

Drama & Theatre Studies

A Level

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Exam Board: AQA



What is the course about?

Drama and Theatre Studies is a 60% written and 40% practical course. It is both the academic study of theatre through the centuries and the practical exploration of different genre and style of performance. It is designed to deepen your understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of theatre and theatre visits are an integral and key part of the course, being examined in the January written paper.

For the AS level you will study:

During the AS year you will study a set text from a historical period and a theatre practitioner. You will be assessed in examination practice essays, theatre design presentations and practical workshops. You will also analyse live theatre productions and produce additional examination essays

You will perform to a visiting moderator participating in a play extract in groups of eight and submit a written coursework file.

For the A2 level you will study:

In the A2 year, you will study two set texts of history. This will be assessed through a written examination.

You will also produce a piece of original theatre in a group, taking on all responsibilities for writing, directing, set design and acting. This will be moderated by a visiting examiner along with a coursework folder. The role of the director and the designer are the main focus of the A2 year.

How is the course assessed?

Over the two years, practical work is worth 40% and written work is 60%.

What skills will I need and develop in this course?

You will be encouraged to engage with a wide range of different kinds of theatre, developing skills of observation, critical analysis and personal reflection, as well as developing your creativity and practical skills, in both performance and essay writing.

Subject combination advice:

Drama and Theatre Studies is a subject that by its nature requires candidates to consider individual, moral, ethical, historical, social, cultural and contemporary issues. Therefore Theatre Studies combines well with any humanities subject, for example History, English, Politics and Sociology. It also combines well with Film Studies and Media Studies. However, we advise against students combining Drama and Theatre Studies with Performance Studies as they are too closely related in terms of the skill set.

What can the course lead to in terms of higher education and future careers?

With regards to progression, this course does not guarantee a career in the theatre, but many students do go on to read Drama or Theatre Studies at university. It also provides a good analytical A level which would support other subjects for university entry. Students who have studied either AS or A level Drama and Theatre Studies have gone on to study a wide variety of subjects at university.

What are the formal entry requirements for this course?

Aside from the general entry criteria that the College requires, you will also need a grade C or above in English Language, and also a minimum grade C in Drama is preferred.

What extra support / enrichment activities are on offer?

The department offers a varied programme of theatre visits. We also have visiting theatre companies who perform and offer workshops. At the end of the A2 year a student theatre company usually performs at the Edinburgh Festival in August.

What is the difference between Drama and Theatre Studies and Performance Studies?

Drama and Theatre Studies is in some ways similar to English Literature, but with just theatre texts. The Performance Studies course is more flexible so you can play to your strengths in your options as you can choose two options from Drama, Music or Dance. Performance Studies is 30% written and 70% practical, whereas Theatre Studies is 60% written and 40% practical. The Performance Studies Drama course focus is predominantly British twentieth century playwrights, whereas in Theatre Studies you study theatre and practitioners from different countries, genres and time periods.



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