

# Unit 85: Period Costume for the Stage

<b>Unit code:</b>	<b>A/502/5627</b>
<b>QCF Level 3:</b>	<b>BTEC National</b>
<b>Credit value:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Guided learning hours:</b>	<b>60</b>

## ● Aim and purpose

In this unit learners will design and realise a period costume for the stage. Learners will do this by studying and developing the skills required and through creating a period costume from the initial planning stages to construction.

## ● Unit introduction

Having the understanding and knowledge to design and create a period costume are important skills for a costume designer. Accurate period detail is important and is key to the validity of a costume in performance. This unit develops learners' ability to research, design, realise and accessorise a period costume that is suitable for performance.

Learners will develop the skills to create effective period costume designs, considering both the aesthetic and the practical needs of the costume as dictated by the period, the text and the demands of performance. Using a variety of sources to research accurate detail and context of a costume is crucial to creating an accurate, considered costume design. This unit will develop learners' costume and context research skills. Period costume designs also rely on authenticity of fabrics used in construction. This unit will develop learners' ability to source and use suitable fabrics.

Creating a period costume relies on thorough research to inform the costume design. The creation of a period costume is not simply re-creation. There are many challenges in creating a period costume design that is accurate for both the period and the character. Learners will discover how to assimilate their research findings and follow design processes to create their period costume design.

Fabric cutting and construction techniques are pivotal to creating an effective period costume. Learners will develop the skills to create a period costume, including the application of appropriate costume cutting and construction skills. Creating a period costume begins with selecting and using the correct underwear and is finished by accessorising the final costume. Learners will be expected to understand how to select and resource appropriate underwear, shoes and accessories to complete the detail of the final costume design.

## ● Learning outcomes

**On completion of this unit a learner should:**

- 1 Know the requirements of period costume
- 2 Be able to develop period costume designs
- 3 Be able to realise a period costume.

# Unit content

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## 1 Know the requirements of period costume

*Text requirements:* text analysis; identifying character context; period details

*Performance demands:* performance space; actor's movement; length of performance; length of run; stage lighting; director's concept

## 2 Be able to develop period costume designs

*Research:* eg exhibitions, art galleries, museums, libraries, costume collections, film, video, internet, journals

*Research period detail and influences:* cut and shape; colour, texture and pattern of fabric; cut and construction of underwear; period values; social history

*Research construction materials:* qualities of fabric; joining methods; threads; fastening; costs

*Period style and accessories:* period hair style; period millinery; period jewellery; period footwear; period hand props eg umbrella, parasol, handbag

*Developing period costume designs:* origination and development of ideas; use of sketchbook; use of colour, shape and texture; experiments with fabrics; surface decoration; accessories details

## 3 Be able to realise a period costume

*Construct costume:* fabric selection; measuring the actor; interpret costume design; pattern adaptation or cutting, fabric estimation; cut and construct costume using appropriate tools and construction methods; sewing appropriate seams, darts, fastenings; types of thread; reinforcement; boning; fittings; costume adjustments; surface decoration of final costume

*Health and safety:* for the costumier eg use of handheld tools and equipment, use of machines, glue guns, irons, dyes, finishes; for the actor eg comfort of fit, ease of movement, avoidance of allergic reactions or asthma attacks; awareness of potential fire hazards of construction materials

## 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 criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

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:
<b>P1</b> compile a text analysis which details costume demands of a selected play in some detail [IE]	<b>M1</b> compile a detailed text analysis which clearly recognises most of the costume demands of a selected play	<b>D1</b> compile a comprehensively detailed text analysis which fully details the costume demands of a selected play
<b>P2</b> recognise practical performance demands that will influence the design of a period costume [IE]	<b>M2</b> explain with some insight how practical performance demands can influence the design of a period costume	<b>D2</b> explain in fully informed detail how practical performance demands can influence the design of a period costume
<b>P3</b> generate research into historical costume [IE]	<b>M3</b> generate detailed and appropriate research into historical costume	<b>D3</b> produce comprehensive research into historical dress showing a consideration of all aspects of the costume
<b>P4</b> create a period costume design that communicates awareness of the period and construction methods [CT, RL]	<b>M4</b> create an appropriate period costume design which communicates a sense of the period using adequate construction methods	<b>D4</b> create a fully detailed period costume design which clearly communicates accurate period details and uses suitable construction methods
<b>P5</b> apply costume construction skills to create a period costume which has recognisable period style. [RL, SM]	<b>M5</b> apply effective costume construction skills to create a period costume that could be used in a performance and generally conveys the period.	<b>D5</b> consistently apply effective costume construction skills to create a convincing period costume that is fit for performance and accurately conveys the period.

**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 has two fundamental stages. In the first stage learners will discover how to research and design a period costume. Learners must analyse a script to discover the creative opportunities of interpreting the character. They need to think about the practical requirements that will affect the wearing of the costume in performance. Then learners will explore the use of costume construction materials and costume production skills. They will learn how to accessorise a period costume through practical exercises and mini tasks designed to develop confidence and skills.

In the second stage learners will apply the skills and techniques learned to design, resource and construct a period costume. The costume must be made from scratch and cannot be an adaptation of an existing costume. The costume should be a substantial period costume that is suitable for performance.

Health and safety is an important element which will be introduced in the first stage and applied in the creation of the final costume.

To inform learners' understanding it would be valuable to visit a museum with a costume department, eg The Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Here learners can appreciate firsthand the fabrics, the cutting and the accessories. Some National Trust properties also have period costume exhibitions. It would also be valuable to arrange a site visit to a theatre wardrobe department, a design school or a costume production company to enable learners to observe the professional approach to period costume construction.

### 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.
Lecture/discussion/mini tasks – text/character analysis.
Lecture/discussion/mini tasks – period details.
Lecture/discussion/mini tasks – performance demands.
<b>Assignment 1: Text Requirements and Performance Demands – P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2</b>
Learner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• carries out text/character analysis</li><li>• analyses period details</li><li>• analyses performance demands.</li></ul>
<b>Assignment 2: Researching Period Costume – P3, M3, D3</b>
Introduction to assignment.
Learner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• generates historical costume research.</li></ul>
Lecture/discussion – developing period costume designs.
Lecture/discussion – costume construction plans.

## Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

### Assignment 3: Designing a Period Costume for the Stage – P4, M4, D4

Introduction to assignment.

Learner:

- draws on research and creates design ideas
- creates finished period costume design, which includes full costume, accessories, hair and make-up
- creates costume construction plan.

Lectures/discussions – fabrics for period costume.

Lectures/discussion – cutting period costume.

### Assignment 4: Constructing a Period Costume for the Stage – P5, M5, D5

Introduction to assignment.

Learner:

- measures actor
- selects/buys fabrics, trimmings and haberdashery
- adapts or cuts pattern
- cuts fabric
- constructs costume
- fits costume
- adds surface decoration or trimmings
- selects/makes accessories
- presents work to lecturer and peers.

Visits to museums and galleries.

Feedback and reviews – individual and group.

## Assessment

Assessment must focus on the planning of practical tasks to provide suitable evidence to fulfil the grading criteria.

Initially assessment in this unit should focus on learners' completion of mini tasks to develop their mastery of text analysis, research, design approaches and understanding of costume-making materials and techniques. Prompt formative assessment will enable the development of learners' skills and confidence.

The second part of the unit concentrates on learners demonstrating their ability to design, resource materials, construct and accessorise a period costume through their practical work. It is important that there is a thorough record of learners' experience of the process. This could include photographic evidence, interim I:I learner and tutor assessments, self-assessments, peer assessments and tutor observations. Such effective monitoring of the process will build a valuable evidence trail. It is important that tutors support learners in providing the evidence. An evaluative account that learners use to record their experience of the process could be used as supporting evidence but must not be used as a primary assessment tool.

Learning outcome 1, which relates to grading criteria 1 and 2, requires learners to demonstrate their ability to analyse some costume demands of a selected play in some detail and recognise some practical performance demands that will influence the design of a period costume. Differentiation between, pass, merit and distinction will be apparent through the level of understanding regarding text and performance demands that learners demonstrate in the work submitted.

- At pass level, learners will carry out a basic text analysis and identify some costume demands of the text. The answer will be straightforward but correct. Learners will show a limited understanding of the costume demands and make few references to the text. Learners will recognise some practical performance demands that will influence the design of a period costume but the level of understanding shown will be simplistic.
- At merit level, learners will analyse the text in some detail and will assess most of the costume demands of the text. A sense of thoughtfulness will be shown in learners' work and appropriate reference to the text will be given. Learners will analyse how practical performance demands can influence the design of a period costume and give examples to justify their response.
- At distinction level, learners will produce a thoroughly detailed and accurate analysis of the costume demands. Learners will articulate their understanding intelligently and back up their ideas with reference to the text. Learners will give a fully informed explanation of how practical performance demands can influence the design of a period costume. The distinction level answer will be characterised throughout by creative thinking. Learners will articulate their understanding fluently.

Learning outcome 2, which relates to criteria 3 and 4, requires learners to develop period costume designs. Learners will carry out historical research and use it to inform a period costume design. Learners will produce a design that indicates construction methods. Differentiation between pass, merit and distinction will be apparent through the level of ability learners show in developing period research and the level of skill, detail and appropriateness shown in the period costume design.

- At pass level, learners will produce some basic historical research, which will be used in a simple way to inform the period costume designs. The research will be simplistic but accurate. This answer will be descriptive rather than analytical. The period costume design will be simply drawn and show a limited number of period details. However, the historical period will be recognisable and some construction details will be included.
- At merit level, learners will produce detailed historical research and will use it successfully to inform the period costume design. The research will cover most aspects of the period look including accessories, hair and make-up. Learners will explain why and how some features of the period style have originated. The period costume design will be competent and developed with care, showing a thoughtful and creative development of the research material. The design will display a strong sense of the chosen historical period and clear and detailed construction methods.
- At distinction level, learners will produce thoroughly detailed research and use it creatively and appropriately to inform their period costume design. The research will cover every aspect of the period costume. Learners will explain why and how the period style originated. Learners will demonstrate a thorough understanding of the research material and comment critically on it. The period costume design will be sophisticated, totally reflect the chosen period and show details of all aspects of the period style. Construction methods will be clearly shown.

Learning outcome 3, which relates to grading criterion 5, requires learners to create a period costume. Differentiation between pass, merit and distinction will be apparent through the level of costume construction skills shown by learners and by the degree in which the costume reflects the period.

- At pass level, learners will produce a basic period costume that will be wearable in performance or in a demonstration. Learners will make the costume using straightforward construction techniques. Learners will make a costume that is, for the most part, fit for purpose but it may exhibit a few minor inaccuracies. Learners will produce a costume which creates a sense of the period but it will display limited period detail. Learners would expect to receive help from their tutor to achieve this criterion.
- At merit level, learners will produce a fairly sophisticated period costume. Learners will work competently and their costume will display a sense of thoughtfulness. The costume will be made using accomplished construction techniques. The costume must be worn by a model or performer during a demonstration or performance and will be appropriate in terms of fit and purpose. The costume will reflect the chosen period and will be mostly accurate in terms of shape, cut and choice of fabric, trimmings and accessories. Learners would expect to receive some help from their tutor to achieve this criterion.
- At distinction level, learners will produce a sophisticated period costume. Learners will work confidently and their work will display creative thinking and a strong sense that ideas and solutions have been incorporated into the thinking process. The costume must be worn by a model or a performer during a demonstration or performance and will be wholly appropriate in terms of fit and purpose. Learners will create a credible period costume that will be totally accurate in terms of shape, cut and choice of fabric, trimmings and accessories. Learners will work independently to achieve this criterion.

## Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the 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, P2, M2, D2	Text Requirements and Performance Demands	<p>Wardrobe Magazine wants to produce a series of articles in their forthcoming magazines called 'Period Costume from the Page to the Stage'.</p> <p>The article will cover a selection of historical periods and they would like learners to produce material which shows the creation of a period costume from its conception by means of the analysis of text and research to its construction.</p>	<p>Portfolio of evidence consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details of play and period selected</li> <li>• written text analysis which outlines costume demands of the play</li> <li>• a written account which details some practical performance demands that will influence the design of a period costume.</li> </ul>
P3, M3, D3	Researching Period Costume	<p>Wardrobe Magazine wants to produce a series of articles in their forthcoming magazines called 'Period Costume from the Page to the Stage'.</p>	<p>Portfolio of evidence consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research material into historical costume for a specific period.</li> </ul>
P4, M4, D4	Designing a Period Costume for the Stage	<p>Wardrobe Magazine wants to produce a series of articles in their forthcoming magazines called 'Period Costume from the Page to the Stage'.</p>	<p>Portfolio of evidence consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a design of a period costume for a character from the selected play</li> <li>• step by step diagrammatic and written construction details.</li> </ul>
P5, M5, D5	Constructing a Period Costume for the Stage	<p>Wardrobe Magazine wants to produce a series of articles in their forthcoming magazines called 'Period Costume from the Page to the Stage'.</p> <p>Learners are to construct a costume that is suitable for their chosen text and period.</p>	<p>Portfolio of evidence consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a written account of the construction process – materials and techniques</li> <li>• fabric swatches</li> <li>• photographs of the construction stages of the period costume</li> <li>• photographs of the finished period costume on a model or a performer.</li> </ul>

## 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
	Costume Construction	Design Drawing Development
		Design Materials and Processes
		Period Make-up for the Stage
		Stage Costume Making
		Designing Costumes for Performance

This unit may also have links with the following National Occupational Standards:

### Technical Theatre

- CPD1 – Improving your skills
- TP2.1b – Interpreting designs for costumes
- TP2.1a – Contribute to the interpretation of designs for costumes
- TP3.1b – Planning costume requirements for a production
- TP7.1a – Making and finishing costumes
- TP18 – Drafting patterns for costumes
- TP19a – Carry out the fitting and altering of costumes and accessories.

## Essential resources

Learners will need access to a learning resource centre, library, internet, specialist video, film, visits to appropriate exhibitions, galleries and museums for research. For the design element, a basic design studio environment will be required. For notation of research results, access to an IT suite is required. A well-equipped space with cutting and measuring tools, sewing machine, models, cutting tables and provision for dyeing and painting techniques. Access to a supply of fabrics with provision for dyeing and painting techniques is needed.

## Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Learners should develop links with theatre, film and television studios that have costume design/construction departments. Most of the large producing theatre companies such as The Royal Shakespeare Theatre and The National Theatre offer work placements to learners – [www.rsc.org.uk](http://www.rsc.org.uk) and [www.nationaltheatre.org.uk](http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk). Costume designers and makers are usually willing to talk to learners about the processes involved in designing and constructing costume. Learners should also visit costume hire companies that specialise in costumes from historical periods. They will be able to see firsthand how costumes are constructed and fabrics and trimmings used to create them.

Both Skillset, the Sector Skills Council for the audio-visual industries and the BBC have substantial sections of their websites dedicated to careers, including job descriptions – [www.skillset.org/careers](http://www.skillset.org/careers) and [www.bbc.co.uk/design/careers](http://www.bbc.co.uk/design/careers)

## Indicative reading for learners

### Textbooks

- Aldrich W – *Metric Pattern Cutting for Menswear, Fourth Edition* (Blackwell, 2006) ISBN 9781405131414
- Arnold J – *Patterns of Fashion Volume 1* (Macmillan, 1972) ISBN 9780333136065
- Arnold J – *Patterns of Fashion Volume 2* (Macmillan, 1982) ISBN 9780333136072
- Arnold J – *Patterns of Fashion Volume 3* (Macmillan, 1985) ISBN 9780333382844
- Arnold J – *Patterns of Fashion Volume 4* (Macmillan, 2008) ISBN 9780333570821
- Betzina S – *Fabric Savvy: The Essential Guide for Every Sewer* (Taunton Press, 2002) ISBN 9781561585731
- Bicat T – *Making Stage Costumes: A Practical Guide* (Crowood Press, 2001) ISBN 9781861264084
- Campbell H – *Designing Patterns: A Fresh Approach to Pattern Cutting* (Nelson Thornes, 1980) ISBN 9780859504041
- Hill M H and Bucknell P A – *The Evolution of Fashion: Pattern and Cut from 1066 to 1930* (BT Batsford, 1997) ISBN 9780713458183
- Holman G – *Pattern Cutting Made Easy* (BT Batsford, 1997) ISBN 9780713480931
- Holt M – *Costume and Make up* (Phaidon, 1988) ISBN 9780714825120
- Huaxiang T – *Character Costume Figure Drawing: Step by Step Drawing Methods for Theatre Costume Designers* (Focal Press, 2004) ISBN 9780240805344
- Hunnisett J – *Period Costume for Stage and Screen: Patterns for Women's Dress 1500 to 1800* (Players Press, 1991) ISBN 9780887346101
- Moss S – *Costume and Chemistry: A Comprehensive Guide to Materials and Applications* (Batsford, 2001) ISBN 9780896762145
- Peacock J – *Costume 1066 to the Present, Second Edition* (Thames & Hudson, 2006) ISBN 9780500286029
- Peacock J – *The Complete Fashion Sourcebook: 2,000 Illustrations Charting 20th Century Fashion* (Thames & Hudson, 2006) ISBN 9780500512760
- Peacock J – *Men's Fashion: The Complete Sourcebook* (Thames & Hudson, 1996) ISBN 9780500017258
- Peacock J – *Fashion Accessories: The Complete 20th Century Sourcebook* (Thames & Hudson, 2000) ISBN 9780500510278
- Thorne G – *Designing Stage Costumes: A Practical Guide* (The Crowood Press, 2001) ISBN 9781861264169
- Tsu S, Ingham R and Covey L – *The Costume Technician's Handbook, Third Edition* (Greenwood Press, 2003) ISBN 9780325004778
- Tilke M – *Costume Patterns and Designs* (Rizzoli International Publications, 1990) ISBN 9780847812097
- Waugh N – *Corsets and Crinolines* (Theatre Art Books, 1981) ISBN 9780878305261
- Waugh N – *The Cut of Men's Clothes 1600-1900* (Faber and Faber, 1994) ISBN 9780571057146
- Waugh N – *The Cut of Women's Clothes 1600-1930* (Faber and Faber, 1994) ISBN 9780571085941

### Website

[www.theatredesign.org.uk](http://www.theatredesign.org.uk)

British Society of Theatre Designers

## 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 ...
<b>Independent enquirers</b>	analysing the costume demands of a text and evaluating the information, judging its relevance and value analysing and evaluating some performance demands that will influence the design of a period costume, judging its relevance and value planning and carrying out costume research into an historical period
<b>Creative thinkers</b>	generating design ideas for a period costume
<b>Reflective learners</b>	inviting feedback on costume design or costume construction techniques and dealing positively with praise, setbacks and criticism
<b>Self-managers</b>	organising time and resources when constructing a period costume.

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 ...
<b>Independent enquirers</b>	identifying questions to answer and problems to resolve
<b>Creative thinkers</b>	generating ideas and exploring possibilities for creating a period costume trying out alternatives or new solutions when constructing the period costume and following the ideas through adapting ideas when constructing the period costume as circumstances change
<b>Reflective learners</b>	evaluating experiences during the designing and construction processes and learning to inform future work reviewing progress and acting on outcomes
<b>Self-managers</b>	working towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance responding positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed.

## ● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
<b>ICT – Use ICT systems</b>	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	using the internet to research historical costume using the internet to research costume construction techniques using the internet to research fabric suppliers
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	using ICT to store research material
<b>ICT – Develop, present and communicate information</b>	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• text and tables</li> <li>• images</li> <li>• numbers</li> <li>• records</li> </ul>	making a database of fabrics used in the construction of costumes using tables to make measurement charts compiling historical research
<b>Mathematics</b>	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	taking measurements drafting pattern using formulae
Identify the situation or problem and the mathematical methods needed to tackle it	using calculation to work out the amount of fabric required to construct costume
Select and apply a range of skills to find solutions	using calculation to work out the cost of the costume
Use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage	
Interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems in familiar and unfamiliar routine contexts and situations	
Draw conclusions and provide mathematical justifications	
<b>English</b>	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	communicating with fabric suppliers presenting costume design and finished costume to tutor and peer group
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	reading text reading research material reading costume construction instructions
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	writing a text analysis which details costume demands of a play producing written research material writing instructions for constructing costumes.