



Consultation on development of a new Vocational Award in Performing Arts (Technical Award)

The Arts Council (2018) has warned that ‘a decrease in the number of schools and colleges offering creative art and design courses, the decrease in the number of students studying these subjects and a lack of effective information, advice and guidance on careers in the creative and cultural sector are perceived to be threatening the development of the talent pipeline.’¹ The Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre Association (2017) have also emphasised that in a post-EU Britain it will be vital for the sector to build on its success with ‘home grown’ talent and continued partnerships to ensure we retain our world-leading reputation.²

In 2015 the music, performing and visual arts sector, was worth £5.4 billion a year to the UK economy. This represented a growth of almost 10% from 2012 to 2013. The 10% increase was three times that of the wider UK economy during the same period. The figures showed a 46% increase in the music and performing arts sector since 2008.³ In 2018, 77,000 people were employed in performing arts. The number of employees in performing arts had increased from 59,000 in 2013.⁴ This highlights the importance of qualifications in developing the performing arts of young people.

Our new Vocational Award in Performing Arts is being designed to support learners aged 14-16 year old to develop fundamental performing arts skills that can support them in their careers and further study.

Proposals relating to the qualification structure and topic areas included

We propose that the qualification is made up of three units:

Unit	Unit title	Assessment	GLH
1	Performing	Internal	36
2	Creating	Internal	36
3	Performing Arts in Practice	External	48

¹ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/SkillsNeedsAssessment.pdf>

² <https://uktheatre.org/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=549583>

³ <https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2015/performing-arts-contributes-5-4-billion-year-uk-economy/>

⁴ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/384607/employment-in-performing-arts-in-the-united-kingdom-uk/>

Unit 1 Performing

Unit 1 will focus on developing performing skills and techniques through the reproduction of existing material. Content will focus on discipline-specific knowledge through research, rehearsal, performance and review from one of the following areas:

- Acting
- Dancing
- Music
- Music Technology
- Musical Theatre

Unit 2 Creating

Unit 2 will focus on creating original work. Content will focus on discipline-specific knowledge through exploring and developing, applying skills to create and review from one of the following areas:

- Devised drama
- Choreography
- Composition
- Composition using technology
- Costume design
- Lighting
- Make-up
- Set Design

Unit 3 Performing Arts in Practice

Unit 3 will focus on professional practice in the performing arts industry. Learners will gain knowledge and understanding of different aspects of working in the creative industries. Content will focus on discipline-specific knowledge and broader knowledge about the world of work to include:

- Roles and responsibilities of practitioners (learners will learn about a range of roles, what the practitioner does, how they contribute to a creative process, how their role is linked to the role of other practitioners)
- Planning
- Target audience
- Budgets
- Health and safety
- Marketing / advertising

This structure has been proposed to equip learners applied knowledge and understanding related to a range of disciplines within performing arts. It is designed with both practical and theoretical elements. In this qualification, learners will be able to develop their skills in both performing and creating original work and to reflect on their progress in these areas. This reflects evidence from the Arts Council that roles are becoming increasingly multi-faceted. Therefore, employers perceive the need for diversification of roles and a broad skill set.⁵ It also will add to 'the development and

⁵ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/SkillsNeedsAssessment.pdf>

retention of talent’ that the Creative Industries mapping document (2003) called for in order to grow the sector.⁶ Learners will also be able to focus on professional practice in the performing arts industry by gaining knowledge and understanding of different aspects of working in the creative industries. Content will focus on discipline-specific knowledge and broader knowledge about the world of work.

The course will also develop a variety of transferable skills including reflection, communication, presentation, problem-solving and research. These skills will stand any learner in good stead for the future, irrespective of their chosen career path.

Proposals relating to our approach to assessment

We propose that **Unit 1** and **Unit 2** are internally assessed. Unit 1 will primarily assesses performing an existing piece in one performing arts discipline, whilst Unit 2 will primarily assesses creating an original piece in one performing arts discipline. We propose that these units will be assessed through a practical task-based assessment completed under controlled conditions. Controlled assessment in our Vocational Awards is designed so that knowledge, skills and understanding are assessed through tasks that have many of the characteristics of real work in the sector. We envisage this assessment for this unit to be holistic, requiring candidates to use different applications in an integrated way to solve a set problem.

We propose that **Unit 3** is assessed via an external controlled assignment which learners would need to complete within a set time frame. Controlled assessment in our Vocational Awards is designed so that knowledge, skills and understanding are assessed through tasks that have many of the characteristics of real work in the sector. Assignment briefs are designed around an applied context which acts as a focus for the assessment. Externally controlled assignments offer the potential for learners to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding in more practical ways and can offer an alternative for those learners who typically underperform in external examinations.

Additional areas for consideration

In addition to your views on the proposals for this qualification we are also interested in hearing your views on a number of other areas including resources. Within the online form, there is an opportunity to join a closed forum to discuss these areas further.

Consultation questions

To provide your views on these proposals please complete the online form [here](#).