



**Victorian Certificate of Education  
Year**

**DRAMA**

**Solo performance examination**

**Day Date to Day Date Year**



## Guidelines for students and teachers

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### Performance examination conditions

1. The performance examination will be set and assessed by panels appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).
2. VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*.
3. The performance examination venue is set annually by the VCAA.

### Examination room conditions

1. Students will be allocated an examination room at the performance examination venue in which to perform. Students and their teachers are not permitted to request a change of room.
2. Only the assessors and any personnel authorised by the VCAA will be permitted in the examination room with the student during the performance examination.
3. The performance will use a single clearly lit space. No changes to the lighting grid, or to the lighting provided in the examination room, are permitted.
4. Only two chairs will be provided in the examination room for students to use during the performance, if they wish. Any additional props, if required, must be carried into the examination room by the student alone and within the allotted time.
5. The assessors' table is for assessment purposes. Students are not to place objects on the assessors' table or use the table in any way as part of their performance.
6. In the examination room, the health and safety of both students and assessors is paramount. Students must not endanger, or be seen to endanger, either themselves or others. Students are not permitted to bring into the examination room:
  - any objects or substances (including aerosols) deemed harmful, hazardous or illegal
  - actual or imitation weapons of any description (including swords, daggers or knives of any type)
  - open flames (including candles and matches).

Students are not to use any materials, objects or substances in their performance that may cause, or that may be perceived to cause, injury to themselves or others.

In some cases an object, material or substance that may be considered safe by the student may in the actual performance be considered hazardous. Consequently, careful consideration must be given to the selection of props or set items. Students are advised that if the use of any material, object or substance is deemed by any assessor to be potentially dangerous or hazardous, the student will not be permitted to use it. The decision of the assessors will be final.

7. Students must ensure that any props, costumes (including footwear) or other aspects of their performance do not, in any way, damage the performance space.
8. Students are responsible for cleaning up and removing, by the end of their allotted examination time, any materials they bring into the space for their performance.
9. All student performances will be recorded. These audiovisual recordings will provide a valuable additional quality assurance measure. Recordings will not be used for any other purpose without first obtaining student consent.
10. Any updates to the conditions for the performance examination will be published in the *VCAA Bulletin*.

### Format of the performance examination

1. Students are required to prepare a solo performance using one of the prescribed structures on pages 7–16. Marks will not be awarded for performances that do not use one of the prescribed structures.

2. Students are required to present their performance as a single uninterrupted performance that lasts **no more than seven minutes**.
3. If a performance exceeds the prescribed time limit, the student will be asked to stop. A timing device will indicate when the seven minutes have elapsed.
4. A total of **10 minutes** per student will be allocated for preparation, performance and clearing the performance space. No additional time is permitted. Students should be mindful of these time restrictions when preparing technical aspects, including theatre technologies for the solo performance.
5. The emphasis during the performance must be on ‘action’ rather than ‘narration’, i.e. ‘doing’ rather than ‘telling’ should be emphasised. Sustained use of realism/naturalism should be avoided. It is contrary to the use of the eclectic performance styles that are required for this examination.
6. Reading from a script does not constitute a solo performance and will be considered off-task.
7. Where a plural is used in the wording of a structure, two or more moments/examples must be evident unless a specific number is stated.
8. Students may choose to perform to the assessors as audience or to an imagined audience or to both.
9. Students must not walk behind and/or touch and/or approach the assessors during their performance examination.
10. A list of key terms is provided in the ‘Terminology’ section at the end of this examination. Students are advised to consult the ‘Terminology’ section for explanations of performance styles, conventions and dramatic elements, as prescribed in the examination.

### The prescribed structures

Each prescribed structure is composed of the following: character, stimulus material, performance focus, performance style, convention and dramatic element, and resources. All parts of the prescribed structure must be addressed in the student’s performance. There will be a direct impact on student scores for specific criteria and marks will be adjusted accordingly should any part of the prescribed structure not be addressed.

The following explanations should be used to help students prepare for their solo performance:

- **character** – The character is the central focus of the performance. Where the gender of a character is identified in the prescribed structure, the character must be portrayed in that gender.
- **stimulus material** – The stimulus material(s) is the specified source(s) of information that must be used in the development of the character and it must be referenced and evident throughout the performance.
- **performance focus** – The performance focus offers information that provides a context for the character. Students are required to present this information during their performance, incorporating the specific details that are identified in the opening sentences of each prescribed structure and the three accompanying dot points.

### The opening sentences

- could provide background to the character
- could indicate when and/or where the performance takes place
- could establish the audience
- could provide insight into the emotional state or motivation of the character

### The three dot points

- To fulfil the requirements of dot point 1, dot point 2 and dot point 3, students can choose from scenes, dramatic images, montages and/or vignettes in the development and realisation of the performance.
- The stimulus material(s) must be evident in the students’ interpretation of any or all of the dot points. In one or more of the dot points, students are invited to use their creative licence to invent material that might or could have happened.
- The three dot points may be represented as a scene, dramatic image, montage, vignette or combinations of each.

Students are not required to give each aspect of the performance focus equal emphasis during their performance. Unless otherwise indicated, aspects of the performance focus may be performed in any order.

**All aspects of the performance focus must be included in the performance.**

- **performance style** – The prescribed performance style(s) is explained for each prescribed structure. The prescribed performance style(s) must be evident throughout the performance. Where features are listed for a particular performance style, students may use some or all of the features listed, as appropriate to their performance.
- **convention** – The following conventions will be assessed in all performances: transformation of character, time and place, and application of symbol. The student will select one additional convention from the list of eight published each year in the examination and write it on the Statement of Intention. This selected convention must be integral to, and embedded in, the performance. Students may use additional conventions as appropriate.
- **dramatic element** – The student will select one dramatic element from the list of eight published each year in the examination and write it on the Statement of Intention. This selected dramatic element must be integral to, and embedded in, the performance. The dramatic element will be selected from the following list: climax, conflict, contrast, mood, rhythm, sound, space and tension. Students may use additional dramatic elements as appropriate.
- **resources** – Students are expected to undertake a wide range of research when developing their solo performance. The resources provided are recommendations only. This list is not exhaustive. Note: If a resource is also listed under ‘Stimulus material’, this resource must be used in the development of the performance text and must be evident throughout the performance.

### Statement of Intention

1. A Statement of Intention template has been provided on page 21.
2. The purpose of the Statement of Intention is to:
  - indicate which convention and dramatic element the student has selected
  - highlight aspects of the student’s interpretation that they would like to bring to the assessors’ attention.
3. Immediately prior to their performance, students are required to present **three** copies of the Statement of Intention to the assessors. **The Statement of Intention must not exceed 100 words in total and is required to be written in point form.** Only areas relevant to the student’s performance are required to be addressed. The Statement of Intention may include:
  - an explanation/clarification of decisions made in the student’s interpretation of their selected prescribed structure
  - reasons for choices made (for example, for the use of costume, props, accent, application of symbol, etc.)
  - how and where a specific convention, dramatic element or dot point is demonstrated in the performance.
4. Where there is a choice of several characters within a prescribed structure (for example, prescribed structures 5 and 7), students should state the name of their selected character.
5. Students should not merely describe their character by rewriting the performance focus.
6. The Statement of Intention will not be assessed.

### Notes

1. While the VCAA considers all of the prescribed structures to be suitable for study, teachers should be aware that, in some instances, sensitivity might be needed where particular issues or themes are explored. Teachers should ensure that they consider and are aware of the issues and themes that are contained in the prescribed structures prior to the commencement of Unit 4 so that they can provide appropriate advice to students.
2. Schools and teachers are advised to check the local availability of required stimulus material(s) and resources prior to beginning Unit 4. Some materials may not be immediately available.
3. Students and teachers should be aware that the websites provided as resources or stimulus material in the prescribed structures, including Wikipedia, may contain information that has been altered since the publication of the examination.

4. It is the VCAA that provides the advice on and specifies the requirements of the VCE Drama solo performance examination. Students are advised to refer to this examination throughout the development of their solo performance. Caution should be exercised when using information from other sources, including social media and blogs.
5. For additional advice, students should refer to the previous year's examination report.
6. Students and teachers are reminded that, in addition to the one convention selected for the prescribed structure, transformation of character, time and place, and application of symbol must be demonstrated in the student's performance.
7. The performance style(s), convention(s) and dramatic element(s) must be integral to, and embedded in, the performance. The use of the performance style(s), convention(s) or dramatic element(s) only once does not constitute compliance.
8. All enquiries regarding the VCE Drama solo performance examination should be forwarded to:
  - Margaret Arnold, Curriculum Manager, telephone: (03) 9032 1681, email: <arnold.margaret.j@edumail.vic.gov.au>
  - Glenn Martin, Project Manager, Assessment Operations, telephone: (03) 9225 2212, email: <martin.glenn.w1@edumail.vic.gov.au>.

## Instructions

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Select **one** convention and **one** dramatic element from the lists provided below and write each on your Statement of Intention. The selected convention and dramatic element **must** be integral to, and embedded in, your solo performance.

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### Conventions

The conventions of transformation of character, time and place, and application of symbol will be assessed in every solo performance. In addition to these, students are required to select **one** convention from the following list and apply it throughout their solo performance:

- caricature
- exaggerated movement
- heightened use of language
- pathos
- satire
- song
- stillness and silence
- use of fact

Write your selected convention on your Statement of Intention.

### Dramatic elements

Students are required to select **one** dramatic element from the following list and apply it throughout their solo performance:

- climax
- conflict
- contrast
- mood
- rhythm
- sound
- space
- tension

Write your selected dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

## Prescribed structure 1

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**Character** The Aspiring ‘Artist’

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### Stimulus material

Anson Cameron, ‘Every story blurs the tale’, *The Age*, 25 April 2009

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Aspiring ‘Artist’.

At a meeting of a Melbourne artists’ collective, those gathered are angered by the vast sums of money local galleries spend on acquiring non-Australian artworks. In a call to arms, the Aspiring ‘Artist’, who has yet again been overlooked for an arts grant, goads others into action and hatches a plot that will gain media attention.

The Aspiring ‘Artist’ does this by:

- showing the responses by the decadent art establishment and the philistine authorities to the theft of the painting *The Weeping Woman*
- demonstrating his/her involvement in the theft of the painting
- creating a piece of **performance art** that explores how the nature and purpose of art have changed over time.

### Performance style

Eclectic\*

### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

### Resources

Anson Cameron, ‘Every story blurs the tale’, *The Age*, 25 April 2009

Dada and Cabaret Voltaire, <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkl92oV1kMc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkl92oV1kMc)>

The History of Art in 3 Minutes,

<[www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZOsR0TzbJ8&list=PLVi7sdAfeSjKrG EQgZfW7IqiSKEXWy48c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZOsR0TzbJ8&list=PLVi7sdAfeSjKrG EQgZfW7IqiSKEXWy48c)>

#### \*Eclectic

Eclectic theatre draws on a range of performance styles to devise performances that go beyond the reality of life as it is lived. It juxtaposes a number of performance styles to make dramatic statements and theatre that is innovative, transformational and creative. Eclectic theatre is devised with a specific purpose and intention for the audience.

Eclectic theatre draws on drama traditions and practice including:

- ritual and storytelling
- contemporary drama practice and performance styles
- the work of drama practitioners and associated performance styles
- a combination of any of the above.

## Prescribed structure 2

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**Character** Professor Lucifer Gorgonzola Butts, AK

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### Stimulus material

<[www.rubegoldberg.com](http://www.rubegoldberg.com)> and ‘It’s the Little Things That Matter’ by Rube Goldberg

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Professor Lucifer Gorgonzola Butts, AK.

While attempting to sell his latest invention on a home-shopping television channel, Professor Butts boasts about how he, unlike other inventors, is saving society with his inventions.

Professor Butts does this by:

- demonstrating one or more of his most-loved inventions and why he developed them
- comparing another of his inventions to the invention(s) of a great inventor listed at <[www.biographyonline.net/scientists/top-10-inventors.html](http://www.biographyonline.net/scientists/top-10-inventors.html)> or <[www.women-inventors.com/](http://www.women-inventors.com/)>
- showing how a famous invention has had an adverse effect on humankind.

### Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of physical theatre\*

### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

### Resources

<[www.rubegoldberg.com](http://www.rubegoldberg.com)>

‘It’s the Little Things That Matter’ by Rube Goldberg,  
<[screwballcomics.blogspot.com.au/p/rube-goldberg.html](http://screwballcomics.blogspot.com.au/p/rube-goldberg.html)>

<[www.rube-goldberg.com/wiki/rube-theses.html](http://www.rube-goldberg.com/wiki/rube-theses.html)>

<[www.biographyonline.net/scientists/top-10-inventors.html](http://www.biographyonline.net/scientists/top-10-inventors.html)>

<[www.women-inventors.com/](http://www.women-inventors.com/)>

#### **\*Physical theatre**

Physical theatre is a style of performance that pursues storytelling through physical means. The primary focus is on the physical work of the actor through the use of the body. It is a highly visual form of theatre.

Physical theatre is exemplified by:

- use of mime/dance
- use of acrobatics/circus skills
- visual theatre.



## Prescribed structure 3

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**Character** The Socialite

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### Stimulus material

The song 'The Ladies Who Lunch' from the musical *Company* by Stephen Sondheim

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Socialite.

Following an economic downturn in which she lost everything, a former socialite gatecrashes a luncheon and proposes a toast to the assembled guests, accusing each of them of being shallow and leading empty lives.

The Socialite does this by:

- showing the types of ladies and girls who lunch as depicted in the song
- exploring the political and/or social and/or economic reasons why two or more types of Australian women are unable to lunch
- demonstrating how an actual woman, either past or present, has used her power and influence to improve the lives of others.

### Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of musical theatre\*

### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

### Resources

'The Ladies Who Lunch', from the musical *Company* by Stephen Sondheim, 1970

'The Ladies Who Lunch' – *Company* (2011) – Patti LuPone,

<[www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmM-5VAzrNw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmM-5VAzrNw)>

<[www.biographyonline.net/people/women-who-changed-world.html](http://www.biographyonline.net/people/women-who-changed-world.html)>

#### **\*Musical theatre**

Musical theatre is a style of theatre that contains a mixture of song, dance, music and spoken dialogue.

Musical theatre is exemplified by:

- central characters often involved in a romantic entanglement set against a bigger event or context that often results in conflict
- emotional content, such as love, pathos, anger or humour, expressed through song and/or dance
- use of a range of differing musical and/or dance forms and styles.

## Prescribed structure 4

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**Character** Louis de Rougemont (aka Henri Louis Grin)

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### Stimulus material

The novel *The Adventures of Louis de Rougement*, Chapters 1–5,

<<http://publicdomainreview.org/collections/the-adventures-of-louis-de-rougement-1899/>>

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person Louis de Rougemont (aka Henri Louis Grin).

In 1898, a charming and flamboyant Louis de Rougemont meets with a sceptical journalist from *The Daily Chronicle* in an attempt to show him that, in truth, he is a larger-than-life figure rather than a liar and a fraud.

Louis de Rougemont does this by:

- highlighting the circumstances of his shipwreck and subsequent survival in the northern Western Australian bush
- creating another adventure in which he was involved that appears beyond belief
- demonstrating how an urban myth evolving after 1898 will lead to misunderstandings about life in Australia.

### Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of vaudeville\*

### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

### Resources

The novel *The Adventures of Louis de Rougement*, Chapters 1–5, 1899,

<<http://publicdomainreview.org/collections/the-adventures-of-louis-de-rougement-1899/>>

<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_folklore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_folklore)>

<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis\\_de\\_Rougemont](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_de_Rougemont)>

#### **\*Vaudeville**

Vaudeville is a form and style of theatre entertainment that was popular among the lower classes from the 1880s until the 1930s. It was referred to as ‘music hall’ in Britain and consisted of a variety of brief acts that were introduced by a master of ceremonies.

Vaudeville acts could include:

- illustrated song, dance, active storytelling
- comedy, slapstick, repartee, clowning
- exaggerated acting, acrobatics.

## Prescribed structure 5

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**Character** Pa Ubu or Ma Ubu

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### Stimulus material

The play *Ubu Roi* by Alfred Jarry

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of either Pa Ubu or Ma Ubu.

Following the Polish campaign, Pa Ubu or Ma Ubu meets with close advisors in the War Cabinet. The grotesque Pa Ubu or Ma Ubu unveils his/her absurd vision to invade Australia and re-establish it as a penal colony for the world's unwanted.

Pa Ubu or Ma Ubu does this by:

- highlighting key moments from the play that demonstrate his/her approach to maintaining power
- showing his/her strategies for the Australian invasion and development of the penal colony
- creating a parallel to a real political leader, past or present, who is considered corrupt.

### Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of surrealism\*

### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

### Resources

The play *Ubu Roi* by Alfred Jarry, 1896 (any translation)

Great Surrealism performance, <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-8U5GJUMNI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-8U5GJUMNI)>

Handspan Theatre documentary, <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBFssHPJ48A](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBFssHPJ48A)>

#### **\*Surrealism**

Surrealism is an avant-garde arts and theatre movement associated with the early 20th century.

Surrealism is exemplified by:

- dramatic structures that feature elements of surprise or unexpected juxtapositions
- use of unnerving and/or seemingly illogical scenes or dialogue and dream-like imagery
- use of fantastic and/or grotesque characters through the use of symbols, props, costume, make-up.

## Prescribed structure 6

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**Character** Oiwa (The Onryō or Vengeful Ghost)

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### Stimulus material

The story ‘Yotsuya Kaidan’, <[http://seeksghosts.blogspot.com.au/2012/03/traditional-japanese-ghost-story-oiwa.html?\\_sm\\_au\\_=isVZpHJQL55SPQNs](http://seeksghosts.blogspot.com.au/2012/03/traditional-japanese-ghost-story-oiwa.html?_sm_au_=isVZpHJQL55SPQNs)>

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Oiwa.

An angry and vengeful Oiwa appears before a company of actors prior to its new theatrical production of *Yotsuya Kaidan*. She berates them for having failed to complete the obligatory homage at her shrine and curses the production.

Oiwa does this by:

- highlighting moments from the story that show how she became a ghost
- demonstrating an example of what will happen to the production if the company of actors does not atone for its lack of respect
- exploring how what has frightened people has changed over time.

### Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of Japanese horror\*

### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

### Resources

<[http://seeksghosts.blogspot.com.au/2012/03/traditional-japanese-ghost-story-oiwa.html?\\_sm\\_au\\_=isVZpHJQL55SPQNs](http://seeksghosts.blogspot.com.au/2012/03/traditional-japanese-ghost-story-oiwa.html?_sm_au_=isVZpHJQL55SPQNs)>

Mystery of Japanese Ghost Yurei! Ghost Caught on Tape in Japan!!,

<[www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVDP1LeD5Tc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVDP1LeD5Tc)>

<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yotsuya\\_Kaidan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yotsuya_Kaidan)>

#### **\*Japanese horror**

Japanese horror is a literary and theatrical form that can be traced back to the Tokugawa (Edo) period. It tells stories of revenge and ghostly appearances.

Japanese horror is exemplified by:

- plots that often explore the psychological aspects of horror and fear, including the appearance of a ghost
- strong visual and theatrical imagery through the use of costume, make-up, props
- use of suspense, stillness and silence.

## Prescribed structure 7

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**Character** Mr John Kemble or Mrs Sarah Siddons

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### Stimulus material

<[www.wow.com/wiki/Ireland\\_Shakespeare\\_forgeries](http://www.wow.com/wiki/Ireland_Shakespeare_forgeries)>

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person of either Mr John Kemble or Mrs Sarah Siddons.

After the discovery that the play *Vortigern and Rowena* is a forgery, an arrogant Mr Kemble or a pompous Mrs Siddons attends the cast party following the one and only performance at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in London, 1796. He/she boasts to those assembled of his/her long-held suspicions that the play was both a fake and a scam.

Mr John Kemble or Mrs Sarah Siddons does this by:

- highlighting moments from when he/she visited the Irelands' home and witnessed the hysteria surrounding the unveiling of the documents found within the chest belonging to 'Mr H'
- demonstrating examples of their favourite and least favourite moments from the play *Vortigern and Rowena*
- demonstrating an example(s) of another fraud that has been perpetrated over time on an unsuspecting public.

### Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of comedy of manners\*

### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

### Resources

<[www.wow.com/wiki/Ireland\\_Shakespeare\\_forgeries](http://www.wow.com/wiki/Ireland_Shakespeare_forgeries)>

<<http://blogs.bl.uk/english-and-drama/2016/03/is-this-a-forgery-i-see-before-me.html>>

The English Restoration, <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNPpkYW36M4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNPpkYW36M4)>

<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vortigern\\_and\\_Rowena](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vortigern_and_Rowena)>

### Note

Students are **not** required to read the play *Vortigern and Rowena* but should instead create scenes based on both the characters and the information outlined on the websites listed in **Resources**.

#### **\*Comedy of manners**

This is a style of theatre that has evolved but is most closely associated with the Restoration of the English monarchy and the reopening of theatres in 1660 under King Charles II.

Comedy of manners is exemplified by:

- use of prologue, epilogue, asides, witty dialogue
- plots involving lies, deceit, mistaken identity
- use of stagecraft including wigs, excessive make-up, costume.

## Prescribed structure 8

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**Character** Elisabeth Hauptmann

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### Stimulus material

The life and career of Elisabeth Hauptmann

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person Elisabeth Hauptmann.

After the death of Bertolt Brecht in 1956, a frustrated Elisabeth Hauptmann confronts his widow, Helene Weigel, in a rehearsal room at the Berliner Ensemble. Elisabeth Hauptmann demands both royalties and acknowledgment for her work as the true playwright of *The Threepenny Opera*.

Elisabeth Hauptmann does this by:

- demonstrating key moments from her working life with Bertolt Brecht
- portraying an example(s) of the challenges she and other German artists faced after Hitler rose to power
- creating highlights from her new, as yet unseen, Epic Theatre production about women who will achieve recognition and success in the arts.

### Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of Epic Theatre\*

### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

### Resources

<[www.curiousarts.ca/elisabeth-hauptmann](http://www.curiousarts.ca/elisabeth-hauptmann)>

<[www.signature-reads.com/2015/02/the-nuanced-life-and-art-of-elisabeth-hauptmann-1897-1973/](http://www.signature-reads.com/2015/02/the-nuanced-life-and-art-of-elisabeth-hauptmann-1897-1973/)>

<[www.forbes.com/sites/katepierce/2015/05/26/taylor-swift-beyonce-and-the-most-powerful-women-in-entertainment/#282f82b53d76](http://www.forbes.com/sites/katepierce/2015/05/26/taylor-swift-beyonce-and-the-most-powerful-women-in-entertainment/#282f82b53d76)>

#### **\*Epic Theatre**

Sometimes called Brechtian theatre, Epic Theatre is a style of theatre that seeks to tell a story, often on a large historical scale and including a number of people and events over time. It aims to engage the intellect rather than emotions and often uses devices that alienate the audience.

Epic Theatre is exemplified by:

- direct address and/or the use of narration and song as commentary
- use of signs, mask, stylised gesture and movement
- deliberate and conscious choices intended to remind the audience that they are watching a play.

## Prescribed structure 9

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**Character** The Phone

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### Stimulus material

<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_the\\_telephone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_telephone)>

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Phone.

Concerned about the decline in human interaction, the Phone approaches its nemesis on the opening night of ‘Dial T for Telephone’, the latest exhibition at a gallery of contemporary art. The Phone urges its smug rival, the most recent smartphone, to join forces and ‘dumb themselves down’ for the sake of humanity.

The Phone does this by:

- demonstrating three or more examples of how the telephone has evolved and how it has affected human behaviour
- highlighting the pros and/or cons of other forms of communication that have been trialled throughout history
- creating an example(s) of how the lives of human beings have been altered by another technological advancement since the Industrial Revolution.

### Performance style

Eclectic\*

### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

### Resources

<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_the\\_telephone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_telephone)>

Stone Age to Modern Age: Evolution of Communication, <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxTUC5I22LU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxTUC5I22LU)>

<<http://mashable.com/2014/12/05/evolution-of-communication-brandspeak/#.tCVbSpIMOq8>>

#### **\*Eclectic**

Eclectic theatre draws on a range of performance styles to devise performances that go beyond the reality of life as it is lived. It juxtaposes a number of performance styles to make dramatic statements and theatre that is innovative, transformational and creative. Eclectic theatre is devised with a specific purpose and intention for the audience.

Eclectic theatre draws on drama traditions and practice including:

- ritual and storytelling
- contemporary drama practice and performance styles
- the work of drama practitioners and associated performance styles
- a combination of any of the above.

## Prescribed structure 10

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### Character The Stereotype

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#### Stimulus material

The film *Dudley Do-Right*, directed by Hugh Wilson

#### Performance focus

Create a solo performance that includes each of the following stereotypes from the film *Dudley Do-Right*: the hero (Dudley Do-Right), the villain (Snidely Whiplash) and the heroine (Nell Fenwick).

While attempting to persuade the membership subcommittee of Theatrical Entities Inc. of the validity of stereotypes and their right to join the organisation, the characters act out an entertaining and exciting plot that involves a:

- potential environmental disaster
- social commentary that mirrors the life and times of the society of the day
- resolution that offers hope, as good always wins over evil.

#### Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of melodrama\*

#### Convention and dramatic element

As selected by the student from the list on page 6

Write your selected convention and dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

#### Resources

Any history of Victorian melodrama

The film *Dudley Do-Right*, directed by Hugh Wilson, 1999

#### **\*Melodrama**

Melodrama is a performance style that presents an unambiguous confrontation between good and evil.

Melodrama is exemplified by:

- stereotypical and shallow stock characters, with a clear definition of villains, heroes and heroines
- happy endings that demonstrate the eventual triumph of good
- overacting, asides, interaction with the audience
- sound effects and music that are used to heighten the dramatic mood.



## Terminology

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The explanations below provide direction for teachers and students in the development of the VCE Drama solo performance examination. This information should be read together with pages 9–12 of the *VCE Drama Study Design 2019–2023*.

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### Create

To create is to enact for an audience situations and conversations that may be informed by material other than the stimulus, such as reference material. The emphasis in the creation must be on action rather than narration; that is, ‘doing’ rather than ‘telling’.

## Performance styles

### Comedy of manners

This is a style of theatre that has evolved but is most closely associated with the Restoration of the English monarchy and the reopening of theatres in 1660 under King Charles II.

Comedy of manners is exemplified by:

- use of prologue, epilogue, asides, witty dialogue
- plots involving lies, deceit, mistaken identity
- use of stagecraft including wigs, excessive make-up, costume.

### Eclectic

Eclectic theatre draws on a range of performance styles to devise performances that go beyond the reality of life as it is lived. It juxtaposes a number of performance styles to make dramatic statements and theatre that is innovative, transformational and creative. Eclectic theatre is devised with a specific purpose and intention for the audience.

Eclectic theatre draws on drama traditions and practice including:

- ritual and storytelling
- contemporary drama practice and performance styles
- the work of drama practitioners and associated performance styles
- a combination of any of the above.

### Epic Theatre

Sometimes called Brechtian theatre, Epic Theatre is a style of theatre that seeks to tell a story, often on a large historical scale and including a number of people and events over time. It aims to engage the intellect rather than emotions and often uses devices that alienate the audience.

Epic Theatre is exemplified by:

- direct address and/or the use of narration and song as commentary
- use of signs, mask, stylised gesture and movement
- deliberate and conscious choices intended to remind the audience that they are watching a play.

### Japanese horror

Japanese horror is a literary and theatrical form that can be traced back to the Tokugawa (Edo) period. It tells stories of revenge and ghostly appearances.

Japanese horror is exemplified by:

- plots that often explore the psychological aspects of horror and fear, including the appearance of a ghost
- strong visual and theatrical imagery through the use of costume, make-up, props
- use of suspense, stillness and silence.

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### **Musical theatre**

Musical theatre is a style of theatre that contains a mixture of song, dance, music and spoken dialogue.

Musical theatre is exemplified by:

- central characters often involved in a romantic entanglement set against a bigger event or context that often results in conflict
- emotional content, such as love, pathos, anger or humour, expressed through song and/or dance
- use of a range of differing musical and/or dance forms and styles.

### **Physical theatre**

Physical theatre is a style of performance that pursues storytelling through physical means. The primary focus is on the physical work of the actor through the use of the body. It is a highly visual form of theatre.

Physical theatre is exemplified by:

- use of mime/dance
- use of acrobatics/circus skills
- visual theatre.

### **Surrealism**

Surrealism is an avant-garde arts and theatre movement associated with the early 20th century.

Surrealism is exemplified by:

- dramatic structures that feature elements of surprise or unexpected juxtapositions
- use of unnerving and/or seemingly illogical scenes or dialogue and dream-like imagery
- use of fantastic and/or grotesque characters through the use of symbols, props, costume, make-up.

### **Vaudeville**

Vaudeville is a form and style of theatre entertainment that was popular among the lower classes from the 1880s until the 1930s. It was referred to as ‘music hall’ in Britain and consisted of a variety of brief acts that were introduced by a master of ceremonies.

Vaudeville acts could include:

- illustrated song, dance, active storytelling
- comedy, slapstick, repartee, clowning
- exaggerated acting, acrobatics.

## **Conventions**

### **Application of symbol**

Application of symbol is used to create meaning that is not literal. Application of symbol allows actors to communicate ideas and themes through action, gesture, language, vocal or facial expression, object/prop, costume, set pieces and/or heightened movement. Application of symbol may assist transformations.

**Caricature**

Caricature is an exaggeration of a character that is often ludicrous or grotesque. It may be comic, at times derogatory, with the intention to ridicule.

**Exaggerated movement**

Exaggerated movement includes action that is overstated or drawn larger than life, often for the purpose of ridicule.

**Heightened use of language**

Heightened use of language is the poetic and exaggerated use of language. It includes a deliberate choice of words whose syntax, alliteration and rhyming patterns enhance the dramatic statement. The intended meaning is enhanced through the use of non-conventional dialogue.

**Pathos**

Pathos is a quality that evokes a feeling of sympathy, pity or sadness in the audience; for example, the power of stirring tender or melancholic emotion. Pathos may be associated with comedy and/or tragedy.

**Satire**

Satire refers to the use of wit and comedy to attack, denounce or deride a target. It exposes or questions the presence of vice, folly, abuse or pretence. It may be achieved through the manipulation of language, caricature, parody, parable or other comedic theatrical conventions. The satirist laughs at, punishes or questions a target and/or an audience. The target may be an individual or a system.

**Song**

Song refers to a musical interpretation of a text using the performer's own voice at the time of performance (not pre-recorded).

**Stillness and silence**

Stillness and silence is found where there is a simultaneously sustained absence of sound and movement. This technique is used to create mood or dramatic effect. There may be a build-up to this moment in which limited sound and movement are used.

**Transformation of character**

The actor manipulates expressive skills to create characters in performance. A change in character, therefore, requires modification of the focus and manner of use of expressive skills by the actor. Additions of mask or costume may enhance the character transformation, but this does not constitute transformation unless accompanied by communicable changes in the use of expressive skills.

**Transformation of place**

The actor creates more than one place or setting during the performance and does so without the use of scenery. The actor may communicate transformation of place to an audience through the context that they create for the performance and through the use of objects and space in symbolic ways. Transformation of place may be achieved through the use of production areas and/or through the use of expressive skills.

**Transformation of time**

Performances can move around in time as well as in place. Sometimes performances can occur in a linear or chronological timeline. Others move backwards and forwards in time from a central point.

**Use of fact**

This refers to research that is used to provide the basis for selective and informed scripting. This information should then become part of a cohesive narrative rather than be a summary of events and actions or a list of facts and related information. Facts should be presented in a variety of ways rather than just verbally.

## **Dramatic elements**

### **Climax**

Climax is the most significant moment of tension or conflict in a drama and often occurs towards the end of the plot. Multiple climaxes and/or an anticlimax may also occur. The action of a drama usually unravels after the climax has transpired but the work might finish with a climactic moment.

### **Conflict**

Conflict generally occurs when a character cannot achieve an objective due to an obstacle. This obstacle may be internal or external and between characters, or between characters and their environment. Conflict may be shown in a variety of ways, for example through physical, verbal or psychological means. Conflict may be embedded in the structure of the drama.

### **Contrast**

Contrast presents the dissimilar or the opposite in order to highlight or emphasise difference. Contrast may be explored in many ways, and may include contrasting characters, settings, times, themes, elements, production areas and performance styles.

### **Mood**

Mood is the overall feeling or emotion that a performance may evoke. This may be achieved through manipulation of acting, conventions or production areas.

### **Rhythm**

Rhythm is a regular pattern of words, sounds or actions. Performances have their own rhythm that may be influenced by the emotional nature of the plot, the pace of line delivery, the dialogue (long and/or short lines), the pace of scene transitions and the length of scenes.

### **Sound**

Sound is created live, by the actor, in the performance. Voice, body percussion and objects can be used individually or in combination to create sonic effects in performance and to enhance meaning. Sound may include silence or the deliberate absence of sound.

### **Space**

Space involves the way the performance area is used to communicate meaning, to define settings, to represent status and to create actor–audience relationships. This may be achieved through the use of levels, proximity and depth. The use of space may be symbolic.

### **Tension**

Tension is the suspense that holds an audience’s attention as a performance unfolds. The release of tension may have a comic or a dramatic effect.

