

Appendix H - A comparison of Graded Examinations with relevant GCSEs and A levels

Speech and drama A level comparison

Comparison of A level subject content and assessment objectives (published in 2011 by Ofqual) and the existing New Era Academy specification for graded examinations in speech and drama grades 6-8.

Comparison headings	A level subject content (DfE January 2015)	Grades 6-8
<p>Aims and objectives</p>	<p>Aims and objectives AS and A level specifications in Drama and Theatre Studies should encourage students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop their interest and enjoyment in drama and theatre both as participants and as informed members of an audience, fostering an enthusiasm for and critical appreciation of the subject; • develop understanding and appreciation of the significance of social, cultural and historical influences on the development of drama and theatre; • experience a range of opportunities to develop a variety of dramatic and theatrical skills, enabling them to grow creatively and imaginatively in both devised and scripted work; • integrate theory and practice through their understanding of critical concepts and the discriminating use of specialist terminology. 	<p>The New Era Acting syllabus (at all grades) seeks to offer learners the opportunity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop imagination and creativity increase self confidence develop vocal techniques develop physical stage techniques instill an enthusiasm and interest in the theatre
<p>Content – practical</p>	<p>Skills AS and A level specifications should develop learners’ ability to form judgements about live theatre based on their understanding of drama and theatre;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of subject-specific terminology in a range of contexts; □ • and realisation of drama and theatre; • ability to work creatively and collaboratively to achieve shared dramatic intentions; • ability to respond to plays imaginatively, conveying ideas clearly and coherently. <p>In addition A2 learners should develop:</p>	<p>GRADE 6 Bronze Medal (25 Minutes) Learners should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform a scene arranged for one character only from a play by any well known dramatist of the Elizabethan period. (Time limit 3 minutes) 2. Perform a scene arranged for one character from a play written between 1900 and 1950 by a well known dramatist. 3. Perform at sight a short passage from a play chosen by the examiner. 4. Perform an improvisation which will be set by the examiner during the examination. (Time will be given for preparation and 3 minutes to perform)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a more advanced level of performance and/or production skills; • the ability to think independently, make judgements and refine their work in the light of research; • the ability to analyse the ways in which different performance and production elements are brought together to create theatre. 	<p>5. Discuss in detail with the examiner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characters chosen the plays from which the pieces are taken • the vocal techniques, including modulation, required in performance <p>GRADE 7 Silver Medal (30 Minutes)</p> <p>Learners should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform a scene arranged for one character from a play from the late 18th or 19th centuries. (Time limit 3 minutes) 2. Perform a contrasting scene arranged for one character from a play written between 1950 and 1980 by a well known dramatist. (Time limit 3 minutes) 3. Perform a short scene in dialect (from any period) in contrast to the other two pieces. (Time limit 3 minutes) 4. Perform at sight a short passage from a play chosen by the examiner. 5. Perform a short mime, the subject of which will be set by the examiner during the examination. (Time will be given for preparation and 3 minutes to perform) 6. Discuss in detail with the examiner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characters chosen • the plays from which the pieces are taken • the importance of good breath support and practice in performance <p>GRADE 8 Gold Medal (40 Minutes)</p> <p>Learners should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform a scene arranged for one character from a play of the Restoration period. (Time limit 4 minutes) 2. Perform a contrasting scene arranged for one character from a play by a well known dramatist. The play should be set and written after 1970. (Time limit 4 minutes)
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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Perform a short scene in dialect (from any period) in contrast to the other two pieces. (Time limit 4 minutes) 4. Perform at sight a short passage from a play chosen by the examiner and take redirection on the piece. 5. Perform an improvisation set by the examiner during the examination. (Time will be given for preparation and 3 minutes to perform) 6. Discuss in detail with the examiner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characters chosen • the plays from which their pieces are taken • the creative thought and technical details involved in preparing to play a character in performance • the practical application of good breath support including resonance, forward • placing and projection
<p>Content – theoretical knowledge and understanding</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding AS and A level specifications should require learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how performers, designers and directors communicate meaning to an audience; • theatre practice through their own engagement with the medium as both participant and informed audience member; • the appropriate vocabulary and specialist terminology for the subject. 	
<p>Content – historical and contextual</p>	<p>AS level specifications should require learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum of two published plays demonstrating understanding of how style, form, dramatic structure and characterisation can be interpreted and realised in performance, and how plays relate to their historical, social and cultural context – they must be varied in terms of period and genre; 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the work of at least one influential director, designer, theatre company or other practitioner who has made a significant contribution to theatre practice. <p>A2 level specifications should require learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least two more published plays, of which one must be pre-20th century; the connections between theory and practice demonstrated through a range of forms, genres and performance styles; the directorial overview required in the interpretation and realisation of a theatrical performance; how relevant research supports practical work. 	
<p>Assessment objectives practical</p>	<p><i>NB the assessment objectives are likely to contain a mixture of practical and theoretical elements which will be assessed using a variety of means.</i></p> <p>AO1 Demonstrate the application of performance and/or production skills through the realisation of drama and theatre 30–40%</p> <p>AO2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of practical and theoretical aspects of drama and theatre using appropriate terminology 20–40%</p> <p>AO3 Interpret plays from different periods and genres 20–40%</p> <p>AO4 Make critical and evaluative judgements of live theatre 10–25%</p>	<p>All examinations are marked on the following areas:</p> <p>Technique The technical skills required in the preparation and performance of the selection. This includes vocal technique, stagecraft and teamwork where appropriate</p> <p>Interpretation The artistic realisation of the selection presented demonstrating appropriate qualities required for performance. This includes the appreciation of and the thought process in achieving the writer’s intention</p> <p>Communication To demonstrate the ability to share mentally, vocally and physically in both performance and discussion to an appropriate standard</p> <p>Discussion To convey the knowledge required for the level and to be able to participate in an exchange of ideas to an appropriate standard</p>

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		<p>Learning outcomes and assessment criteria for Grade 8 Acting:</p> <p>LO1 Be able to improvise</p> <p>1.1 Perform an improvisation to an appropriate standard</p> <p>1.2 Show a developed sense of place and situation</p> <p>1.3 Show the full range of emotions of the characters presented</p> <p>1.4 Show spontaneity and believability to an appropriate standard</p> <p>1.6 Respond physically to the demands of the characterisations</p> <p>1.7 Respond vocally to the demands of the characterisations</p> <p>1.8 Mentally project the mood, style and focus of the narrative</p> <p>LO2 Know the techniques of dramatic performance</p> <p>2.1 Perform a scene as specified by the syllabus to an appropriate standard</p> <p>2.2 Perform a contrasting scene as specified by the syllabus to an appropriate standard</p> <p>2.3 Perform a scene in dialect to an appropriate standard</p> <p>2.4 Show emotion in the characters in the three pieces to an appropriate standard</p> <p>2.5 Show spontaneity and believability to an appropriate standard</p> <p>2.6 Show complete understanding of the text in all pieces</p> <p>2.7 Show complete understanding of the subtext in all pieces to an appropriate standard. 2.8 Show complete understanding of the context of all pieces to an appropriate standard</p> <p>2.9 Show complete understanding of the objectives of the characters portrayed in all pieces</p> <p>2.10 Understand the situations in which the characters find themselves in the three pieces</p> <p>2.11 Use breath support and resonance to an appropriate</p>
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		<p>standard</p> <p>2.12 Show clear articulation and a well-modulated voice, demonstrating effective vocal projection and freedom</p> <p>2.13 Convey appropriate physical responses to demonstrate period movement and gesture</p> <p>2.14 Employ appropriate interpretative responses to reveal understanding of movement, posture and gesture in context</p> <p>2.15 Demonstrate relevant use of range of tone, colour and emphasis to develop structure and emotional climax</p> <p>2.16 Demonstrate maturity, revealing layers of meaning through creative interpretation, appropriate preparation and the combining of technical skills</p> <p>2.17 Perform with confidence, clarity and a sense of ownership of the material</p> <p>2.18 Consciously integrate knowledge, understanding and technique to produce a secure, sustained performance</p> <p>2.19 Combine the skillful and relevant use of voice, body and space with a creative response to engage the audience throughout</p> <p>2.20 Demonstrate a thoughtful and sensitive personal interpretation of material, to communicate complexity and range of meaning in characterisation, style, mood and content.</p> <p>LO3 Be able to take redirection</p> <p>3.1 Display understanding of the redirection and respond appropriately</p> <p>LO4 Understand the techniques involved in preparing a role</p> <p>4.1 Meaningfully discuss the characters and plays chosen</p> <p>4.2 Show understanding of the creative and thought processes, as well as technical details</p> <p>4.3 Meaningfully discuss the practical application of good breath support, resonance, forward placing and projection</p>
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		<p>LO5 Be able to read a previously unseen piece of drama to an appropriate standard</p> <p>5.1 Read with fluency, movement and expression, giving an idea of character Interpret awareness of the social and historical context of the script for theatrical purpose</p> <p>5.2 Respond to and/or indicate the presence of any implied third persons, imagined characters and setting with appropriate use of stage areas and mimed action</p> <p>5.3 Connect to and communicate the content, style and mood of the text, with a sense of performance</p>
<p>Assessment objectives knowledge and understanding</p>		