

BLUE COAT CofE SCHOOL
& MUSIC COLLEGE

DRAMA DEPARTMENT

YEAR 11 >>> YEAR 12



TRANSITION TO
BTEC PERFORMING ARTS
Student Booklet

INTRODUCTION

BTEC Performing Arts is a challenging and stimulating course in which you learn the theory and practice of performance making and specialise in areas of drama, variety or musical theatre and develop key skills of creativity, collaboration and organisation. The course is summarised over the next few pages and the full specification can be downloaded at:

[Drama, Theatre Studies and Performing Arts | Pearson qualifications](#)

The majority of your lessons will be taught in the school's state of the art theatre. Two or more teachers will lead you through the course, each taking responsibility for different elements of the course. You will also have the support of our theatre staff for your practical projects, along with access to our extensive store of costumes, props and scenery.

This booklet contains information and a number of tasks to prepare you for starting the course. Completing these tasks will help you to make a strong start in September and establish a foundation for academic and practical success.

Bring all completed work to your first Performing Arts lesson in September.

Have a lovely summer.

COURSE FEATURES

There are different versions of the BTEC. The one we offer is equivalent in weighting and UCAS points to one A Level.

The course is made up of four units:

Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners' Work

Unit 2: Developing Skills and Techniques for Live Performance

Unit 3: Group Performance Workshop

A 4th Unit will be chosen from the below options – your teachers will agree this with you based on the group's preferences and skillsets:

- Interpreting classical text for performance
- **Acting styles - currently planned for year 1**
- Developing the voice for performance
- Improvisation
- Movement in performance
- Musical Theatre techniques
- Variety performance

Sixth Form Dress Code in Performing Arts

You will need to adhere to the Blue Coat Sixth Form Dress code while in most of your subject lessons. Due to the practical nature of this course there is an option to wear a sweatshirt and/or t-shirt for performing arts lessons, available to purchase from school. These can be changed into or worn as an alternative professional wear. Accompanying clothes and shoes should be comfortable for movement and all black to maintain a professional appearance (as you would in the industry).



Sweatshirts *£15

T-Shirts *£10



*Cost subject to quotes and quantity each year

COURSE STRUCTURE: SUMMARY

Here is a one-page summary of the how the course is structured and assessed.

Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners' Work	Exploration of two practitioners in detail. Part A – Four weeks to investigate, explore and log practitioners' approaches.
Timed written assessment	Part B – Supervised, timed written assessment over a period of three hours. Assessed externally.
Unit 2: Developing skills and techniques for live performance	Research task and presentation exploring 'The Life of an Actor'. This is followed by the development of a scripted performance which is accompanied by a written log of decisions and progress made.
Performance and coursework	Assessed internally by up to three sources of evidence: performance & coursework.
Unit 3: Group Performance Workshop	Creation of an original performance based on a given stimulus. Performances can take the form of one or more of: Drama, Musical Theatre and/or Variety performance.
Devised performance and process log	Assessed externally.
4th Option unit (see previous page)	Exploration and performance of a specific genre or style of performance (see list on previous page).
Performance & coursework	Assessed internally via up to three sources of evidence, including a performance.

COURSE SEQUENCE

This alters slightly each year but delivery and sequence of the course will closely resemble this:

You will also benefit greatly from the advice of the year 13 students who you will work closely with and who have already completed Units 1 and 2.

Year 12	
Autumn Term	Introduction to Drama and Unit 19 'Acting Styles' (or other optional unit)
Spring 1	Unit 19 'Acting Styles'
Spring 2	Unit 3 - Group Performance Workshop
Summer 1	Unit 3 - Group Performance Workshop
Summer 2	Mock Unit 1 (Investigating Practitioners)
Year 13	
Autumn Term	Unit 1 Investigating Practitioners' Work
Spring 1	Unit 2 Skills and Techniques (Life of an Actor)
Spring 2	Unit 2 Skills and Techniques Rehearsal
Summer 1	Unit 2 Skills and Techniques Performance and Evaluation

RESEARCH AND TASKS

Below are a series of tasks to help you make a strong start to the course in September. Aim to do one-two tasks during the summer holidays to best prepare you for the course ahead.

TASK ONE: YOUR BACKGROUND

Part One - in a few paragraphs, summarise your experience of performance. This could include:

- Performances you have taken part in, at school or elsewhere.
- Workshops you have attended, weekend classes, clubs.
- Any technical experience you have, e.g. sound, lighting.
- Helping to build sets, make props, costumes, etc.
- Performances you have seen that have stuck in your memory.

You are not limited to items on the list, include anything that you feel is relevant that tells us about your performance background.

Part Two – In a few paragraphs, summarise what type of performance you like and what you hope to study as part of the course. This could include:

- References to types of drama, dance, musicals.
- References to specific playwrights, directors, performers or choreographers whose work you like.
- Any plays and shows you know of that you might like to do.
- Performances you have seen that have impressed you.
- What you want to learn and skills you want to develop during the course.

TASK TWO: WARM UPS

Performers need to prepare their voices and bodies before heading on stage; most especially if performing physical theatre or a role that demands singing/ strenuous use of voice.

Put together a programme a group of performers could use in preparation for a performance. These can be exercises you know and have used yourself or you can research online – there are plenty of suggestions out there.

Make sure your suggestions have a balance of physical and vocal warm ups.

Try to make the work attractive and user friendly. Include images and clear instructions.

TASKS THREE, FOUR, FIVE and SIX.

You should choose ONE of these tasks and complete them. Feel free to do 2 or all 3 if you really want to challenge yourself!

Task 3 – Musical theatre

Task 4 – Drama

Task 5 – Variety performance

TASK THREE: Musical Theatre

Musical theatre is defined as theatre that combines songs, spoken dialogue, acting and dance in collaboration. There are many subgenres of musical theatre such as operetta, jukebox, book, rock and concept musicals. Depending on the genre of the musical, stylistic choices are made to ensure accurate movement, mood and narrative development that is in-keeping with its subgenre. Both song and dance routines comprise of one person to an ensemble depending on the musical content and intended impact on the audience in terms of storyline or message in that moment. Below are the links to one book musical called *Les Misérables* first performed in 1980 and one concept musical called *Dear Evan Hansen* first performed in 2015. Both clips are of a performance of an ensemble number that features within the musical with a lead vocalist and ensemble solos. Considering the below questions, please watch both clips and consider the similarities and differences between them stylistically.

PART A:

1. What similarities can you find in relation to staging and performance?
2. How does the staging and costume reflect the time period of the performances?
3. What is the mood in both performances and does it change? If so, when and how?
4. What relationships are communicated between the performers and how are they communicated whilst the performers are singing?
5. How are the two performances stylistically different?

6. What is communicated to the audience during these performances?
7. How are the technical aspects of the performance used to enhance the atmosphere and performance overall?
8. Would you say musical theatre has changed significantly based on these two videos? If so, explain why and if not, justify your opinion on that.

"You Will Be Found" West End cast 2022 performance | Dear Evan Hansen - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJBOxvVOTC4>

Les Miserables " ABC Cafe "Red and Black"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFysFCobH5U>

PART B:

Research two musicals of different subgenres and complete a similarity and difference analysis of two songs of your choice from each one but this time, the focus is on ensemble dance numbers. Consider the questions given to you in task 1 as the foundation for your analysis and probe further into the creative team behind the performances and their dramatic intentions to inform your comparison too.

TASK FIVE: DRAMA

PART A: PLAYS

Read two plays of your own choosing. You can obtain these from your local library, bookshops, Amazon, E-bay, etc. Cheap second- hand versions are readily available if you would like your own copy.

One should be a play written AFTER 1940.

The second play should be a play written BEFORE 1940.

You must not choose plays studied in Years 10 and 11!

Write a plot summary for each play and the review each play, summarising your opinions on the strengths of your two chosen texts.

PART B: PRACTITIONERS

Below is a list of Drama practitioners that you could focus on in your BTEC. Pick one and conduct some research on their work:

- Constantin Stanislavski
- Bertolt Brecht
- Steven Berkoff
- Frantic Assembly
- Gecko Theatre
- Complicite
- Paper Birds
- Katie Mitchell
- Emma Rice/Kneehigh/Wise Children

In your research, cover the following:

- What is their style of theatre?

- What do they aim to produce?
- What do they want audiences to experience?
- Are they working against any style of theatre or trend?
- What are their influences? Who or what inspires them?
- What rehearsal techniques do they use?
- What performances are they famous for?

Decide how you would like to present your research. For example you could produce:

- An essay
- A power point
- A poster

You are not limited to the choices above in your research or how you choose to present it. Please put it all in your own words ... no copy and pasting from the internet!

TASK SIX: VARIETY PERFORMANCE

Select one of the activities below and have a go at developing one of the skills. Use Youtube as your starting point, you will very easily find “how to” videos on each of the below.

Option 1: Stand-up comedy	Option 2: juggling
Create a stand-up routine with a mix of jokes and gags. Routines and jokes usually focus on a topic and link to each other.	Start with two ball and then move on to three ball juggling. You can then experiment using scarves and build in tricks.
Option 3: Ventriloquism	Option 4: Magic
Make or obtain your own puppet, a sock puppet is entirely adequate. Aim to perfect a voice for your puppet and not moving your lips too much,	Card tricks are a great place to start and there a many Youtube videos on how to amaze people with such tricks. Learn a few card tricks and show family/friends.

Keep a log of your practical work. This could take the form of a diary, a poster or an essay. You should log what you have done and progress made on the chosen variety performance skill.

TASK SEVEN: ORGANISING YOUR WORK

Collate your work from your chosen tasks into one place to form a complete transition project.

This could be a PDF document, a power point, a portfolio — any format you like.

Design an attractive front cover with the title “Transition to BTEC PERFORMING ARTS”

Include your name of the front cover.

Bring completed work to your first Performing Arts lesson in Year 12 in September.