Cambridge TECHNICALS

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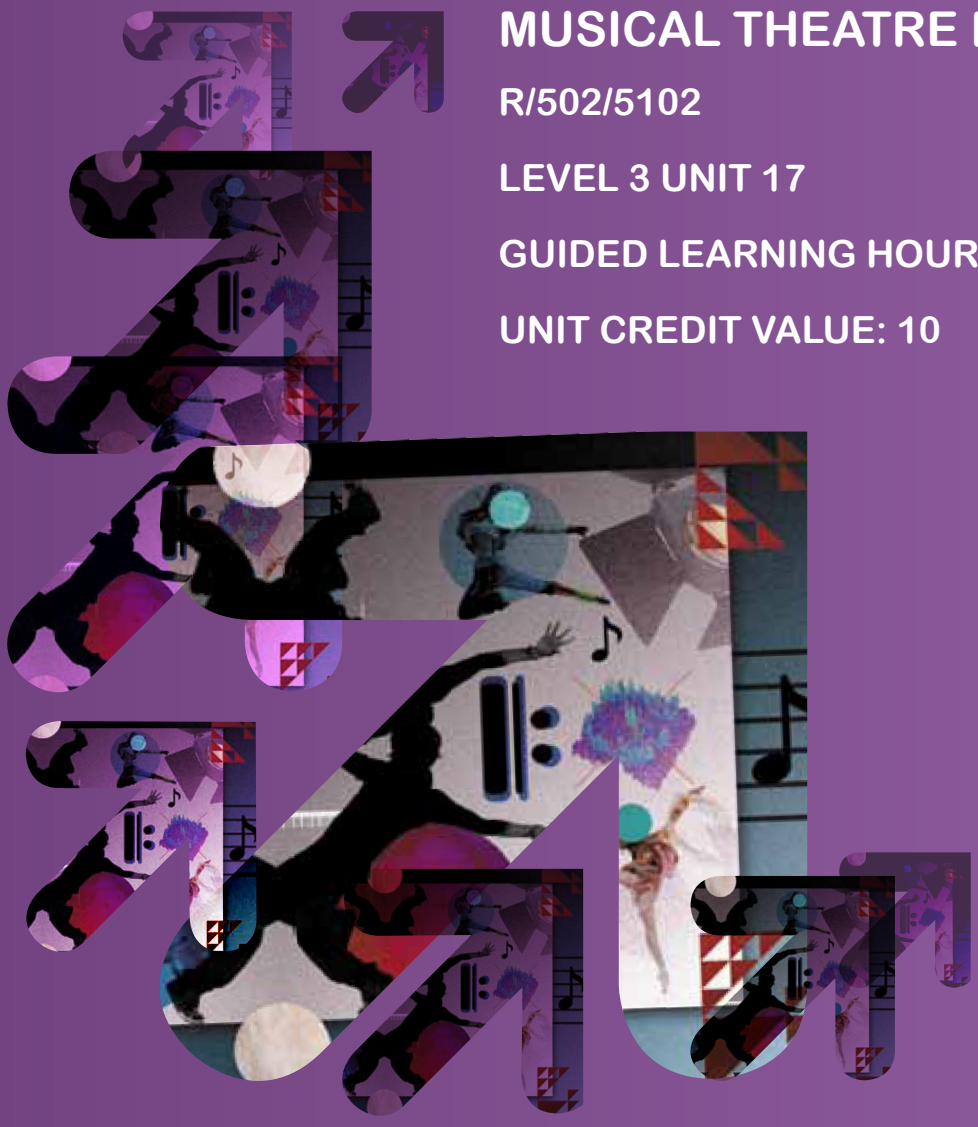
# OCR LEVEL 3 CAMBRIDGE TECHNICAL

## CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA IN

# PERFORMING ARTS



## MUSICAL THEATRE PERFORMANCE

R/502/5102

LEVEL 3 UNIT 17

GUIDED LEARNING HOURS: 60

UNIT CREDIT VALUE: 10

OCR

# MUSICAL THEATRE PERFORMANCE

## R/502/5102

## LEVEL 3 UNIT 17

## AIM OF UNIT

This unit is designed to equip learners with skills for performing in musical theatre. Musical theatre is rapidly becoming the most popular form of live entertainment after live music. Popular TV shows have heightened public awareness of the vast repertoire of musical theatre works. Employment opportunities which exist are wide ranging, from children's entertainers through to the newer and often innovative small-scale touring companies producing their own work, to musical plays and the more traditional genres such as pantomime.

Learners will need to achieve competence in all three art forms. The Musical Theatre performer is known as a `triple threat' performer due to their skills in acting, singing and dancing and this unit is intended to develop a raft of skills, ideally in equal measure. In addition to developed performance skills, there is a high level of focus, concentration and discipline expected of the musical theatre performer.

## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING CRITERIA

| Learning Outcome (LO)<br>The learner will: | Pass<br>The assessment criteria are the pass requirements for this unit.<br>The learner can: | Merit<br>To achieve a merit the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to: | Distinction<br>To achieve a distinction the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to: |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Understand a role or roles in a musical theatre work | P1 discuss an interpretation and realisation of a role or roles | M1 apply a range of effective role playing techniques | |
| 2 Be able to apply the appropriate performance skills | P2 use the appropriate skills and techniques with support and guidance | | |
| 3 Be able to rehearse for a role in a musical | P3 contribute to the rehearsal process maintaining a suitable level of rehearsal discipline | | |
| 4 Be able to perform a role in a musical | P4 use performing skills competently to create a performance that communicates an interpretation to an audience | M2 perform a role with a clear interpretation and good performance skills | D1 perform a role with flair which engages the audience, exhibiting a wide range of highly developed performance skills |

## 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.

Whichever teaching format is selected, the basic skills are the same across the board. This means that for learners, learning vehicles are many although clearly, it is incumbent on the teacher to ensure that the repertoire chosen is appropriate for the teaching group. It is essential for teachers to inculcate self-discipline and control and for learners to commit to a regime of dedicated hard work spanning the complete performance process. Fitness is also an important consideration for musical theatre performers who require the stamina to sustain a performance encompassing all three art forms. It is therefore essential for learners to take their skills training seriously.

### Understand a role or roles in a musical theatre work

Musical theatre genres, e.g. Book Musicals, Operetta, Concept Musicals

Musical theatre conventions, e.g. related to role, familiarisation with performance styles across three art forms, engaging the audience, working as part of an ensemble or chorus, understanding the aesthetics of the stage 'picture'.

Character, e.g. establishing a character, how to deliver dialogue, creative interpretation of music, lyrics and choreography.

### Be able to apply the appropriate performance skills

Selection and practice: casting considerations, skills related performance challenges, voice training and physicality appropriate to the role, following a practice regime, setting and attaining targets.

Memorisation of lines, songs, choreography and routines. Working an audience.

Vocal skills: Identifying personal vocal range; application of breathing techniques; recognition of pitch, tone quality, notes, intervals, pace, chords and keys; rehearsing with a score, response to musical direction.

Dance skills: rhythm, dynamic response, assimilation of choreographic principles, accuracy, use of space, technical precision, proxemics awareness, solo, duo and ensemble work

Acting skills: e.g. physicality, facial expression, emotional register, vocal range, projection, versatility, character development, response to direction; role development.

**Be able to rehearse for a role in a musical**

Scheduling: time management, following a rehearsal schedule

Discipline: attendance and punctuality, focus and concentration, self-control, work ethic

Preparation: clothing, equipment, documentation, memorisation, personal warm-up, physical fitness

Working with others: team work, cooperative attitude and approach, commitment, preparation.

### Be able to perform a role in a musical

Physical and vocal expression: e.g. vocal and physical control, effective use of physical and vocal range, awareness of tone, pitch, intonation, balance, poise, dynamics.

Communication: e.g. engaging the audience, stylistic awareness, maintaining focus and concentration, physical and vocal projection, maintaining a character, communication of mood and emotion, interpretation, communication with other performers.

Stage discipline: e.g. proxemic awareness of other performers and set, appropriate use of microphones, costume and props, back stage conduct, health and safety awareness.

Evaluation skills: observation and feedback, reflection and review and refining and shaping.

# DELIVERY GUIDANCE

### Understand a role or roles in a musical theatre work

The focus of this unit is on role and practical performance, nonetheless it is essential for performers to know and understand at least the most significant types of musical repertoire which they may encounter together with their component elements, stylistic characteristics etc. Obviously there can be no substitute for attending live performances by professional companies but realistically it may be necessary to rely heavily on DVD and internet sources. However the material is accessed, teachers should bear in mind that the central tenet of the learning objective is role centred. Clearly, it is beneficial for learners to have as broad an appreciation as possible about a range of styles and types of musical theatre but where such knowledge is developed it should focus on the way a role is created and communicated across the art forms. Hence a comparison between say Chicago and Les Miserables would not only recognise the contrasting stylistic features of the respective pieces but also attempt to isolate and analyse what it is that makes the development and performance of the roles within them so very different.

Learners might be encouraged to carry out an analysis of a range of roles from contrasting musicals and in each case highlight the salient stylistic/physical/vocal elements and how they are used in each given example or context. Wherever possible, this should not be confined to the theoretical but should aim for practical realisation in as wide a range as is possible.

### Be able to apply the appropriate performance skills

Learners should focus purely on performance skills across the three art forms. The teaching approach will no doubt dictate how these areas are addressed either through discrete skills workshops or through integrated sessions. Whichever approach is chosen, it is essential that (natural talent apart), learners do not develop one particular skill at the expense of another. Learners will not be expected to be equally proficient in all three art forms but nevertheless they should strive to develop all three concurrently and in equal measure. Again, a role-centred approach might be useful; arising out of the work which learners have carried out under LO1 they may work on realising an extract or extracts from a specific role or contracting roles. Such roles need not of course be lead roles; indeed it would be inadvisable for this to be the case. Learners need to experience equally the challenges of role development in all its aspects, including ensemble chorus work.

### Be able to rehearse for a role in a musical

This learning objective moves the focus away from performance skills to the more functional mechanisms associated with professional practice. There can be no effective substitute for 'doing' of course and it is therefore strongly recommended that this LO is embraced in the course of the production process. Having said this, there are some aspects which will need to be developed by association rather than as part of the process. Personal aspects such as physical fitness and warm-up routines need to be addressed early on as does what is expected of performers during rehearsal. It is strongly suggested that a group contract or code of conduct should be established at the beginning of the unit and referred to if necessary throughout the unit. Learners should be familiar with the layout and function of a rehearsal schedule and again it is important that they appreciate that in order to fulfil the requirement of the unit they should do all they can to ensure that the timetable is maintained together with its associated requirements. The rehearsal process should become a matter of daily routine for learners so that they arrive on time and completely prepared for the work ahead of them.

### Be able to perform a role in a musical

As the culmination of the learning process, the performance gives learners the opportunity to give their learning process its full rein in an applied setting. This should be before a live audience since they cannot apply some aspects of the learning objectives in the absence of one. In musical theatre performers have to love their audiences and want to please them since it gives them meaning. By focussing on the act of sharing their role with others, i.e. the spectators, performers are given the opportunity to gauge how effective their understanding, interpretation and realisation have been.

It is essential that the performance is recorded and that time is made available after the performance for the ensemble to review, informally analyse and evaluate the work from individual, group and whole production perspectives.

## SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT SCENARIOS AND GUIDANCE ON ASSESSMENT

### Assessment and Grading Criteria P2

As part of a group learners will contribute to a seminar devoted to the consideration of specified roles from a piece of musical theatre (live or recorded). Individual learners will:

- highlight aspects of interpretation
- discuss aspects of realisation

### Assessment and Grading Criteria M1

Learners will apply a range of role playing techniques in the creation of their nominated role from **P1**

### Assessment and Grading Criteria P2

Individual learners will prepare a role or roles for workshop performance, (separate from role for **P1**). Skills may be applied separately or in combination. Within the role they must develop and apply the following:

- singing skills
- dance skills
- acting skills.

### Assessment and Grading Criteria P3, P4, M2, D4

For **P3** and **P4** learners will take part in the rehearsal and performance of a whole or significant extract from, musical theatre repertoire before an audience. It should not contain any of the roles approached through **P2** and should be carried out as a group performance. Learners should demonstrate:

- self-discipline and commitment during the rehearsal process in all its aspects
- appropriate application of a variety of musical theatre skills drawn from the three art forms
- effective audience engagement.

For **M2** learners will demonstrate

- a clear sense of, and engagement with, their audience
- assured application of a variety of performance skills.

For **D4** learners will demonstrate:

- an ability to apply a wide range of performance skills from three art forms with flair and energy
- effective audience engagement wherein the role takes on a life of its own.

## RESOURCES

http://www.musicals101.com/research.htm

http://www.ascap.com/music-career/resource-guide/resource-6.aspx

http://www.pbs.org/wnet/broadway

http://namt.org/support-namt.aspx

http://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/content.php?pid=151048&sid=2155043

http://www.colonialdancing.org/Easmes/Index.htm

http://viterbo.libguides.com/theatre

## LINKS TO NOS

| Suite | Reference | NOS |
|---|---|---|
| Community Arts | CCSCA5 | Assist in developing a community arts project |
| Community Arts | CCSCA8 | Obtain and use research information |
| Proskills | PROHSS 1 | Make sure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety |
| Community Arts | CCSCA 8 | Obtain and use research information |
| Community Arts | CCSCA8 | Keep up to date with developments in the arts |
| Music Performers and Composers | CCSMPR23 | Rehearse music |
| Cultural Heritage | CCSCCS30 | Understand the sector in which you work and the wider creative and cultural heritage |



## CONTACT US

Staff at the OCR Customer Contact Centre are available to take your call between 8am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.
We're always delighted to answer questions and give advice.

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