

Unit 99: Period Hair Design and Wig Making for Performers

Unit code:	F/502/5628
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

This unit enables learners to develop the skills and practices required to design and manage wigs and hairpieces for use within a production.

● Unit introduction

Wigs and hairpieces are an instantaneous way of depicting an era, and are therefore integral to the production of period drama. They are also an important part of performers' conversion from themselves as an actor to the character they become. This unit is about designing hair for performers using wigs and hairpieces. Most professional theatrical, television and feature film productions use wigs and hairpieces as an integral part of the development and presentation of the characters seen by the audience. They are an excellent method of maintaining continuity in a performance so that the visual appearance of a character remains constant from scene to scene, night after night. There is also valuable time saving for production staff as wigs and hairpieces can be dressed without the performer being present.

In this unit learners will develop an understanding of the requirements of different time periods and be able to dress wigs and construct small hairpieces for performers within a production.

Learners will have the opportunity to manage the entire process from initial research, through planning and design and ending with a wig that can be fitted to a performer as part of a production.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know how to research period hairstyles and wigs
- 2 Understand the construction methods used in the creation of wigs and hairpieces
- 3 Be able to construct and apply a small hairpiece
- 4 Be able to manage the wig requirements for a performer or production.

Unit content

1 Know how to research period hairstyles and wigs

Historical periods: eg Elizabethan, Jacobean, Restoration, 18th century French Court, Victorian, Edwardian, early 1900s, the 20s, the 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, late 20th century

Social and cultural influences: gender; status, role and position within society; fashion, age group eg youth culture; uniform; casual/formal dress

2 Understand the construction methods used in the creation of wigs and hairpieces

Hair preparation: techniques eg hair teasing, carding, drawing off, sorting, mixing, crop curl, creoling, using crepe hair; origins of hair used eg human, animal, synthetic

Types: hair pieces and facial postiche eg hand made, machine, foundation postiche, patterns; wigs, semi-transformation, toupee, chignon, partings, ordinary, hair lace and drawn through, tension springs, positional springs; knotting, single, double, point, cross and under knotting; weaving; fly, once-in, twice-in, thrice-in

3 Be able to construct and apply a small hairpiece

Type: facial postiche eg moustache, beards, eyebrows, sideburns; foundation postiche eg nape or crown chignon, toupee, ponytail, ringlets

Skills: crop curl, creoling and crepe hair, pattern-making, three-stem switch, diamond mesh, samples of double point and cross knotting

Application: setting, dressing and applying postiche; use of appropriate equipment and products for setting, blow-drying, dressing, styling and trimming facial and hairpieces

Health and safety issues: eg pins, scissors, blades, chemical products

4 Be able to manage the wig requirements for a performer or production

Planning and researching: era; style; budget; available skills; suppliers; production requirements; measurements

Preparation and application: cleaning, setting, dressing and applying the wig; use of appropriate equipment and products for setting, dressing and styling; awareness of health and safety issues in the application of a wig, comfort of the actor

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 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 identify a range of hairstyles, wigs or facial hair appropriate to the social status and the culture of the time [IE, RL]	M1 describe a range of hairstyles, wigs or facial hair appropriate to the social status and the culture of the time	D1 give an in-depth explanation of a range of hairstyles, wigs or facial hair, appropriate to the social status and the culture of the time
P2 explain the basic construction methods for postiche in simple terms [IE, RL]	M2 explain the construction methods for postiche in some detail	D2 explain construction methods for postiche in full detail
P3 using appropriate equipment, construct, apply and secure a chosen hairpiece with support and guidance [CT, SM, EP]	M3 using appropriate equipment, construct, apply and secure a chosen hairpiece with minimal support and guidance	D3 using appropriate equipment, construct, apply and secure a chosen hairpiece with evidence of dexterity and independence
P4 prepare, dress and fit a wig on a performer/model to an acceptable standard. [IE, CT, SM]	M4 prepare, dress and fit a wig on a performer/model to a good standard.	D4 prepare, dress and fit a wig on a performer/model to a near professional standard.

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 should use practical workshop activities to enable learners to practise and develop creative, practical skills. Guidance on research and personal development for portfolio presentation will be necessary; sources may include literature and multimedia including internet sites. Learners could look at such aspects as social status and conventions of the period.

The majority of study will be learner led, encouraging personal development and use of initiative. Learners' progress should be monitored closely with regular feedback and target setting. Work on real productions is encouraged, along with simulation work that concentrates on planning skills.

Although not assessed by the unit grading criteria, centres need to develop a proactive approach to managing safety aspects. In particular, centres need to follow COSHH guidelines relating to substances that could be hazardous to health.

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.
Period hair, examples of common styles – DVDs.
Assignment 1: Social Status and Culture – P1, M1, D1
Health and safety primer.
Workshop session 1 – postiche <ul style="list-style-type: none">• wigs• hairpieces.
Workshop session 2 – facial hair <ul style="list-style-type: none">• moustaches• beards• eyebrows• sideburns.
Assignment 2: Facial Hair – P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construction• Ideas• Preparation and application.
Assessment Session 1 and 2 Learners produce their facial hair ideas.
Workshop Session 3 – setting, dressing, blow-drying, styling and trimming.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

Assignment 3: Simulated Production – P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P4, M4, D4

- Decide production
- Carry out research
- Construction methods
- Prepare and dress wigs
- Fit wigs to performers
- Video/photography session
- Display results on notice boards.

Workshop Session 4 – advanced techniques.

Planning for Les Miserables – introduction.

Assignment 4: Les Miserables – P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4

- Planning and research
- Wig and hairpiece list – allocation of work
- Sourcing, construction and modifications
- Preparation and dressing
- Fittings
- Modifications and alterations
- Dressing
- Fittings
- Maintenance
- Returns.

Review unit and assignments.

Feedback from assignment.

Assessment

Learner activity needed for the successful completion of this unit will require a variety of different assessment methods. Text, drawings, photographs, video recordings and tutor observation are all valid methods of assessing that the unit criteria have been met. Tutors should use appropriate assessment methods suitable to the tasks set.

Written or presentation based evidence should show the use of wig-making terminology. Learners should be able to show that they can work to a performance schedule of work, ensuring appropriate preparation for practical observed performance and displaying a professional attitude to others and the work itself.

The minimum evidence requirements for this unit are the:

- construction and application of one female hairpiece
- construction and application of one male facial hairpiece
- acquiring and fitting of one female period wig
- acquiring and fitting of one male period wig.

The evidence may be taken from one production or from various performances. As many of the wigs may be re-used, it is essential that centres record evidence in a suitable manner to allow assessment and verification at some point after the event. Video and photographic evidence will provide suitable evidence if carefully recorded. Tutor observation in isolation is not a reliable form of evidence recording for the application and fitting of wigs within this unit.

It is important to set this unit into a performance context. It is not designed to require conventional hairdressing skills, although these may be an advantage. The assessment is focused onto the research, design and application of wigs and hairpieces for use within a performance, carried out by performing arts skilled individuals.

Learning outcome 1 is centred onto the research of period hairstyles and wigs. Learners will be introduced to the range of wigs and hairpieces in common use in the performing arts industry. During their research they will develop an understanding of social status and culture appropriate to the era.

Learning outcome 2 requires learners to understand how wigs and hairpieces are constructed, and be able to communicate this to others. In this outcome area they will be introduced to the terminology and industry jargon that is used within the wigs department of theatre and television production companies.

Learning outcome 3 relates to learners being able to construct and apply small hairpieces to performers or other individuals. They will be selecting appropriate equipment and materials, and carrying out the process themselves.

Learning outcome 4 is concerned with providing services to a production. Learners will be identifying the requirements of the production then providing wig services for the event. There is scope for learners to manage the entire process from planning to the last night, or they may focus on selected tasks during this time period, as required by the centre. The essential features are that they can identify some requirements, prepare, dress and fit a wig ready for performance.

All learners will need to be able to understand the concepts of social status and the culture of the time period they are researching. To achieve P1, learners need to be able to identify a range of different hairstyles, wigs or facial hair in fashion at different points in time. As an example of this, learners working at P1 level would be expected to be able to differentiate between an Elizabethan wig design and one from France in the revolutionary period. Learners may be awarded the M1 grade if they are able to describe a range of different hairstyles, wigs or facial hair. If learners can describe these differences and offer in-depth comment then they may be awarded D1.

Criterion 2 requires learners to consider construction methods. Evidence for this criterion could be conventional written work or by means of a presentation. P2 grade will be appropriate for those learners who can identify basic constructional methods and explain these in simple terms. Learners who have analysed the process and can then explain the construction method in some detail may be awarded the M2 grade. Learners who can apply evaluation techniques to their work and explain processes in detail will have access to the D2 grade.

Criterion 3 is concerned with assessing learners' ability to use appropriate equipment to construct, apply and secure a chosen hairpiece. At P3 level, it is likely that this may have been carried out under supervision, with guidance throughout. If the guidance provided has been minimal, then an M3 grade is appropriate. As much of the process requires manual dexterity, those learners who can demonstrate this and work independently are awarded the D3 grade. This criterion requires learners to show skills with 'a hairpiece' – the style or type is not specified allowing centres to select a task that is within the ability of learners working at this level.

Criterion 4 will usually be assessed when learners have been working on products designed for a real production. They will have determined what is required and been involved with the preparation, dressing and fitting on a performer, or other individual. The key feature for access to the P4 grade is that some of the production requirements have been identified and the performer is fitted with a dressed wig to standard that is acceptable to the audience. Learners who have identified the main wig requirements for the production and carried out their work to a good standard can be awarded the M4 grade. Learners who have identified the complete wig requirements and carried out their work to a standard close to a professional would be awarded the D4 grade. Assessors should use their own professional judgement as to the definition of 'professional' within the context of this unit. It is appreciated that rarely will educational productions have the budget, or facilities, to manage wigs in a manner found within a professional production company, but learners may act in a professional manner, with suitable levels of responsibility, and assessors may treat this as evidence of professional behaviour and attitude.

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	Assignment 1 – Social Status and Culture	Learners, in the role of hairdresser, are researching period hair designs.	Learner written work. Learner presentation.
P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3	Assignment 2 – Facial Hair	Learners, in the role of hairdresser, are constructing, preparing and applying facial hair.	Learner notes. Assessor observation. Video recordings. Photographs.
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P4, M4, D4	Assignment 3 – Simulated Production with End Assessment	Learners, in the role of hairdresser, are working on a simulated production, trying out ideas and new skills.	Learner notes. Learner presentation. Assessor observation. Video recordings. Photographs.
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4	Assignment 4 – Les Miserables	Learners, in the role of hairdresser, are providing wig and hair services for the production.	Learner notes. Assessor observation. Video recordings. Photographs.

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
Exploring Design Skills for the Performing Arts	Design For Performance	Production Arts Workshop
		Fantasy Hair Design for Performers
		Hair Styling and Dressing for Performers
		Full Body Makeup for Performers

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

Technical Theatre

- CPD1 – Improving your skills
- CPD2b – Ensure that you and your team keep up to date with the technical and production areas of the live arts
- HSI – Working safely
- TP2.2a – Interpreting designs for hair and makeup
- TP3.2 – Planning hair and makeup requirements for a production
- TP13 – Applying hair techniques and wigs.

Essential resources

As most of the learning outcomes rely heavily on learners' abilities to find information effectively, research skills will need to be developed. A wide variety of research resources will be needed. Opportunities for learners to work or visit within the industry would be beneficial. A practical workshop with suitable equipment and materials is required. Centres need to give learners a selection of hair, clamps and weaving sticks, together with weaving silk and beeswax. The materials to construct a hairpiece are essential, as is a budget to enable learners to acquire wigs. Centres may be able to build up an in-house stock of wigs that are suitable, but learners should still be aware of the likely hire costs and the care that must be taken with hired in items. One essential issue is that as part of this unit, learners may need to modify existing designs, which in many cases renders them non-reusable, requiring reordering. The ability to source budget products and then use them as a basis for new creations is essential.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres should develop links with local theatres, amateur production companies 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 due to legal restrictions.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Baker P – *Wigs and Make-up: For Theatre, Television and Film* (Butterworth-Heinemann, 1993)
ISBN 9780750604314

Conway J – *Make-up Artistry for Professional Qualifications* (Heinemann, 2004) ISBN 9780435453305

Corson R – *Fashions in Hair: The First Five Thousand Years* (Peter Owen, 2000) ISBN 9780720610932

Swinfield R – *Hair and Wigs for the Stage: Step-by-Step* (A&C Black, 1999) ISBN 9780713642254

Examples of television programmes and musicals that feature period hair design and wigs

Although not an exhaustive list, the following television programmes and musicals feature a good range of typical period hair designs. These are useful to learners researching the hairstyles, social factors and culture of different time periods.

Blackadder – Middle Ages, Elizabethan, Regency England, early 20th century World War I

Charles Dickens – *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*, and many others

Les Miserables

My Fair Lady

Peter Pan

Poirot – various television series and movies cover a large part of the 20th century

Websites

www.britishtheatre.com

British Theatre

www.stagelink.com

Stagelink

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 ...
Creative thinkers	developing ideas and producing their products
Team workers	working with other team members to achieve a common goal
Self-managers	managing their time and selecting appropriate tools, equipment and source material to complete their work
Effective participators	trying out new and unusual techniques, working in unfamiliar areas.

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	carrying out research into historic factors and sourcing products and determining their suitability
Reflective learners	considering techniques to be used and the suitability of materials.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching period wig designs used in productions from different time periods
Mathematics	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	dealing with quantities and linear measurement managing liquid measurements, dilution ratios and solution strengths
Identify the situation or problem and the mathematical methods needed to tackle it	pricing and calculating postage weights and discounts/multiple pricing
Select and apply a range of skills to find solutions	managing a budget for a production
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	
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	responding to the requests of the producer, director or other production team members
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	using scripts and other production documentation to generate ideas for period wig designs.
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	