

Unit 2: Production Arts Workshop

Unit code:	R/600/0128
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

This unit emphasises the importance of the interrelation of design, administrative and technical elements within a performing arts project. It does this by encouraging learners to work across production, design and technical disciplines such as lighting, sound, costume, setting, stage management, makeup and props.

● Unit introduction

Understanding the creative and management role of a production team in the development of a performance is essential for anyone wishing to work in a production team and/or progress to study theatre production at higher qualification levels.

This unit gives learners opportunities to explore and develop theatre production skills, trying them out in a workshop setting reflecting some of the conditions, demands and time constraints of a professional environment.

Learners should gain awareness of, and experience in, the range of tasks that a production team undertakes during the performance process. Learners will be able to explore some of the different production roles and acquire creative, technical, administrative and organisational skills typical of these roles.

As this is a 'workshop' unit, learners need to remember that they are working in the context of a production team in developing, presenting and implementing production ideas. These ideas may be realised in an informal workshop performance to an audience; but equally the workshop nature of this unit could allow learners to present production ideas, models, artefacts, etc for an intended performance. The most important aspects are that learners see how the work of the production team eventually affects communication with an audience and that they are able to evaluate the artistic potential of their work accordingly.

The creative team has a vision of how the production will evolve, and learners will experience what it takes to bring the vision to reality. The impact of budget, available skills and time will have to be considered, and compromises negotiated. This unit brings together all of the specialist skills such as lighting, sound, set, management, costume, etc. Production scale is not important – the skills required fit small dramatic pieces as well as larger scale productions.

Much of the content of this unit is about creating, modifying and evaluating ideas for production, and it is essential that teaching staff ensure that correct health and safety procedures are followed at all times.

Learners should explore ideas from at least two different sources in response to two production scenarios. At least one of the sources must be a pre-existing work that involves interpretation, for example script, score, choreographic instructions.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know the role of the production team
- 2 Be able to develop ideas creatively
- 3 Be able to present production ideas in a workshop setting
- 4 Understand the potential of the production process.

Unit content

1 Know the role of the production team

Source materials and stimuli: eg design brief, a play and/or play extract, devised work in progress, choreographed work in progress, a musical number

Exploration of sources: exploring the possibilities/requirements of the brief/text/work; research materials; sketches, drawings and/or photographs; technical plans; idea and thought mapping eg spider diagrams, flow charts, notes, minutes, etc; annotated texts; mock-ups and try-outs; review; discussion; evaluation

Working within a production team: giving and receiving ideas; evaluating own ideas and ideas of others; collaboration in developing ideas; problem solving; discussion; debate; health and safety

Range of production team roles: eg company manager, production manager, stage management (CSM, SM, DSM, ASM), wardrobe manager, technical manager, FOH manager, administration, marketing and publicity, set designer, set builder, lighting designer, lighting engineer, sound designer, sound engineer, props designer, props maker, wig maker, costume designer, costume maker, mask designer, mask maker, makeup designer, makeup artist, hair designer, hairdresser, video/multimedia designer, video/multimedia engineer

2 Be able to develop ideas creatively

Design and/or technical skills: eg construction, visualisation, rigging, recording, programming, painting, operation of equipment, manipulation of materials; selecting and using different materials, techniques, processes; applying the chosen medium and/or media in different ways; health and safety; working to a brief; working with other design elements; working and coordinating with other production roles/departments

3 Be able to present production ideas in a workshop setting

Presentation: verbal and/or written explanation; presentation techniques eg displays, working models, ICT (CAD, PowerPoint, etc), recorded materials; relation to brief and/or commission; development of source materials/stimuli

Production: elements eg props, set, staging, technical services

4 Understand the potential of the production process

Artistic: production values; meeting requirements of design/brief; response to director's notes/interpretation; objective and subjective analysis; effectiveness in use of media eg colour, form, shape, texture, light, sound; combination of elements, techniques and processes in producing meaning and enhancing artistic intention in the work

Professional: working relationships; understanding and fulfilment of role(s); working to deadlines; health and safety

Vocational: meeting the requirements of the client/commission; understanding the target audience and possible markets; potential for further development; economic constraints and viability

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 outline a range of roles within a production team	M1 explain a range of roles within a production team	D1 give a detailed analysis of a range of roles within a production team
P2 develop production ideas using resources, materials and research [CT]	M2 develop effective production ideas carrying out detailed research, using a range of materials and resources	D2 develop effective and imaginative production ideas carrying out detailed research, using a range of materials and resources
P3 work cooperatively in the development of ideas [TW, CT]	M3 work effectively in the development of ideas, showing consideration of own role and the interrelated roles of others	D3 work resourcefully in the development of ideas, showing a detailed consideration of own role and the interrelated roles of others
P4 convert production ideas contained within the brief into a product or performance [SM, TW]	M4 convert production ideas contained within the brief into a well produced product or performance	D4 convert production ideas contained within the brief into a professional, perceptive and imaginative quality product or performance
P5 evaluate the potential of the work in artistic, professional and vocational terms with recognition of the strengths and weaknesses of the work. [IE]	M5 evaluate the potential of the work with clear and considered judgements concerning artistic, professional and vocational strengths and weaknesses.	D5 evaluate the potential of the work with the artistic, professional and vocational strengths and weaknesses clearly identified and fully justified.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit will be fulfilled in collaboration with performers so that the work can be seen in a meaningful context, with learners carrying out the creative, production and administration tasks essential to the development of the workshop performance. Delivery and assessment should incorporate a number of methods and activities, drawing on a variety of resources to introduce learners to the range of creative, technical and administrative roles, practices and jobs in a production team. Whilst the assessment criteria require learners to present ideas and research in respect of the role(s) they are undertaking in each production workshop project, it is essential that these are contextualised within a wider overview of the production process, acknowledging the links and connections between different areas of practice. Teaching and assessment strategies could, therefore, allow learners to gain a wider knowledge and understanding of the profession through combining, for example, independent ideas and research, visits to performances and venues, guest practitioners, job shadowing and case studies.

Learners should be encouraged to choose areas of the process appropriate to their particular specialism, interests and skills. Guidance and consideration should be given to the sharing of individual ideas and research through: a group/class approach; team working; using presentations, group seminars, handouts and discussions. This will encourage a broader dissemination of creative ideas and knowledge. Skills and knowledge in basic production skills will be delivered through tutor input and/or through delivery of other units, although this can be supplemented with input from guest practitioners and/or visits to venues and performances and independent learner research. Ideas should be shaped and developed sufficiently to demonstrate learners' response in relation to the intentions of the production concept, showing understanding of the ways in which production ideas and the ways in which various roles combine to assist the performance.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the production process in the development of a performance should be integral to the teaching of the unit. Learners should be given guidance on how meaningful review and evaluation of the work-in-progress is intrinsic to the work of any theatre practitioner. Opportunities should be given for learners to reflect on the artistic, professional and vocational effectiveness of their work and the work of others; a variety of methods of recording their judgements should be developed. In this unit evaluation could be used to predict the standard of the final product from the advance work being carried out, or the final product could be evaluated, looking back at the process.

Teaching and learning should draw on the unit content to provide coverage of the key areas within a production team. While learners will not be assessed on their understanding of all areas, it is important that unit delivery is structured to provide an overview of the whole process, allowing learners to develop an awareness of the range of different roles and their contribution to the development of a performance.

There is considerable scope for repeatability in learner roles or activities, allowing learners to improve grades, as their experience and ability grows.

Safe working practices

Although not specifically covered by assessment in this unit, there are health and safety implications to some aspects of the processes learners may be carrying out. In the specialist units, health and safety is built in, as a taught element, because of its importance.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to unit and structure of the programme – whole group.
Assignment 1: Production Team Roles – P1, M1, D1
Introduction to roles and responsibilities.
Visit to local theatre for backstage and front of house tour.
Introduction to safe working practices. Activities on the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• electricity at work• working at height• tools (manual and power)• manual handling.
Introduction to problem solving <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis• brainstorming• workshops• decision making.
Assignment 2: Planning for Daisy Pulls it Off – P2, M2, D2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• costumes• set• the hockey match.
Production 1: Daisy Pulls it Off – P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4
Production for the show in teams <ul style="list-style-type: none">• set• costume• backstage.
Assignment 3: Evaluation of Daisy Pulls it Off – in retrospect – P5, M5, D5
Planning for Community Event – P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• choosing a venue• visit to venue• problems• solutions• formulation of 'The Plan'.
Assignment 4: Evaluation of 'The Plan' – P5, M5, D5
Advance evaluation of the likely outcomes, problems and effects of 'The Plan'.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

Start work on 'The Plan'

- allocate roles
- produce timetable.

Assignment 5: Three Roles – in-depth investigation – P1 M1 D1

- own role
- two other team members' roles
- comparison with professional production team.

Final production – P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5

- production ideas
- roles and responsibilities
- production preparation
- production commences
- reviewing the production.

Assessment

Learning outcome 1 could be evidenced through a written report or presentation by one learner or a small group. These presentations should be recorded for internal and external verification purposes. There is scope within this unit to carry out this process throughout the delivery period of the unit which should allow learners to develop their understanding, and progress to higher grades.

Learning outcome 2 is concerned with being able to produce ideas that can be developed. Learners can apply their design and technical skills. They will need to be able to assess if the ideas generated are suitable to be progressed, and will have to achieve collective agreement on when it is appropriate to scrap an idea, and move on.

Learning outcome 3 takes these initial ideas and incorporates them into the actual production. Assessment shifts from the 'idea' itself, onto the practical aspects of using the idea. Much of the work in this area requires learners to take their ideas, and cooperate with others to make them work.

Learning outcome 4 is concerned with reviewing and evaluating the work. In this unit this can be applied in the conventional sense, looking back on what actually happened and making critical comment. However, it may also be incorporated into the planning stage – working with ideas and attempting to evaluate in advance what is likely to happen when these ideas are put into action.

NB: When applying the grading criteria tutors should follow the advice given below. Please note that the examples of evidence given here are indicative only. This advice is not inclusive and the examples need not be included in a learner's work in order for that learner to achieve the awarded grade.

To achieve P1, learners must outline a range of production team roles. The specification for this unit lists a large number of job titles, but even so, this list is not complete. New job titles are being added as technology and producers' needs drive the industry. Assessors are encouraged to accept more modern job role titles, but must make sure the role is adequately described. Bullet point and short-note style may be appropriate for P1. For M1, explanation is required, and learners who achieve D1 will be able to provide detailed breakdowns of what the job role entails in their analysis. It is important to remember that the centre may choose to limit the range of roles to what the learner group will be doing, or may open the role list to anything in the industry. This may entail some adjustment to typical job roles. As an example – a large-scale professional production will have a SM, DSM and ASM – but a small in-house workshop production could have just an SM – in this case, the amalgamated job description would still be accurate.

Criterion 2 relates to the generation of ideas phase. Learners will know of a number of strategies that help assist this process. As much of the evidence is verbally generated, video or audio recording is a useful form of evidence collection, although the many plans and drawings generated also enable assessment to be carried out. The grading criteria show that P2 is appropriate when the ideas generated are workable, but the criterion also links to basic research and limited materials and resources. In this context, limited resources and materials indicate learners did not consider a wide range, perhaps choosing what already existed in stock. The word 'resources' is not intended as excluding a low budget. Working within the available budget still allows access to all grade levels for criterion 2. Learners considering a wider range and carrying out more in-depth research allows achievement at M2 for learners with effective ideas. Learners who have used imagination to develop their ideas will achieve D2.

Criterion 3 focuses on working with others in the development of the idea and, accepting that the idea may require modification to meet the requirements of learners in a different role. P3 indicates that learners have cooperated in the development process, although the development may not have been effective due to some misunderstanding of the requirements of the roles of others. M3 shows the development was effective and did consider the requirements of other team members in different roles. Resourceful work that shows a detailed understanding of all the roles involved with the idea will be awarded D3.

Converting the idea into a functional product is a requirement for criterion 4, the next stage in the production process. The criterion refers to a brief. This can be the brief learners were given, or a brief that was generated by them during the planning process. The key to achieving P4 is that the product must be functional; it must be useable. As a guide, consider a learner tasked with creating a working prop that measures how another learner is telling the truth – pantomime style. He produces a device made from cardboard, stuck together with sticky tape. It has a big clock-style hand that moves from 'Lie' to 'Truth', worked by an unseen hand. It fits the brief, but it is clear that it is very fragile, likely to get damaged and rather poorly finished with coloured pen applied to the brown cardboard. It does, however, function on cue. Using the criteria grid, this would allow a P4 grade to be awarded. The same product, made from more durable materials, and finished neatly would meet M4. A fully-finished version, strong, light to a high standard would be a product capable of being awarded D4.

Criterion 5 relates to the evaluation of the ideas that were developed. P5 requires learners to recognise strengths and weaknesses in three areas and evaluate the potential of the work. Clear and concise judgements are required for access to M5, and to meet D5, learners must be able to present and justify their arguments clearly.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1, D1	Assignment 1 Production Team Roles	Learners will investigate four backstage roles in the performing arts industry.	Written portfolio or presentation.
P2, M2, D2	Assignment 2 Planning for Daisy Pulls it Off	Learners plan for the essential elements – costume, set and the hockey match scene.	Learner documentation. Audio-visual records. Photographs. Tutor observation.
P3, M3, D3 P4, M4, D4	Production Daisy Pulls it Off	Learners work on the pre-production and production phases.	Learner documentation. Audio-visual records. Photographs. Tutor observation.
P5, M5, D5	Assignment 3 Evaluation of Daisy Pulls it Off	Learners review the production and produce an evaluation.	Written portfolio or presentation.
P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3	Planning for Community Event	Learners are planning an event outside the centre.	Learner documentation. Audio-visual records. Photographs. Teacher observation.
P5, M5, D5	Assignment 4 Reviewing 'The Plan'	Learners will review 'The Plan' and make predictions as to its success.	Teacher observation. Written portfolio or presentation.
P1, M1, D1	Assignment 5 Three Roles – an investigation	Learners look closely at three specific roles within their team.	Written portfolio or presentation.
P1, M1, D1 P2, M2, D2 P3, M3, D3 P4, M4, D4 P5, M5, D5	Final Production	Learners plan and work on the final production – linking closely with learners on different pathways and units.	Written portfolio or presentation. Learner documentation. Audio-visual records. Photographs. Tutor observation.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Performing and Production Arts sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the BTEC Performing and Production Arts suite:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Presenting Performing Arts Work	Production Arts Production Process	Production Arts Planning
	Design for Performers	Production for Theatre Performance

This unit also has links with the following National Occupational Standards:

Technical Theatre

- G11a – Building work relationships
- G11b – Developing and maintaining work relationships
- TP3.7 – Planning requirements for a production
- TP4b – Provide design information to enable drawings to be produced
- TP3.1b – Planning costume requirements for a production
- TP3.2 – Planning hair and makeup requirements for a production
- TP3.3b – Planning lighting requirements for a production
- TP3.6b – Planning sound requirements for a production
- TP3.6a – Contribute to the planning of sound requirements for a production
- TP3.4a – Support the planning of props requirements for a production
- TP3.4b – Planning props requirements for a production
- TP3.5b – Planning set construction requirements for a production
- TP3.5c – Planning scenic art set requirements for a production
- TP3.5a – Contribute to the planning of set requirements for a production
- TP3.5b – Contribute to the planning of set requirements for a production.

Essential resources

Learners will require access to production equipment and materials. Workshop and/or rehearsal space will be required along with access to a range of library, video, sound, photographic and historical materials. Access to a range of appropriate technical equipment, ICT facilities and the internet is essential.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres should develop links with local theatres and other entertainment venues. Centres with learners aged under 16 need to be aware that placements or real work experience are rarely available in theatres because of legal restrictions.

The Stage newspaper is a source of information and situations vacant in the UK and Europe. Backstage and performance and music positions are frequently advertised – there is also an online facility, www.thestage.co.uk

Details of summer schools and other training opportunities can be found at www.abtt.co.uk

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Fraser N – *Stage Lighting and Design: A Practical Guide* (The Crowood Press, 1999) ISBN 9781861262486

Ionazzi D – *The Stagecraft Handbook* (Northlights Books, 1997) ISBN 9781558704046

Orton K – *Model Making for the Stage: A Practical Guide* (The Crowood Press, 2004) ISBN 9781861266903

Palmer S – *Essential Guide to Stage Management, Lighting and Sound* (Hodder Arnold, 2000)
ISBN 9780340721131

Parker W, Wolf R and Block D – *Scene Design and Stage Lighting* (Wadsworth, 2008) ISBN 9780495501909

Thomas K – *Back Stage Guide to Stage Management: Traditional and New Methods for Running a Show from First Rehearsal to Last Performance, 2nd Edition* (Crown Publishing, 1999) ISBN 9780823088102

Websites

www.abtt.org.uk

Association of British Theatre Technicians

www.ald.org.uk

Association of Lighting Designers

www.blue-room.org.uk

Blue Room Backstage Forum

www.psa.org.uk

Production Services Association

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	researching roles and responsibilities of backstage roles
Team workers	collaborating with others to carry out the get-in, fit-up, operate, strike and get-out phases of crewing work
Self-managers	organising time and resources and prioritising actions when following cues or reacting to unforeseen events, whether working on their own or in a group.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the work considering the potential of the ideas generated
Creative thinkers	working with others, developing and modifying the ideas that have been formulated or suggested
Team workers	considering other people's roles during the development process working with others during the production process
Self-managers	taking responsibility for their own contribution to the production process.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	developing their ideas drawing CAD plans and producing production documentation
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching roles considering how the ideas formulated will meet the production needs
Mathematics	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	producing budget requirements using estimation and calculation to assist the development of the production using calculation to scale drawings to be used by themselves and other team members dealing with planning their time
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	responding to ideas formulated by other learners doing planning and preparation work attending production meetings giving presentations
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	responding to written cues and scripts considering written requirements from other learners using production documentation
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	writing cue sheets and lists writing responses to the criteria involving roles producing production documentation.