

performing arts

BTEC Extended Certificate

Head of department: Gail Deal

Email: gdeal@esher.ac.uk

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel



Please note that information in this course leaflet is slightly different to the Prospectus and also, that this course is potentially subject to change as Pearson, the examination board, are reviewing course content and assessment. We want to make sure that our students have the most enjoyable learning experience and gain the best learning outcomes so there may be some adjustments to encompass different units or pathways of learning. We will update the course information on our website once content and assessments have been finalised. The information below will give a flavour of the types of thing you might do. Musical Theatre is certainly a big part of what you will be involved in.

What is this subject about?

BTEC Performing Arts is a nationally recognised vocational subject. The subject provides the opportunity to develop skills in the performing arts which are relevant to the industry. Units in the different art forms are offered to cover the students' range of abilities in the three disciplines of acting, dancing and singing. Each student will have different skill levels in the different art form, and the course will help the student develop these skills. This is a two- year course equivalent to one full A Level.

What will I study over the two years?

The majority of lessons are practically based and there will be some online assignments which will build skills in performance idea generation, research, reflection and evaluation.

In the first year you will study two units:

Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners' Work involves exploring the work of a selection of choreographers, composers and playwrights such as: Matthew Bourne, Cirque du Soleil, Complicite, DV8, Bob Fosse, Akram Khan, Frantic Assembly, Punchdrunk, Stephen Sondheim, Stanislavski and Andrew Lloyd Webber. You will investigate two practitioners, one from the list and one of your own choice. You will look at their work, styles

and techniques and the context of the work and the skills needed to perform it. Costume, lighting, set and sound design are all aspects to explore. This unit is externally assessed in January of the first year.

Unit 2: Developing Skills and Techniques for Live Performance (actor, dancer, musical theatre performer, variety entertainer, circus performer)

Students explore technical performance skills with a focus on developing skills and techniques in at least two performance styles. Students will take part in workshops, classes and task-based exercises in order to develop technical, practical and interpretative performance skills to aid success when performing live to an audience. This will prepare them for higher education and life as a performer.

In the second year, you will hone your skills over two units:

Unit 3: Group Performance Workshop

This is an externally assessed unit where students work together in small groups, between three and seven in number, to produce an original piece of devised performance work. This can be in any performing arts discipline: dance, drama and music or a mixture of all three. Students will explore work by practitioners who create new and innovative performance works. Students will take part in workshops with professional companies and learn how to respond to stimuli. The final workshop performance will be recorded on video in front of an invited audience.

The fourth unit is not mandatory so students can choose one unit from a range of units, with careful guidance. This unit should suit their strengths and tastes and might be Unit 22: **Movement in Performance** or Unit 27: **Musical Theatre Techniques**

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed through internal and external assessment. Written work is all online in a student portfolio. Students may also use video diaries and blogs to document work. Rehearsals and class are often filmed for evidence of work.

What skills will I need and develop in this course?

You will need some skills in at least two of the three art forms: dance, drama and singing.

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

Typical future careers might be West End star, performer, critic, art administrator, arts funder or performing arts teacher. Many students go to stage school or university from this course. Schools where our students have gone include Mountview, Arts Educational, London Studio Centre, Laban, Northern Contemporary Ballet, Rambert, London Contemporary Dance and Bristol Old Vic. Many students have gone to universities such as Chichester, Winchester, Bath Spa, Exeter, Manchester, Sussex and Leeds to study related degrees.

What are the formal entry requirements for this course?

Aside from the general criteria that the college requires, you will need to achieve a minimum of:

- Grade 4 in English Language GCSE
- Some experience of two of the art forms whether through GCSE or other lessons/grade exams out of school – by negotiation with the Head of Department

What extra support/enrichment activities are on offer?

Professional companies come to college to perform and take workshops with the students e.g. Sleeping Trees from Chichester University, Frantic Assembly, Re-Bourne (Matthew Company). There is an extensive theatre trips programme including shows such as Six, Matilda, Blood Wedding, Everybody's Talking About Jamie, The Jungle, Cirque du Soleil and Mama Mia (an ex-student is in this show).

Subject combination advice:

BTEC Performing Arts works well with a variety of subjects. Some students who study Performing Arts might do English, Fashion, Photography, Art, Media Studies, BTEC Media, Film Studies or History. Other students choose to study Performing Arts as a contrasting subject and might be studying Mathematics, Sciences or Humanities subjects such as Geography.

What is the difference between Drama & Theatre and BTEC Performing Arts?

The Performing Arts BTEC course involves music, dance and acting and is more flexible so you can play to your strengths and can follow a Musical Theatre pathway if needed. BTEC Performing Arts has a strong focus on rehearsal and performance work. It is a vocational course which develops the performer for a career in the industry. The lessons are practically based. In contrast, Drama and Theatre has a stronger theoretical component and requires the study of specific plays. There is also a heavier written element and the practical work is predominantly based around acting skills. If you are unsure about which course to take, do consult with the appropriate Heads of Department for those courses.