing dance versions of classical texts and naturalistic plays (such as Nigel Charnock's 'How to Live' based on Ibsen's women) give the opposite end of the physical scale. This process can also be used to explore the range of content and audience engagement, moving, for instance, from Brecht's and Fo's use of *gestus* (attitude) to evoke political commitment and involvement through to Artaud's desire for the most direct impact on an audience without any intellectual involvement. Contemporary practitioners and companies could be placed in their contexts by unpicking their influences and styles of performance.

Be able to develop skills and techniques associated with physical theatre

How the delivery outline above develops will depend on the starting point of the group, the centre's resources and the expertise of the delivery staff so guidance remains flexible and fluid but the course could start with a practical skills audit of the learners and an induction process that explores their physical possibilities and limitations. This can be done through a series of games and exercises that will also encourage the essential teamwork needed for performance work. Trust exercises incorporating lifting, falling and building could be explored – subject to health and safety considerations and constraints. Physical theatre is demanding

on performers and there could be regular workshops that develop stamina, fitness and extension. If acting specialists are teaching the programme it would be useful for dancers to give advice or lead workshops on a regular basis, or the group could be instructed to develop a suitable physical programme for themselves. The full range of vocal and sound possibilities should be explored including choral work using lyrical texts, singing and other techniques such as *grammelot* (satirical gibberish) and sound-poetry.

Be able to select, develop and refine materials

Texts and plays are a useful starting point for the development of physical theatre and in LO1 it is suggested that these can be used to also explore the range of styles and techniques encompassed in the term as well as the work of practitioners. There should also be a wide use of other starting points starting with the learners themselves and their personal stories and concerns. This will encourage the ownership necessary for committed physical work. Objects, news reports, online material and content-free (at the beginning) improvisational techniques could be freely explored. There should be an imperative to document all stages of development both in personal logs and on displayed sheets around the walls – this is necessary later on to define a throughline or arc to the piece or simply an order to the performance strategies deployed. Regular production meetings may allow the group to stand back and see what they have and structure and re-structure the performance.

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT SCENARIOS AND GUIDANCE ON ASSESSMENT

Assessment and Grading Criterion P1

The assessment criterion should be evidenced by exploring and logging how physical theatre techniques can be used in a range of texts and performance styles. Learners could produce annotated texts, workshop presentations and videoed accounts of how physical work has been evolved from given texts. Learners should develop short workshop performances that showcase a variety of theatre pieces based on physicality and visual communication of content. This could include scenes using masks from commedia dell'arte scenarios, or combining action with comic monologues or re-enactments from film (silent comedy and the Marx Brothers).

To achieve **P1** learners should examine through at least three short extracts a deconstruction of the pieces which makes evident that they have grasped the key characteristics of the exemplified work. Documentation should evidence an understanding of influences as well as stages of development of the extracts.

Assessment and Grading Criteria P2/M1/D1

Evidence for this criterion will be assessed through both group and individual work and could involve milestones on the physical journey of learners. Learners should start by identifying their own level and range of physical movement and ability and keep logs and DVD diaries of how this is widening and developing. There could also be movement classes where teacher and peer observation is built into the assessment process.

To achieve **P2** learners should perform with a competent level of technical and stylistic skill which makes evident that they have grasped the style being performed.

M1 requires the learner to produce evidence of refinement and honing of skills in response to classes, feedback and performances. They should be moving towards a more accomplished performance of physical theatre styles.

D1 can be awarded when learner's evidence technically accomplishes physical theatre practice.

Assessment and Grading Criterion P3

Learners could present evidence of how they would work on stimulus material. This could be a research and development stage. For this criterion the stimulus material could be either the same for the whole group or they could choose this for themselves. This could be a table-top exercise where learners present written evidence (annotated texts, photographs, music scores or recordings and storyboards) that provides the starting framework or scenario for a performance. This material should be kept and used as documentary evidence for assessment. Learners would need to justify and keep evidence of their choice of material, their decisions on how it would be shaped and worked on and the potential for audience engagement.

Assessment and Grading Criteria P4/M2/D2

Using the experience and logs from the work outlined for the other outcomes, learners will devise their own physical theatre piece. This could be from a given stimulus to provide coherence and a clear benchmark. This can be in the form of a commission brief based on a given myth or story and be produced for a specified age range and audience. There should be limits to props and set so that there is an imperative to construct these physical and with their bodies only. DVD evidence of the stages and of the final piece should be kept.

To achieve **P3** and **P4** learners should show evidence of taking an active part in the selection and developing of material. They should articulate strengths and weaknesses of on-going decisions and have practically explored their own ideas and the ideas of others.

M2 should be awarded when learners have played a competent and effective part in the development of material for physical theatre performance.

D2 requires learners to review and comment on the extent to which the original intention as described in the stimulus has been realised.

RESOURCES

Studio. Recording equipment. Sprung floor

LINKS TO NOS

CCSCA8	Obtain and use research information
SKSGI1	Research information for work in the creative industries
Unique ref number	Cast performers to realise a creative idea
CCSCA5r	Assist in developing a community arts project
CCSCA4	Contribute ideas for community arts projects
CCSCA2	Provide direction and leadership for your team
CCSCA8	Obtain and use research information
CCSCA5	Assist in developing a community arts project
Community Arts	Contribute ideas for community arts projects
Cultural Heritage	Evaluate the customer, audience or visitor experience of a creative or cultural experience
Proskills	Make sure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety



CONTACT US

Staff at the OCR Customer Contact Centre are available to take your call between 8am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

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