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Important information

Accreditation period

Units 1–4: 1 January 2025–31 December 2029

Implementation of this study commences in 2025.

Other sources of information

The [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx) is the only official source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. The Bulletin also regularly includes advice on VCE studies. It is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to refer to each issue of the Bulletin. The Bulletin is available as an e-newsletter via [free subscription](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Footer/Pages/Subscribe.aspx) on the VCAA website.

To assist teachers in developing courses, the VCAA publishes online [Support materials](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/theatrestudies/Pages/Index.aspx) (incorporating the content previously supplied in the *Advice for teachers*).

The current [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx) contains essential information on assessment processes and other procedures.

VCE providers

Throughout this study design, the term ‘school’ is intended to include both schools and other VCE providers.

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Introduction

Scope of study

In VCE Theatre Studies, students interpret scripts from historic periods to the present day and produce theatre for audiences. Through practical and theoretical engagement with scripts, they gain an insight into the origins and development of theatre, the influences of theatre on cultures and societies, and the influences of culture and society on theatre. Students apply dramaturgy and work in the production roles of actor, director and designer, developing an understanding and appreciation of the role of theatre practitioners.

Throughout the study, students work individually and collaboratively in production roles to interpret scripts and to plan, develop and present productions. Students study the contexts of scripts (time and place, including the historical, cultural, political and social contexts) and the languages of scripts, as well as theatre movements. They experiment with different possibilities for interpreting scripts and apply ideas and concepts for presentation to audiences. They examine ways in which meaning can be constructed and conveyed through theatre performance. Students consider their audiences and, in their interpretations, incorporate knowledge and understanding of audience culture and demographics.

Students learn about innovations in theatre production across different times, cultures and places and apply this knowledge to their work. Through the study of scripts, theatre styles and contemporary theatre movements, and by working in production roles to interpret scripts, students develop knowledge and understanding of theatre, its conventions and elements of theatre composition. Students analyse and evaluate the production of professional theatre performances and consider the relationship to their own theatre production work. They consider their dual roles as artist and as audience. Students learn about and demonstrate an understanding of safe, ethical, inclusive, sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) and responsible personal and interpersonal work practices in theatre production.

Rationale

Theatre as a form of cultural expression has been made and performed for audiences from the earliest times and is an integral part of all cultures. Theatre is ever evolving and exists as entertainment, education, ritual, an agent for change, a representation of values and a critical window on society. Theatre practice has developed from, and been influenced by, cultures over many centuries through a wide variety of productions in diverse performance spaces for a range of audiences. Theatre-makers work as playwrights, actors, dramaturgs, directors and designers, producing theatre for diverse purposes.

Through the study of VCE Theatre Studies, students develop, refine and enhance their analytical, evaluative and critical thinking skills as well as creative expression, technical application, problem-solving, collaborative and communication skills. They work both individually and in collaboration with others to interpret scripts. Through theoretical study and creative practice, students develop their aesthetic understanding and appreciation of the art form of theatre, and their interpretive and theatre production skills. Through the study of theatre, students also explore world views, alternative perspectives and ways of being.

The study of theatre, in its various forms, prepares students for further study in theatre production, theatre history, communication, marketing, production management, writing, acting, direction and design at tertiary level. VCE Theatre Studies also prepares students for further learning in vocational educational training settings or for industry or community-related pathways.

Aims

This study enables students to:

* acquire knowledge of theatre including its styles, movements, purposes and audiences
* interpret scripts through engagement in the production process
* experiment with theatrical possibilities and elements of theatre composition
* apply knowledge of production roles and the skills to interpret scripts
* understand themselves as theatre practitioners and audiences
* appreciate theatre and its significance as an art form
* apply safe, ethical, inclusive, sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) and personal and interpersonal practices in theatre production
* conduct performance analysis and production evaluations and apply learning to their own theatre production work
* apply thinking, problem-solving and communication skills to creatively participate in the theatre life of their community.

Structure

The study is made up of 4 units:

* Unit 1: History of theatre styles and conventions pre-1945 (TS011)
* Unit 2: Contemporary theatre styles and movements (TS022)
* Unit 3: Producing theatre (TS033)
* Unit 4: Presenting an interpretation (TS034)

Each unit deals with specific content contained in areas of study and is designed to enable students to achieve a set of outcomes for that unit. Each outcome is described in terms of key knowledge and key skills.

Entry

There are no prerequisites for entry to Units 1, 2 and 3. Students must undertake Unit 3 and Unit 4 as a sequence. Units 1–4 are designed to the equivalent standard of the final 2 years of secondary education. All VCE studies are benchmarked against comparable national and international curriculum.

An extended glossary defining terms used across Units 1–4 in the *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design* is included in the [Support materials](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/theatrestudies/Pages/Index.aspx)*.*

Duration

Each unit involves at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction. In VCE Theatre Studies, scheduled instruction can include classroom instruction, rehearsing and producing theatre, and attendance at professional theatre productions.

Changes to the study design

During its period of accreditation, minor changes to the study will be announced in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx). The Bulletin is the only source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. It is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to monitor changes or advice about VCE studies published in the Bulletin.

Monitoring for quality

As part of ongoing monitoring and quality assurance, the VCAA will periodically undertake an audit of VCE Theatre Studies to ensure the study is being taught and assessed as accredited. The details of the audit procedures and requirements are published annually in the [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx). Schools will be notified if they are required to submit material to be audited.

Requirements for delivery

The Principal must make sure that students have access to adequate facilities and resources to complete any VCE study they are offered. To ensure assessment requirements are met for this study, students should have access to attend appropriate live professional performances as part of the teaching and learning program and school-based assessments. There are no requirements for specialist facilities and [teacher qualifications](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/recruitment-schools/policy-and-guidelines/qualifications#teacher-class) specified for this study.

Safety and wellbeing

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that duty of care is exercised in relation to the health and safety of all students undertaking the study.

Scripts and performances selected for study should be appropriate for the age and development of students and reflect current community standards and expectations. Teachers should be aware that sensitive issues might arise in relation to some productions. The following strategies may assist teachers when selecting scripts for study.

For scripts that students will interpret and performances they will attend, teachers are advised to:

* read the script
* be familiar with the themes, contexts and world of the play, and pay particular attention to matters identified in the advice provided by publishers and theatre companies, and in the VCE Theatre Studies Playlist
* (if available) read information such as the director’s vision or creative concept for the production
* identify any issues that may require additional resourcing, such as information about different perspectives on controversial historical, social, cultural and/or political themes
* make the selection in consultation with school leaders, including wellbeing staff.

For performances that students will attend, teachers are advised to:

* discuss issues of concern with the theatre company
* (if available) read information such as the director’s vision or creative concept for the production
* (if possible) attend a preview performance
* discuss with colleagues at school (including wellbeing staff) any aspects of the production that may be challenging for students and develop support material as required.

Safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable work practices

In VCE Theatre Studies, students may be required to handle equipment and use chemicals (for example, adhesives, solvents and paints used in set or costume design) that are potentially hazardous. Also, since lifting and moving heavy objects may be required, students should be instructed on appropriate ways of doing this. Students and teachers must be aware of acceptable levels of sound, particularly when using amplifiers and PA systems. Equipment should be tested and tagged to comply with WorkSafe Victoria regulations and regulations must be followed regarding persons working 2 metres or more above the ground. For activities that take place in a performance space, all people who access the space during the activity must be made aware of relevant safety and evacuation procedures.

The Victorian WorkCover Authority [website](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/) regularly updates relevant occupational health and safety regulations. Relevant information is also provided on the Department of Education [website](http://www.education.vic.gov.au).

Students learn about inclusive theatre-making and establishing inclusive performance spaces for a range of abilities and needs, and for a range of audience members. They consider accessibility, including participation in production roles, and possibilities in relation to venue access, relaxed performances and visual and aural adjustments. Further information can be found at [Creative Australia – accessibility](https://creative.gov.au/about-us/accessibility), [Arts Access Victoria](https://www.artsaccess.com.au/) and [Arts Access Australia](https://artsaccessaustralia.org/resources/).

Students also learn about, engage with and, where possible, apply environmentally sustainable work practices in the theatre. This includes energy efficiency, sustainable materials, ethical sourcing of materials, and ways to actively reduce the carbon footprint of theatre production (see [Sustainable Theatres Australia – Green Guides).](https://sustainabletheatresaustralia.org/greenguides)

Employability skills

This study offers a number of opportunities for students to develop employability skills. The [Support materials](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/theatrestudies/Pages/Index.aspx) provide specific examples of how students can develop employability skills during learning activities and assessment tasks.

Legislative compliance

When collecting and using information, the provisions of privacy and copyright legislation, such as the Victorian *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and *Health Records Act 2001* and the federal *Privacy Act 1988* and *Copyright Act 1968*, must be met.

Child Safe Standards

Schools and education and training providers are required to comply with the Child Safe Standards made under the Victorian *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*. Registered schools are required to comply with *Ministerial Order No. 1359 Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises*. For further information, consult the websites of the [Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority](https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/Home.aspx), the [Commission for Children and Young People](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/) and the [Department of Education](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-safe-standards/policy).

Assessment and reporting

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on the teacher’s decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Demonstration of achievement of outcomes and satisfactory completion of a unit are determined by evidence gained through the assessment of a range of learning activities and tasks.

Teachers must develop courses that provide appropriate opportunities for students to demonstrate satisfactory achievement of outcomes.

The decision about satisfactory completion of a unit is distinct from the assessment of levels of achievement. Schools will report a student’s result for each unit to the VCAA as S (satisfactory) or N (not satisfactory).

Levels of achievement

Units 1 and 2

Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision. Assessment of levels of achievement for these units will not be reported to the VCAA. Schools may choose to report levels of achievement using grades, descriptive statements or other indicators.

Units 3 and 4

The VCAA specifies the assessment procedures for students undertaking scored assessment in Units 3 and 4. Designated assessment tasks are provided in the details for each unit in VCE study designs.

The student’s level of achievement in Units 3 and 4 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework (SAC) as specified in the VCE study design, and external assessment.

The VCAA will report the student’s level of achievement on each assessment component as a grade from A+ to E or UG (ungraded). To receive a study score, the student must achieve 2 or more graded assessments in the study and receive an S for both Units 3 and 4. The study score is reported on a scale of 0–50; it is a measure of how well the student performed in relation to all others who completed the study. Teachers should refer to the current [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx) for details on graded assessment and calculation of the study score.

Percentage contributions to the study score in VCE Theatre Studies are as follows:

* Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework: 45 per cent
* End-of-year monologue examination: 25 per cent
* End-of-year written examination: 30 per cent.

Details of the assessment program are described in the sections on Units 3 and 4 in this study design.

Authentication

Work related to the outcomes of each unit will be accepted only if the teacher can attest that, to the best of their knowledge, all unacknowledged work is the student’s own. Teachers need to refer to the current [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx) for authentication rules and strategies.

Terms used in this study

For the purposes of this study design and associated assessments, the following terms will apply.

Script

The term script refers to a text used for a theatre performance. A script may be an entire play or excerpts from plays. A script may also be an adaptation of a screenplay from a film or a novel, or a libretto/score from a musical.

Dramaturgy

Dramaturgy refers to exploration and research into a play to inform an interpretation of it. This may include examining the structure, language, theatrical style(s), conventions and devices of the play; the contexts of the play including historical, political, social and cultural; its intended meanings; the background of the playwright; and previous productions of the play. Dramaturgy is part of the production process and may be applied at any stage and in any production role; it is not a separate stage of the production process.

The dramaturgical process assists the production team to interpret the script through research, questioning, discussion and feedback, and then apply directorial and design concepts, inquire into and analyse the text for key moments, character arcs, timelines, plot turning points, the playwright’s intentions (particularly in new works), and theatrical possibilities, and consider the most effective way to present their interpretation of the script to an audience.

Production roles

Production role is the term used to describe an area of work in theatre production. There are key production roles identified in this study design and there are additional roles students may wish to explore within their study such as stage management, production management, publicity and marketing, technical operation, voice coach, intimacy coach, fight choreographer, dance choreographer, etc. The production roles that are to be given focus and to be assessed in this study are:

* actor
* director
* designer: costume
* designer: hair and make-up
* designer: props
* designer: set
* designer: lighting
* designer: sound.

Theatre production processes

The theatre production process in this study is described as having the following 3 distinct but interrelated stages.

Planning

Planning is the stage of the production process where there is an initial exploration of script. Initial theatrical possibilities are established through reading, annotating, the undertaking of dramaturgy, and evaluation of the process. From this process, initial concepts, aims and creative and theatrical possibilities are generated.

Development

Development is the stage of the production process where rehearsing, trialling, experimenting and refining of initial concepts, ideas and aims occur in order to determine achievability, viability, suitability and sustainable production processes for performance. This includes reflection and evaluation of this stage of the production process and may be informed by further dramaturgical work.

Presentation

Presentation is where the final stages of a creative concept and idea are realised for performance to a live audience. These concepts and ideas can be further refined through technical and dress rehearsals, during performance and through post-performance evaluation and feedback.

Contexts

Contexts refer to the circumstances surrounding a play and its interpretation for an audience. This may include the time and place in which the play is set and was written, influences on the playwright(s), the languages of the script, circumstances associated with the contents of the play (including historical, social, cultural and/or political), the possibilities for interpreting a script, and the intended audience.

Recontextualisation can take various forms, depending on the director's vision and artistic choices. It might involve setting a play in a different time period or culture, altering the social or political context, or incorporating modern elements into a traditional work. The purpose of recontextualisation is to provide a new perspective on a familiar story, challenge audience expectations or explore the relevance and universality of a particular work.

Theatre styles and conventions

Theatre styles are the traditions of theatre that are accepted by different cultures as conventional and are particular to specific times, places and peoples. By their very nature, theatre styles and their associated conventions are not static, constant or definitive, rather, they are indicative. For example, a theatre style might indicate a historical period or political movement. In contemporary theatre, it is understood that theatre styles are fluid and experimental and evolve in response to a range of contexts and purposes so that productions may be eclectic in nature.

Contemporary theatre movements

For the purposes of this study, contemporary theatre movements are defined as theatre from 1945 to the present day – theatre that pushes the boundaries of, and experiments with, traditional theatre and its conventions. Such movements can cut across theatre styles, art forms, genres and disciplines. Contemporary theatre movements are influenced by cultural structures, which may be religious, ideological, political and/or social.

More broadly, contemporary theatre may include social or political movements, for example feminism, human rights, climate justice, anti-racism, queer theatre and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theatre. A theatre movement may focus on particular forms such as cine-theatre, physical, verbatim or documentary theatre, or plays written by particular playwrights during what could be regarded as a contemporary movement. This may be time-bound (within a specified period of years, such as a decade), it may be a movement that emerges across a longer period of time, or a movement that emerges in response to a particular point in time, such as the climate emergency or the #MeToo movement. A movement may also constitute a series of works by specific directors or theatre-makers who experiment with form, themes or ideas. Scripts remain central to study when selecting a theatre movement.

Elements of theatre composition

The elements of theatre composition may be applied when exploring the interpretation of script throughout the stages of the production process. They can be applied individually or in combination, and in any theatre style. These elements can be used to generate, develop and refine ideas and concepts. They can be applied to realise the aims and intentions of those of the creative production team.

The elements of theatre composition in a performance may be applied to deliberately affect an audience, encourage or lead the audience towards the meaning or interpretation desired by the creative team, and to assist in establishing, manipulating and/or maintaining an actor–audience relationship.

Members of the creative team may incorporate elements of theatre composition into their practice to give form and structure to their interpretation of the script. They may collaboratively apply specific elements of theatre composition across production roles to generate and emphasise a unified concept or idea. Additionally, production roles might choose to focus on one or more elements of theatre composition, individually, to create and express a certain idea to their audience.

For the purposes of this study, the elements of theatre composition are:

* cohesion – the overall unity and balance of an interpretation or of moments within an interpretation
* motion – the movement, implied movement and/or stillness of actors and/or design features that occur in the space (this may include position, pattern, arrangement, proportion and flow)
* rhythm – the pace, timing and tempo within certain moments or across the interpretation
* emphasis – aspects of the interpretation are given a particular focus, importance or prominence
* contrast – juxtaposition (2 things being seen or placed close together with contrasting effect) of different or opposing aspects or qualities within certain moments in the interpretation
* variation – changes to the dynamics of the interpretation, as may be evident in the use and manipulation of tension, conflict, intensity, energy and space (variation may be gradual and may occur in certain moments or across an interpretation).

Theatre technologies

This term refers to any form or technology (mechanical, electrical, digital) applied in the theatrical process, be it planning, development or production. Technological enhancement has been central to theatrical innovation over time, and development of technology continues to enhance all facets of theatrical production to shape the appearance, sound, operation and audience experience of a performance. Theatre technologies can include networked, online, extended reality, immersive, mobile and situated tools, devices and environments that enable certain forms of theatrical expression and experience.

Students explore past, present and emerging theatre technologies and their applications. They develop an understanding of, and language for, how technologies such as sound, light, set, image, artificial intelligence (AI) and hybrid forms can be used across production roles and production processes when interpreting scripts. Students also consider the technologies they engage with and apply as part of a production team across production processes including, where possible, environmentally sustainable practices in the use of technologies. They consider how the technologies they use and incorporate may differ from the technologies they experience as an audience member seeing a production. They analyse and evaluate the use of theatre technologies in the productions they see.

Audience and audience culture

Theatre as an art form is constructed and created for an audience of one or more spectators. In this study, students are both artists and audiences. As artists, they learn about the importance of audience, audience and performance spaces, audience and intended meaning, and the effect of their work on an audience. As audiences, they attend professional theatre for the purposes of analysis and evaluation.

Audience culture refers to the attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviours of a particular group of people who engage with theatre performances. In this study, audience culture pertains to an intended audience and may be directly related to or informed by the historical, political, social and cultural contexts in which a script was written. Audience culture is also related to theatre styles, conventions and movements. Historical plays written for audiences of their time can offer new insights or meanings when performed to contemporary audiences. Contemporary theatre practices offer new insights into the role of an audience, for example a contemporary performance of a Shakespearean play or an immersive performance.

Character(s) and acting skills

Character(s) refers to the roles played by actors in a production to an audience. Characters are inherent in scripts from early forms of theatre to contemporary theatre forms. Students study character(s) in productions, examining their function and purpose, objective(s), motivation(s), status and traits or qualities.

Acting skills are skills used by actors to portray character(s) in the interpretation of a script. Acting skills include the use of facial expression, voice, gesture, movement, stillness and silence, focus, and verbal and non-verbal language to convey the intended meanings of characters in a script. Acting skills also assist to establish, maintain and/or manipulate the actor–audience relationship. Acting skills may be enhanced by other production roles.

Unit 1: History of theatre styles and conventions pre-1945

This unit focuses on the application of acting, direction and design in relation to theatre styles and their conventions pre-1945, that is, from the era up to and including 1944. Students work in production roles with scripts from specific periods that fall between the beginning of theatre history until the end of 1944 focusing on at least 2 theatre styles, their conventions and histories. They study innovations in theatre production through the styles they explore and apply this knowledge to their interpretations of works.

Students develop knowledge and skills about theatre production processes, including dramaturgy, planning, development, and performance to an audience, and they apply this knowledge and skill to their own work. They study safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in theatre production.

Theatre up to and including 1944 encompasses scripts from a wide range of styles including, but not limited to, Agitprop, Ancient Greek, Ancient Roman, Beijing Opera, Bunraku, Commedia Dell ’Arte, Epic Theatre (early works), Elizabethan, Expressionism, Kabuki, Liturgical, Medieval, Miracle plays, Musical theatre, Naturalism, Neoclassical, Noh, Melodrama, Realism, Surrealism, Theatre of Cruelty and Wayang Kulit Theatre.

Students begin to develop skills of performance analysis and apply these to the analysis of a play in performance.

Area of Study 1

Exploring theatre styles and conventions pre-1945

In this area of study, students explore theatre styles and their conventions pre-1945. They study 2 or more distinct theatre styles pre-1945 and the conventions and scripts associated with each selected style. Students study developments and innovations in theatre production as they learn about contexts, production roles and performance possibilities for each of the selected theatre styles. Through practical workshops, research and dramaturgy, students gain knowledge of how these styles shaped and contributed to the world of theatre pre-1945.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to identify and describe distinguishing features of 2 or more theatre styles from pre-1945 and scripts associated with the selected styles.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

* conventions of 2 or more theatre styles pre-1945
* scripts from selected pre-1945 theatre styles
* historical contexts of the styles studied including social, political and cultural
* working practices in production roles to interpret scripts written pre-1945
* knowledge about the application of conventions of theatre styles, dramaturgy, acting skills, directorial skills and design skills to shape interpretations of scripts selected, studied and explored
* knowledge of theatre technologies and elements of theatre composition
* knowledge of safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in theatre production.

Key skills

* apply production roles (actor, director, designer) to scripts
* apply elements of theatre composition to realise theatrical possibilities within a script
* apply dramaturgical processes to interpret scripts
* convey the historical contexts of selected scripts including social, political and cultural
* apply appropriate conventions to present interpretations of selected scripts
* employ at least 2 production roles to interpret scripts
* apply theatre technologies and elements of theatre composition to enhance interpretation of a script for performance
* apply safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in theatre production.

Area of Study 2

Interpreting scripts

In this area of study, students focus on the presentation of theatre scripts pre-1945. They work in at least 2 production roles to interpret scripts from 2 or more distinct pre-1945 theatre styles. Students study and apply relevant conventions of the styles and consider how work in production roles is informed by different theatre styles, their conventions and historical contexts. They learn about processes for developing characters through acting skills appropriate to the style. They consider audience culture and the influence of an audience on their work in production roles to enhance the interpretation of scripts.

Throughout the production process, students will have opportunities to develop oral skills by participating in discussions and explaining how their work in production roles contributes to realising the production aims. They continue to study and apply elements of theatre composition and safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in theatre production.

Production roles

For Area of Study 2, students must work effectively in at least 2 production roles. The production roles for Area of Study 2 are:

* actor
* director
* designer – any one or more of costume, hair and make-up, props, set, lighting, sound.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to work effectively in production roles to interpret scripts from 2 or more pre-1945 theatre styles.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

* 2 or more pre-1945 theatre styles and their associated scripts and conventions
* approaches to interpreting scripts in 2 or more theatre styles from pre-1945
* the use of dramaturgy in theatre production
* the historical contexts of selected scripts such as social, political and cultural
* the possibilities and purposes of recontextualisation in theatre when interpreting for a contemporary audience
* ways of using elements of theatre composition to develop and realise theatrical possibilities within a script
* approaches to applying the production roles of actor, director and/or designer to interpret theatre scripts
* the role of audiences and audience culture in interpreting scripts
* elements of theatre composition
* safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in theatre production
* theatre terminology.

Key skills

* interpret scripts
* apply dramaturgical processes to interpret scripts
* convey the contexts or any recontextualisations of selected scripts
* apply conventions relevant to theatre styles of selected scripts
* employ at least 2 production roles to interpret scripts
* apply theatre technologies and elements of theatre composition to enhance interpretation of a script in performance
* demonstrate understandings of the role of audiences and audience culture
* apply elements of theatre composition to realise possibilities within a script
* apply safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in theatre production
* apply theatre terminology.

Area of Study 3

Analysing a theatre production in performance

In this area of study, students focus on analysing a professional performance of a script. They attend a production of a play in performance and study the nature of performance analysis, including analysing audience culture, acting skills, directorial skills, design skills and the ways in which the historical contexts and conventions of theatre styles identified or implied in a script are interpreted in performance. Students study the use of theatre technologies and the elements of theatre composition in a professional theatre performance. Where possible, students should attend and analyse a pre-1945 play in performance.

Outcome 3

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to analyse a live professional performance.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 3.

Key knowledge

* approaches to performance analysis
* how theatrical interpretations are informed by the historical contexts of the script including political, social and cultural
* the ways in which historical contexts may be recontextualised for a contemporary audience
* approaches to using theatre styles and their associated conventions to shape a performance
* acting, direction and design techniques applied to a play in performance
* the ways in which an audience constructs meaning from a theatre performance
* the establishment, maintenance and/or manipulation of actor–audience relationships
* theatre technologies evident in a theatre performance
* elements of theatre composition evident in a theatre performance
* theatre terminology.

Key skills

Analyse the performance of a theatre production focusing on:

* ways in which meaning is constructed by an audience
* ways in which the performance is informed by the historical contexts of a script
* ways in which a script and its contexts inform any recontextualisation for a contemporary audience
* how theatre styles and their associated conventions are applied in a performance
* the use of production roles in a performance
* the use of technologies in a performance
* the use of elements of theatre composition evident in a performance
* understanding of the role of the audience and actor–audience relationships
* application of relevant theatre terminology.

Assessment

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks that provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study, including the key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes, should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks. Assessment must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and should be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

All assessments at Units 1 and 2 are school-based. Procedures for assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision.

For this unit, students are required to demonstrate 3 outcomes. As a set, these outcomes encompass the areas of study in the unit.

Suitable tasks for assessment in this unit may be selected from the following:

* interpretation of scripts from pre-1945 through the application of acting, direction and/or design (costume, hair and make-up, props, set, lighting, sound)
* oral, visual, multimedia reports and/or presentations
* structured questions
* a research report.

At least one assessment task must be practice-based, at least one task must be written, and at least one task must include an oral component.  
Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks, they must ensure the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand.

Unit 2: Contemporary theatre styles and movements

In this unit, students study contemporary theatre practice through the exploration of scripts from 1945 to the present day. They select scripts from either 2 distinct theatre styles OR a theatre movement between 1945 and the present day. In either option, students should study at least one Australian play.

Contemporary theatre movements can be defined as performance styles from 1945 onwards that push the boundaries of traditional theatre styles and conventions. They often consist of a range of conventions and features and can cut across art forms, genres and disciplines.

This unit focuses on the application of acting, direction and design in relation to contemporary theatre practice from 1945 to the present day. Students work in production roles to interpret scripts. They study developments and innovations in theatre and apply this knowledge to their own work.

Students develop knowledge of, and skills relating to, theatre production processes that include dramaturgy, planning, development and presentation to an audience, and they apply these to their own work. They study safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable working practices (where possible, using environmentally sustainable approaches) in theatre production. They develop skills in theatre production analysis and evaluation, which they apply to their own work and to the work of other practitioners.

Examples of theatre styles post-1945 include Kitchen Sink Drama, Immersive theatre, Verbatim theatre, Theatre of the Absurd, Australian realism, Musical theatre, Butoh, Forum theatre.

Examples of theatre movements post-1945 include Theatre-in-education, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theatre, Feminist theatre, Post-Colonial theatre, Queer theatre, Black Rights theatre, Theatre for Climate Justice, Physical theatre, Cross-cultural theatre, Post-Dramatic theatre, Memory plays.

Note: Some theatre movements may be linked to a particular practitioner or company. Some theatre styles or movements may have been established prior to 1945 and may still have a significant presence post-1945.

Area of Study 1

Exploring contemporary theatre styles and/or movements

In this area of study, students select and explore scripts from contemporary theatre styles and/or movements from 1945 to the present day. They study 2 or more distinct theatre styles OR 2 or more playwrights within one contemporary theatre movement. In examining distinct theatre styles, students consider dramaturgy and research to explore scripts associated with the selected styles. Similarly, in exploring playwrights and scripts from a contemporary theatre movement, students consider the style(s) and conventions implied in the selected scripts from that movement. Dramaturgy may include the social political contexts, cultural origins, intentions, comparisons in structure and languages, production roles and performance possibilities for each of the selected scripts from either the distinct styles OR the selected theatre movement. Students learn about audiences and audience culture. Through practical workshops and experimentation, students gain knowledge of how these styles and/or movement(s) shape and contribute to the world of contemporary theatre.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to identify and describe the distinguishing features of distinct theatre styles and/or the characteristics of a theatre movement(s) through scripts written from 1945 to the present day.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

* conventions of selected contemporary theatre style(s) from 1945 to the present day
* characteristics and features of selected contemporary theatre movements from 1945 to the present day
* approaches to dramaturgy such as contexts and intended meaning of selected scripts
* elements of theatre composition
* approaches to interpretation of these scripts through acting, direction, design
* innovations established in theatre production, such as theatre technologies through contemporary styles and/or movements
* audiences and audience culture
* relevant theatre terminology.

Key skills

* describe the factors that influence or have influenced the development of selected contemporary theatre styles and/or a contemporary theatre movement
* describe how the contexts of scripts from selected contemporary theatre styles and/or a theatre movement can influence a production
* outline conventions of specific contemporary theatre styles
* outline the characteristics of specific contemporary theatre movements
* identify and describe production processes that are characteristic of contemporary theatre styles and/or movements
* apply elements of theatre composition
* conduct dramaturgical research
* research and discuss production roles and their application in the styles and/or movement
* research and discuss the impact of theatre productions on audiences in contemporary theatre
* identify and describe innovations established in theatre production in contemporary theatre
* outline the role of audiences
* apply relevant theatre terminology.

Area of Study 2

Interpreting scripts

In this area of study, students work in at least 2 of the production roles of actor, director and/or designer to realise scripts from at least 2 distinct contemporary theatre styles or one contemporary theatre movement from 1945 to the present day. Through this work, students gain an understanding of how production teams can work collaboratively to interpret scripts. They also learn how work in production roles is informed by, and contributes to, the development of different theatre styles and/or a theatre movement. They consider ways in which theatre production work is itself shaped by the styles and contexts inherent in scripts and theatre movements.

Students continue to learn about theatre production processes, including dramaturgy, planning, development, performance to audiences, and audience culture, and they apply this knowledge to their own work. Throughout the production processes, students will have opportunities to develop oral skills by participating in discussions and explaining how their work in production roles contributes to realising the production aims. They study and apply elements of theatre composition and safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in theatre production.

Production roles

For Area of Study 2, students are required to work in at least 2 production roles. Production roles for Area of Study 2 are:

actor

director

designer – any one or more of costume, hair and make-up, props, set, lighting, sound.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to work in production roles to interpret scripts from theatre styles or movements from 1945 to the present day.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

* conventions of contemporary theatre styles from 1945 to the present day
* characteristics of contemporary theatre movements from 1945 to the present day
* elements of theatre composition
* approaches to interpreting selected scripts, such as use of elements of theatre composition to explore and investigate possibilities in a script
* audiences and audience culture
* contexts of scripts from contemporary theatre styles and/or movements
* the collaborative nature of theatre production
* dramaturgy, production processes and practices for realising a theatre production for performance to an audience
* ways of documenting ideas that inform interpretations of selected scripts
* approaches to applying the production roles of actor, director and/or designer in contemporary theatre from 1945 to the present day
* theatre technologies used in contemporary theatre production
* safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in contemporary theatre.

Key skills

* develop interpretations of scripts from contemporary theatre styles or a movement from 1945 to the present day
* apply theatre styles when presenting scripts from 1945 to the present day
* apply dramaturgy and theatre production processes for performance to an audience
* employ 2 or more production roles to interpret scripts
* apply elements of theatre composition
* work collaboratively to develop an interpretation
* identify intended audience(s)
* document ideas that have contributed to the planning and development of the interpretation
* apply safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in theatre.

Area of Study 3

Analysing and evaluating a theatre production

In this area of study, students attend a performance and focus on analysing and evaluating a professional theatre production of a script. They study the nature of theatre production analysis and evaluation, including the application of acting, direction and design and their effect on an audience. Students study the use of theatre technologies and elements of theatre composition in professional theatre performance, and they study the relationship between contexts of the script and the use of production roles. Where possible, for this area of study students should attend and analyse a play in performance from the period of 1945 to the present day.

Outcome 3

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to analyse and evaluate a theatre production.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 3.

Key knowledge

* analysing and evaluating a theatre production
* how the application of acting, direction and design enables an audience to construct meaning from a performance
* ways in which contexts and/or recontextualisation possibilities are interpreted through selected production roles
* audiences and audience culture
* how theatre styles and their associated conventions have been applied to construct intended meaning for an audience
* how elements of theatre composition are evident in a theatre production
* approaches to using technologies in theatre production
* theatre terminology.

Key skills

* analyse and evaluate a theatre production
* analyse ways in which acting, direction and design are used to interpret the selected theatre styles evident in a production
* analyse connections between contexts of the script and the use of acting, direction and design
* evaluate the ways in which acting, direction and design enable an audience to construct meaning
* evaluate how any recontextualisation(s) enable an audience to construct meaning
* analyse the use of elements of theatre composition evident in theatre production
* analyse the use of technologies in theatre production
* apply relevant theatre terminology.

Assessment

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks that provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study, including the key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes, should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks. Assessment must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and should be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

All assessments at Units 1 and 2 are school-based. Procedures for assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision.

For this unit, students are required to demonstrate 3 outcomes. As a set, these outcomes encompass the areas of study in the unit.

Suitable tasks for assessment in this unit may be selected from the following:

* interpretation of scripts from contemporary theatre styles or movements from 1945 to the present day through the application of acting, direction and/or design (costume, hair and make-up, props, set, lighting, sound)
* oral, visual, multimedia reports and/or presentations
* structured questions
* a research report
* an analytical essay.

At least one assessment task must be practice-based, at least one task must be written, and at least one task must include an oral component.

Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks, they must ensure that the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand.

Unit 3: Producing theatre

In this unit, students develop an interpretation of a script through the 3 stages of the theatre production process: planning, development and presentation. Students specialise in 2 production roles, working collaboratively to interpret and realise the production of a script. They apply the knowledge developed during this process to analyse and evaluate how production roles can be used to interpret script excerpts previously unstudied. Students develop knowledge of elements of theatre composition and safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in the theatre.

Students attend a performance selected from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist and analyse and evaluate the interpretation of the script of the performance. The playlist is published annually on the VCAA website.

Production roles

For Area of Study 1, students select 2 production roles from the following list:

* actor
* director
* designer – any one or 2 of costume, hair and make-up, props, set, lighting, sound.

Production team

For Area of Study 1, more than one student may specialise in each production role and schools may decide to focus only on specific production roles. These decisions will be influenced by the script selected for interpretation and/or the size of the class and/or the available resources.

Scripts

Across Unit 3, students engage with at least 3 scripts. For Area of Study 1, schools select a script for interpretation in a performance to an audience and for Area of Study 2, excerpts from a previously unstudied script are selected for analysis. For Area of Study 3, students must read and study the script for the production they attend and then analyse and evaluate the performance.

The production for Area of Study 3 must be selected from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist published annually by the VCAA.

Area of Study 1

Staging theatre

In this area of study, students focus on developing skills that can be applied to the interpretation of a script for performance to an audience. They work collaboratively to contribute to the development of a production of a selected script. As members of the production team, students undertake exercises and tasks throughout the 3 stages of the production process, leading to a performance of the selected script to an audience.

Students apply dramaturgy and consider how the script’s context, styles and intended meaning can be used to inform their interpretation and any possible recontextualisations of a script for an audience, and they consider audience culture. Students experiment and apply elements of theatre composition in order to manipulate meaning for an audience.

Students develop an understanding of, and enhance their skills in, working in 2 production roles across all stages of the production process. They apply dramaturgy in the work they undertake in the 2 production roles. They develop skills that contribute to theatre production processes, including working collaboratively, time management, planning, scheduling, evaluating and reflecting.

Throughout the production process, students develop their oral skills through discussions with others in the production team or through explaining how their work in production roles contributes to realising the production aims. They further develop knowledge of and apply safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices in theatre production.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to interpret a script across the stages of the production process through collaborative work undertaken in 2 production roles.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

* the nature and purpose of the 3 stages of the production process in the development of the interpretation of a script
* approaches to working collaboratively in a production team
* analysing and annotating a script for performance
* the contexts, theatrical styles and intended meaning of a script and how they inform an interpretation for performance and any recontextualisation possibilities
* contributions that can be made by individuals as part of a production team to interpret a script across the 3 stages of the production process
* ways in which theatre production is informed by dramaturgical techniques that can be used as part of a production process, culminating in the performance of a script to an audience
* audiences and audience culture
* approaches to applying elements of theatre composition to manipulate possibilities in a script
* techniques and processes regarding safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices associated with theatre production
* strategies for documenting, analysing and evaluating contributions to the 3 stages of the production process
* the role of theatre technologies in contributing to the interpretation of a script across the 3 stages of the production process
* elements of theatre composition
* theatre terminology.

Key skills

* identify and describe aspects of the 3 stages of the production process
* analyse a script for production performance
* contribute effectively to the development of an interpretation of a script for performance to an audience
* contribute effectively to 2 production roles in collaboration with others in the production team across the 3 stages of the production process
* apply dramaturgical processes to work in 2 production roles
* apply theatre technologies to enhance realisation of production aims
* apply elements of theatre composition across the production process
* demonstrate techniques and processes regarding safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices associated with theatre production
* document, analyse and evaluate ongoing contributions towards the realisation of production aims across the 3 stages of the production process
* identify intended audience(s)
* apply relevant use of theatre terminology in written and oral documentation and discussion.

Area of Study 2

Interpreting a script

In this area of study, students interpret the theatrical possibilities of excerpts from a script. In doing so, they demonstrate their understanding of working in 2 production roles across the 3 stages of the production process. Students respond to and interpret script excerpts and stimulus material, formulating and justifying interpretative possibilities, including recontextualisation, and they document their interpretation. The documentation should include written material, annotated script excerpts and illustrations, as appropriate, to support interpretive choices.

Students revisit their learning about the stages of the production process, their learning about dramaturgy, and ways in which their work in production roles can contribute to interpretations of scripts for performance to audiences. They develop their understanding of audiences and audience culture.

They further develop their understanding of safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) theatre work practices.

The script excerpts used for teaching and learning and assessment in this area of study must be different to scripts studied for Areas of Study 1 and 3.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to outline concepts and ideas for an interpretation of excerpts from a script and explain how these could be realised in a theatre production.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

* theatre production possibilities of selected scripts
* the languages of scripts including nature, purpose and effect
* the context, theatrical style(s) and intended meaning of a script and how these can inform an interpretation
* ways in which meaning can be constructed in theatre performance through work in production roles
* working practices in production roles in one or more of the 3 stages of the production process
* how elements of theatre composition can be manipulated to create deliberate effects on audiences
* audiences and audience culture
* dramaturgy and how it can inform work in production roles
* theatre technologies and how they can enhance theatre production
* theatre terminology to explain and justify concepts and ideas that could be realised in a theatre production
* safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) work practices.

Key skills

* identify and describe ways in which work in production roles could be used to interpret scripts
* formulate and justify interpretations that could be realised through work in production roles
* annotate a script for interpretation
* identify and explain how work in production roles in one or more of the 3 stages of the production process could be used to realise ideas or concepts for a theatre production
* describe how dramaturgy and theatre technologies could be applied to realise ideas and concepts in the interpretation of a script
* describe how the elements of theatre composition could be manipulated to affect an audience
* apply relevant theatre terminology in writing and in discussion
* describe how the application of safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) practices could be applied to a production.

Area of Study 3

Analysing and evaluating theatre

In this area of study, students attend, analyse and evaluate an interpretation of a script in a production from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist. Students analyse and evaluate the relationship between the written script and its interpretation on stage. In doing so, students study ways in which the interpretation on stage draws on and interprets the contexts in the script as well as any recontextualisation choices. This includes the decisions that have been made when interpreting the script, for example decisions about acting, direction and design, and the use of theatre technologies and elements of theatre composition.

Students evaluate the ways in which theatre practitioners (such as the director, actors, designers) and dramaturgical processes have contributed to the interpretation on stage. Students study how the theatre styles and contexts implied in the written script are interpreted when the play is performed to an audience. Students attend the theatre production and develop skills in applying relevant theatre terminology to analyse and evaluate how the script has been interpreted. Their analysis and evaluation of the production is informed by work undertaken in Areas of Study 1 and 2.

Outcome 3

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to analyse and evaluate the interpretation of a written script from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist in production to an audience.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 3.

Key knowledge

* approaches to analysis and evaluation of a theatre production
* the contexts of the written script and how they have been interpreted in the production and any recontextualisation choices
* theatre styles in the written script and those used in the play in performance
* production roles and their application in developing the written script for performance
* evidence of the interpretations of the written script made by the creative team
* the nature of audiences and audience culture
* theatre technologies and their application in the production
* elements of theatre composition and their application in the production
* terminology to describe, analyse and evaluate a theatre production.

Key skills

* analyse and evaluate ways in which the contexts of a written script were interpreted in a performance of a production to an audience
* analyse the interpretation of audiences and audience culture in a production
* analyse and evaluate the intended meaning of a written script with the meanings conveyed in the performance of the production
* analyse and evaluate the application of production roles to develop the written script in production
* analyse and evaluate the application of theatre technologies in the production
* analyse and evaluate the application of elements of theatre composition in the production
* apply relevant theatre terminology.

School-based assessment

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study and key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks.

Assessment of levels of achievement

School-assessed Coursework

The student’s level of achievement in Unit 3 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework. School-assessed Coursework tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Where teachers provide a range of options for the same School-assessed Coursework task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand.

The types and range of forms of School-assessed Coursework for the outcomes are prescribed within the study design. The VCAA publishes [Support materials](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/theatrestudies/Pages/Index.aspx) for this study, which include advice on the design of assessment tasks and the assessment of student work for a level of achievement.

Teachers will provide to the VCAA a numerical score representing an assessment of the student’s level of achievement. The score must be based on the teacher’s assessment of the performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed Coursework for Unit 3 will contribute 30 per cent to the study score.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcomes** | **Marks allocated** | **Assessment tasks** |
| **Outcome 1**  Interpret a script across the stages of the production process through collaborative work undertaken in 2 production roles. | **45**  **15** | Task 1  Ongoing developmental contributions to the interpretation of a script across all 3 stages of the production process through collaborative work in 2 production roles.  Task 2  Analysis and evaluation, supported by relevant documentation of ongoing contribution to all 3 stages of the production process in 2 or more of the following formats:   * oral * written * visual * multimedia. |
| **Outcome 2**  Outline concepts and ideas for an interpretation of excerpts from a script and explain how these could be realised in a theatre production. | **15** | Documentation that outlines the concepts and ideas for interpretation in excerpts from a script and provides an explanation of how these could be realised in a theatre production in any one or a combination of the following formats:   * an essay * a written report * responses to structured questions. |
| **Outcome 3**  Analyse and evaluate the interpretation of a written script from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist in production to an audience. | **25** | An analysis and evaluation of an interpretation of a written script in production from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist to an audience in any one or a combination of the following formats:   * an analytical essay * responses to structured questions. |
| **Total marks** | **100** |  |

External assessment

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year monologue examination (see [page 36](#Monologue)), which will contribute 25 per cent to the study score, and an end-of-year written examination (see [page 36](#Written)), which will contribute 30 per cent to the study score.

Unit 4: Presenting an interpretation

In this unit, students study a scene and an associated monologue from a script. They initially develop an interpretation of the prescribed scene. This work includes exploring theatrical possibilities and using dramaturgy across the 3 stages of the production process. Students then develop an interpretation of the monologue that is embedded in the specified scene. To realise their interpretation, students work in production roles as an actor and director, or as a designer.

Students’ work for Areas of Study 1 and 2 is supported through the analysis and evaluation of a production they attend for their work in Area of Study 3. The production must be selected from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist and must be different from the production they analyse in Unit 3. The playlist is published annually on the VCAA website. Students analyse and evaluate acting, direction and design in the selected production and consider the application of theatre technologies.

In conducting their work in Areas of Study 1 and 2, students further develop their knowledge and application of inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) theatre practices.

Monologue selection

For Areas of Study 1 and 2, students must select a script, scene and monologue from the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination published annually by the VCAA. The list will consist of a set of prescribed scripts, a specified scene from each script and a selected monologue from that scene.

Scene

In this unit, the term ‘scene’ refers to the designated segment(s) or excerpt(s) of a script selected from the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination. Some prescribed monologues may be drawn from more than one scene across the script.

**Production roles**

In Unit 4 Areas of Study 1 and 2, the production roles are:

* actor and director – students must work in both roles

OR

* designer – any 2 of costume, hair and make-up, props, set, lighting, sound.

Area of Study 1

Dramaturgical research and presenting theatrical possibilities

In this area of study, students document and report on dramaturgical decisions that could inform an interpretation of a monologue and its prescribed scene.

Students conduct dramaturgy as the basis for decisions that will inform their interpretation. This includes research into the contexts of the script, influences on the playwright(s), the world of the audience, and possible recontextualisations.

Students then outline an interpretation of the scene, focusing on the ways in which the scene could be approached as a piece of theatre, including its place within the script, its specific structure, its characters, its themes, its images and ideas, its theatrical possibilities and its theatre style(s).

Students consider how elements of theatre composition and theatre technologies could be applied to realise their proposed interpretative concepts and aims. They identify issues relating to safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) theatre practices that they will need to apply in their work to realise their proposed interpretation.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to describe and justify an interpretation of a monologue and its prescribed scene within the world of the play.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

* dramaturgy and how it informs the interpretation of a script
* contexts of the period in which the script is set and possible recontextualisations
* influences on the playwright(s) including historical, cultural, social and political
* audiences and audience culture
* the place of a scene(s) within the complete script for the play
* the structure, plot and character(s) in the script
* ways in which themes, images and ideas can be conveyed within a scene
* ways in which meaning and intention can be communicated in the interpretation of a script
* ways in which conventions of theatre styles and theatre technologies can be applied
* ways in which production roles inform an interpretation of a monologue
* elements of theatre composition
* theatrical possibilities in relation to interpreting the monologue
* interrelationships of production roles
* safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices
* relevant theatre terminology in relation to chosen production roles, including techniques and processes.

Key skills

* conduct dramaturgy into the contexts of the selected script to inform an interpretation of a monologue and its specified scene
* describe and demonstrate theatrical possibilities and possible interpretations of a monologue and its prescribed scene
* justify dramaturgical decisions that underpin the proposed interpretation, including how the interpretation will convey intended meanings of a monologue, its specified scene and the wider script
* describe work in selected production roles that will be required to realise the proposed interpretation
* describe the interrelationships of production roles
* describe and justify (both orally and in writing) proposed application of theatre styles, elements of theatre composition and theatre technologies to enhance the interpretation for performance to an audience
* demonstrate and describe how the interpretation is informed by an understanding of audience and audience culture
* outline safe, ethical, inclusive and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) working practices associated with theatre production that will be applied to realise the interpretation
* apply relevant theatre terminology, especially pertaining to the 2 chosen production roles.

Area of Study 2

Interpreting a monologue

In this area of study, students focus on the interpretation of a monologue from a scene contained within a script selected from the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination published annually in Term 2 on the VCAA website.

Students select a monologue from the current examination and study the text of the monologue, the prescribed scene in which it is embedded and the complete script from which the scene is derived. Students apply selected production roles and develop an interpretation of the monologue that is informed by their study of the prescribed scene and the complete script. Their interpretation is informed by dramaturgy they conduct, including the contexts of the play and its intended meanings. Students make decisions about how the contexts, theatrical possibilities, elements of theatre composition and theatre styles will inform their interpretation of the monologue. Students work in their selected production roles to realise and present their interpretation of the monologue. They consider the interrelationships between acting, direction and design areas. They consider safe, ethical and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) theatre practices.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to interpret and present a monologue through the application of 2 production roles and orally justify and explain their interpretative decisions.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

* the text of the monologue, the scene in which it is embedded and the complete script from which the scene is derived
* the contexts of the monologue, the scene and the script, including knowledge of the original contexts
* intended meanings of the monologue, the scene and the script
* conventions of theatre styles implied in the monologue, the scene and the script
* ways in which an interpretation is informed by dramaturgy
* the interconnections between the original contexts and the intended interpretation of the monologue, the scene and the script
* theatrical possibilities for interpretation of the script
* intended audience and audience culture
* the interrelationships of production roles
* ways of working in the selected production roles to interpret a monologue in performance, including applying elements of theatre composition
* safe, ethical and sustainable (where possible, environmentally sustainable) theatre practices
* ways to orally justify and explain interpretive decisions
* relevant theatre terminology.

Key skills

* conduct dramaturgy and apply discoveries to inform an interpretation of the monologue
* interpret the contexts of the monologue
* convey intended meanings of the monologue
* apply conventions of theatre style(s) to the monologue
* interpret the monologue by working in selected production roles
* describe and demonstrate theatrical possibilities
* describe possible interpretations of a monologue and its prescribed scene
* identify intended audiences and describe audience culture
* describe the interrelationships of production roles
* apply elements of theatre composition
* justify and explain interpretive decisions, both orally and in writing
* apply relevant theatre terminology.

Area of Study 3

Analysing and evaluating a performance

In this area of study, students focus on the analysis and evaluation of the acting, direction and design in a performance of a production selected from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist.

Students attend a production selected from the playlist. They study the theatrical style(s) evident in the performance and analyse and evaluate how actor(s), director(s) and designer(s) interpret the script for an audience. They consider the interrelationships between acting, direction and design in the performance. In doing so, students consider character(s) in the play, how the actor(s) interpreted them on stage and the contribution of the director(s) and designer(s) to the interpretation and intended meaning(s). They study acting skills used by the actor(s) to portray character(s) to convey the intended meanings of the play and the establishment, maintenance and/or manipulation of the actor–audience relationship.

Students’ understanding of the techniques being used by the actor(s), director(s) and designer(s) is informed by techniques they used to interpret the monologue they selected for Area of Study 1. They refine their understanding of the terminology associated with analysing and evaluating theatre performances.

Outcome 3

On completion of this unit, students should be able to analyse and evaluate acting, direction and design in a performance of a production from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist.

To achieve this outcome, students will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 3.

Key knowledge

* the character(s) in the production, including the function and purpose, objective(s), motivation(s), status and traits
* interpretation of a script in performance by actor(s), director(s) and designer(s)
* acting skills used by the actor(s) to realise character(s), including facial expression, voice, gesture, movement, stillness and silence
* acting and directorial decisions made in interpreting a script and application of acting and direction in the production
* design decisions made in interpreting a script and application of design areas in the production
* application of elements of theatre composition in the production
* focus and verbal and/or non-verbal language to convey character(s)
* the establishment, maintenance and/or manipulation of the actor–audience relationship
* audiences and audience culture
* the interrelationships between acting, direction, design and theatre style(s) applied in the production to convey the intended meanings of the script
* theatre terminology.

Key skills

* analyse the character(s) in the production including function and purpose, objective(s), motivation(s), status and traits
* analyse and evaluate the use of acting skills to convey the characters and intended meanings of the script
* analyse and evaluate the acting, directorial and design decisions
* analyse and evaluate the application of elements of theatre composition
* analyse and evaluate the use of design areas in the performance
* analyse and evaluate the establishment, maintenance and/or manipulation of the actor–audience relationship
* analyse and evaluate the interrelationships between acting, direction, design and theatre styles
* analyse audience culture in relation to the selected performance
* apply relevant theatre terminology.

School-based assessment

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study and key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks.

Assessment of levels of achievement

School-assessed Coursework

The student’s level of achievement in Unit 4 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework. School-assessed Coursework tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Where teachers provide a range of options for the same School-assessed Coursework task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand.

The types and range of forms of School-assessed Coursework for the outcomes are prescribed within the study design. The VCAA publishes [Support materials](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/theatrestudies/Pages/Index.aspx) for this study, which include advice on the design of assessment tasks and the assessment of student work for a level of achievement.

Teachers will provide to the VCAA a numerical score representing an assessment of the student’s level of achievement. The score must be based on the teacher’s assessment of the performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed Coursework for Unit 4 will contribute 15 per cent to the study score.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcomes** | **Marks allocated** | **Assessment tasks** |
| **Outcome 1**  Describe and justify an interpretation of a monologue and its prescribed scene within the world of the play. | **20**  **10** | Task 1  A written response that describes and justifies dramaturgical decisions for an interpretation of a monologue and its prescribed scene. The response may be any one or a combination of the following formats:   * an essay * a report * responses to structured questions.   AND  Task 2  An oral presentation about the possibilities, intentions and vision for an interpretation of a monologue and its prescribed scene. |
| **Outcome 3**  Analyse and evaluate acting, direction and design in a performance of a production from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist. | **20** | An analysis and evaluation of acting, direction and design and their interrelationships in a performance of a production from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Playlist. This may be in one or both of the following formats:   * an analytical essay * responses to structured questions. |
| **Total marks** | **50** |  |

External assessment

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by a monologue examination and an end-of-year written examination.

**Contribution to final assessment**

The monologue examination will contribute 25 per cent to the study score. The written examination will contribute 30 per cent to the study score.

End-of-year examinations

Monologue examination

Description

Students will interpret a monologue from a scene in a play and explain their interpretive decisions. The monologue will be selected from the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination set annually by the VCAA.

A panel appointed by the VCAA will set the examination. All key knowledge and key skills that underpin Unit 4 Outcomes 1 and 2 are examinable.

Assessors appointed by the VCAA will mark the examination.

Conditions

The examination will be completed under the following conditions:

* VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx) and in the [VCE monologue examination](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Theatre-Studies.aspx) specifications.
* The performance venue is set annually by the VCAA.
* The duration of the examination will be no more than 8 minutes.

Written examination

Description

A panel appointed by the VCAA will set the examination. All key knowledge and key skills that underpin Unit 3 Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 and Unit 4 Outcomes 1 and 3 are examinable.

Conditions

The examination will be completed under the following conditions:

* Duration: one-and-a-half hours.
* Date: at the end of the year, on a date to be published annually by the VCAA.
* VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx).
* The examination will be marked by assessors appointed by the VCAA.

Further advice

The VCAA publishes specifications for all VCE examinations on the VCAA website. Examination specifications include details about the sections of the examination, their weighting, the question format(s) and any other essential information. The specifications are published in the first year of implementation of the revised Unit 3 and 4 sequence together with any sample material.