



DRAMA

General course

Year 12 syllabus

Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

Important information

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2028.

Users of this syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

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Rationale

The Drama General course introduces students to the world of professional theatre. They not only have the opportunity to step into the lives of characters through originally devised work or published scripts, but also learn the skills of directing and selected elements of theatre design, such as costume, lighting, set and sound. As well as developing their artistic skills, students independently build their confidence, adaptability and teamwork through creative collaboration activities.

Students in the course build their understanding of drama language, which includes the fundamental building blocks for developing skills as an actor; contextual knowledge, to understand the background of a character or story; and the technical aspects of staging a production. The course commences with a focus on drama in rehearsal and performance where students study and collaboratively workshop rehearsal approaches in preparation for performance. The focus then transitions to the interpretation and performance of a drama. Students will study and apply a practitioner or a company approach to interpret drama for performance.

Students learn performance skills through exploring the elements of drama. They become confident in the application of creative theatre design choices to maximise the drama experience, both for creatives involved in the process and for the audience.

Students in the course study both Australian and world texts, enacting global stories that build their intercultural awareness. By reinterpreting and retelling stories, they gain a deeper understanding of and empathy for diverse human experiences. The course also develops students' interpersonal skills, including creative problem-solving, adaptability through collaborating and communicating in teams, and leadership.

The course equips students with a wide range of skills that open doors to opportunities such as tertiary education in performing arts, media, education and event management, and career pathways in theatre, film and television. Students also develop transferable skills that are valuable in a wide range of areas, such as teaching, corporate training, communications, marketing and customer-facing roles.

Aims

The Drama General course aims to develop students':

- ability to create, interpret and present ideas
- skills in techniques, processes, conventions and technologies
- ability to present drama for specific purposes, audience and spaces
- understanding of the role of drama in society
- ability to reflect on and evaluate drama
- transferable skills in creative problem-solving, collaboration, innovation, flexibility, social skills, self-regulation and leadership.

Organisation

This course is organised into a Year 11 syllabus and a Year 12 syllabus. The cognitive complexity of the syllabus content increases from Year 11 to Year 12.

Structure of the syllabus

The Year 12 syllabus is divided into two units that are delivered as a pair. The notional time for the pair of units is 110 class contact hours.

Unit 3

This unit focuses on drama in rehearsal and performance.

Unit 4

This unit focuses on the application of an approach to interpret and perform drama.

Each unit includes:

- a unit description – a short description of the focus of the unit
- unit content – the content to be taught and learned.

Organisation of content

The course content is divided into three content areas:

- drama language
 - elements of drama
 - drama processes
- contextual knowledge
 - drama conventions
- production and performance
 - spaces of performance
 - theatre design

Suggested text list

A suggested text list is provided to assist teachers in choosing texts of an appropriate rigour and focus for each unit. Teachers may nominate other texts for students to study that address the dramatic language, contextual knowledge, production and performance requirements.

By the end of Units 3 and 4, students should have covered at a minimum, one Australian or one World text, full play or excerpts.

Creative team

In Unit 3 and Unit 4, students will study in the context of drama in rehearsal and performance, and respond to drama in role as a member of the creative team.

All creative team roles must be supported by contextual comprehension.

Actor and Director are to be demonstrated in Unit 3 and Unit 4.

- Actor – interprets and presents a role or character.
- Director – decides on an interpretation and vision to realise the drama.

Design (costume, lighting, set and sound). A minimum of **one design role** is to be researched and applied in Unit 3 and Unit 4.

- Costume designer – provides designs for the roles/characters on stage. These may include accessories, footwear and make-up.
- Lighting designer – provides designs for illumination, focus, mood and transitions.
- Set designer – provides designs that aim to support the vision of the production in a performance space.
- Sound designer – provides designs for aural support for mood, action and transitions.

Note: multimedia technologies may be applied to design roles.

Representation of the General Capabilities

The General Capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will support students to live and work successfully now and into the future. They are not assessed unless identified within the specified unit content. Teachers should find opportunities to incorporate the following General Capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Drama General course.

Critical and creative thinking

In the course, students find satisfying solutions to creative problems by using a broad repertoire of critical and creative thinking skills, including investigating new possibilities for achieving dramatic outcomes. For example, through a nominated approach to performance, students can apply new ideas for character presentation, audience interaction and design choices to highlight particular themes and messages.

Ethical understanding

Through the exploration of drama, students understand and empathise with diverse perspectives and experiences. They devise and enact dramatic works which explore complex moral and ethical dilemmas, prompting them to think critically about right and wrong, justice, and equity.

Intercultural understanding

Students learn that the creation of drama, whether devised or through script interpretation, requires an understanding and thoughtful representation of cultures from different times and/or places. They understand that success in conveying meaning on stage depends on an understanding of historical, social and cultural contexts, which inform all aspects of performance, from design and direction to acting. When staging stories from other cultures, they carry out research to ensure authenticity and respect.

Literacy

Students develop literacy in the course by reading and analysing a variety of texts, exploring their meaning and communicating this meaning to an audience through performance. They use various forms and styles of communication with appropriate drama conventions, and recognised practitioner or company approaches, to interpret texts for particular tasks.

Numeracy

Numeracy in drama involves students recognising and understanding the use of spatial reasoning and measurement in rehearsing and performing in various spaces. It also informs the application of selected design roles and relevant theatre technologies.

Personal and social capability

All learning in drama is a social, collaborative and cooperative process. Students in the Drama General course work together with empathy and develop self-awareness through their interactions and relationships. They learn to manage their time to achieve goals, whether working in groups or handling solo tasks.

Addressing the other General Capabilities

Although the following General Capability has not been identified as a focus in the Drama General Year 12 syllabus, teachers may find opportunities to incorporate it capability into the teaching and learning program.

- Digital literacy

Such opportunities may occur through the application of different contexts, pedagogical practices and/or assessment strategies that relate to the syllabus as part of the teaching and learning program.

Summary representation of the General Capabilities in the Drama General course

The unit content and assessment types for this course provide students with the opportunity to develop the General Capabilities summarised in the table below.

Year	Course	Course type	General Capabilities						
			CCT	DL	EU	IU	L	N	PSC
Year 11	Drama (GEDRA)	General	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year 12	Drama (GTDRA)	General	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Key

CCT: Critical and creative thinking, DL: Digital literacy, EU: Ethical understanding, IU: Intercultural understanding, L: Literacy, N: Numeracy, PSC: Personal and social capability

Representation of the Cross-curriculum Priorities

The Cross-curriculum Priorities address the contemporary issues that students face in a globalised world. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate them into the teaching and learning program for the Drama General course. The Cross-curriculum Priorities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures carry an ancient tradition with stories that communicate mythical histories of Indigenous Australia that are unique and share parallels with other ancient cultures. Exploration of the history and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples provides a rich opportunity to build a greater understanding of a part of Australian history and society as well as fostering values of mutual understanding and respect between cultures included under the broad identity of this country.

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

The Asia region represents a highly diverse spectrum of cultures, traditions and peoples with a third of the world's population located immediately north of Australia. Engaging in a respectful exploration of particular traditions from countries like China, India, Korea (both North and South) and Japan, for example, will enable students to understand more deeply the values and histories of our near neighbours with whom we share important interrelationships.

Sustainability

The challenge of sustainability and the human impact on our environment, including the ongoing challenge of human overconsumption and production of waste, remains a critical challenge for all people. This may be explored in two important ways: the first is through sustainable practices and the ongoing exploration of what they can be for drama; the second is through engagement in creative problem-solving through drama to address behaviours contributing to negative and positive impacts on our environment.

Unit 3

Unit description

This unit focuses on drama in rehearsal and performance. Students study and collaboratively workshop rehearsal approaches in preparation for performance.

Within the area of the realisation of drama, teachers may choose one or more of the suggested approaches to explore the syllabus content (this list is not exhaustive):

- recognised practitioner or company approach to rehearsal
- psychological approach to rehearsal
- physical approach to rehearsal

Unit content

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

In the context of drama in rehearsal, performance and response, students create, understand, select and combine drama language, contextual knowledge, performance and production using oral and written communication.

Drama language

Elements of drama

- character: traits and/or journey
- role: stereotype and/or idea
- relationships: character's connection with others and/or audience
- situation: setting and circumstances
- voice: use of accent, emphasis, pace, pause, pitch, projection, tone and silence
- movement: use of facial expressions, gait, gesture, pace, posture, proxemics
- focus: where attention is directed
- tension: conflict that drives the dramatic action
- space: use of the performance space to define settings
- time: in the narrative; timing of one moment to the next, such as linear and non-linear
- language: use of spoken or written words that communicate ideas, feelings and contexts
- symbol: literal and/or metaphoric
- audience: viewers and/or participants
- mood: emotion presented in performance
- atmosphere: emotion felt by the audience

Drama processes

- selected approach to rehearsing
- identifying themes/issues
- director's vision, which informs performance choices
- improvisation in rehearsal and performance

Contextual knowledge

- context (historical, social or cultural) of the drama

Drama conventions

- conventions used in rehearsals for performing drama
- form and style

Production and performance

Spaces of performance

- performer and audience relationship in the theatre space
- performance space and stage types

Theatre design

- responsibilities of the selected design role
- application of design choices, elements of design and relevant technologies

Oral and written communication

Students address aspects of oral and written communication through drama in performance and associated learning activities, such as:

- structuring ideas and responses
- short answer forms
- oral presentations
- diagrams with annotations

Creative team

In Unit 3, students are required to engage with the role of both actor and director, and one designer role (costume, lighting, set or sound).

Unit 4

Unit description

This unit focuses on the interpretation and performance of a drama. Students study and apply practitioner or company approach to interpret drama for performance.

Within the areas of interpretation and drama for a performance, teachers may choose one or more of the suggested interpretations to explore the syllabus content (this list is not exhaustive):

- recognised practitioner or company approach to interpretation
- design-focused interpretation of different theatre forms
- form and style interpretation

Unit content

This unit builds on the content covered in Unit 3. It includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

In the context of drama in rehearsal, performance and response, students create, understand, select and combine drama language, contextual knowledge, performance and production using oral and written communication.

Drama language

Elements of drama

- character: traits and/or journey
- role: stereotype and/or idea
- relationships: character's connection with others and/or audience
- situation: setting and circumstances
- voice: use of accent, emphasis, pace, pause, pitch, projection, tone and silence
- movement: use of facial expressions, gait, gesture, pace, posture, proxemics
- focus: where attention is directed
- tension: conflict that drives the dramatic action
- space: use of the performance space to define settings
- time: in the narrative; timing of one moment to the next, such as linear and non-linear
- language: use of spoken or written words that communicate ideas, feelings and contexts
- symbol: literal and/or metaphoric
- audience: viewers or participants
- mood: emotion presented in performance
- atmosphere: emotion felt by the audience

Drama processes

- selected approach to performing an interpretation of a drama
- identifying themes/issues
- director's vision, which informs performance choices
- improvisation in rehearsal and performance

Contextual knowledge

- context (historical, social or cultural) of the drama

Drama conventions

- conventions appropriate to the style of performance
- form and style

Production and performance

Spaces of performance

- performer and audience relationship in the theatre space
- performance space and stage types

Theatre design

- responsibilities of the selected design role
- application of design choices, elements of design and relevant technologies

Oral and written communication

Students address aspects of oral and written communication through drama in performance and associated learning activities, such as:

- structuring ideas and responses
- short answer forms
- oral presentations
- diagrams with annotations

Creative team

In Unit 4, students are required to engage with the role of both actor and director, and one designer role (costume, lighting, set or sound).

Suggested text list

This course has a suggested text list. By the end of Units 3 and 4, students should have covered as a minimum, one Australian or one World published text, either a full play or excerpts.

Australian texts

- Brown, David. *The Estimator*
- Castagna, Felicity. *The Incredible Here and Now*
- De Groen, Alma. *The Rivers of China*
- Hayes, Sue. *Gods of Spicy Things*
- Hibberd, Jack. *White with Wire Wheels*
- Kalnejais, Rita. *First Love is the Revolution*
- Lynch, Maryanne. *Toxic*
- Megarrity, David. *Australian Drama*
- Murray, Peta. *The Law of Large Numbers*
- Oswald, Debra. *Dags*
- Mahjoeddin, N Indija. *The Butterfly Seer*
- Rose, Morgan. *Little Girls Alone in the Woods*

World texts

- Abbott, Sally. *I Think We Are Alone*
- Brecht, Bertolt. *Measures Taken*
- Churchill, Caryl. *Top Girls*
- Godber, John. *Teechers*
- Goldoni, Carlo. *A Servant of Two Masters*
- Havel, Vacla. *Temptation*
- Long, A. Singer, D. and Winfield J. *Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*
- Pirandello, Luigi. *Six Characters in Search of an Author*
- Plautus. *The Prisoners or Epidicus*
- Reza, Yasmina. *Art*
- Sondheim, Stephen. *West Side Story*
- Stoppard, Tom. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning that at the senior secondary years:

- provides evidence of student achievement
- identifies opportunities for further learning
- connects to the standards described for the course
- contributes to the recognition of student achievement.

Assessment for learning (formative) and assessment of learning (summative) enable teachers to gather evidence to support students and make judgements about student achievement. These are not necessarily discrete approaches and may be used individually or together, and formally or informally.

Formative assessment involves a range of informal and formal assessment procedures used by teachers during the learning process in order to improve student achievement and to guide teaching and learning activities. It often involves qualitative feedback (rather than scores) for both students and teachers, which focuses on the details of specific knowledge and skills that are being learnt.

Summative assessment involves assessment procedures that aim to determine students' learning at a particular time; for example, when reporting against the standards or after completion of a unit/s. These assessments should be limited in number and made clear to students through the assessment outline.

Appropriate assessment of student work in this course is underpinned by reference to the set of predetermined course standards. These standards describe the level of achievement required to achieve each grade, from A to E. Teachers use these standards to determine how well a student has demonstrated their learning.

Where relevant, higher order cognitive skills (e.g. application, analysis, evaluation and synthesis) and the General Capabilities should be included in the assessment of student achievement in this course. All assessments should be consistent with the requirements identified in the course assessment table.

Assessment should not generate workload and/or stress that, under fair and reasonable circumstances, would unduly diminish the performance of students.

School-based assessment

The *Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Manual* contains essential information on principles, policies and procedures for school-based assessment that needs to be read in conjunction with this syllabus.

School-based assessment involves teachers gathering, describing and quantifying information about student achievement.

Teachers design school-based assessment tasks to meet the needs of students. As outlined in the *WACE Manual*, school-based assessment of student achievement in this course must be based on the Principles of Assessment:

- Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning
- Assessment should be educative
- Assessment must be fair
- Assessment should be designed to meet its specific purpose/s
- Assessment should lead to informative reporting
- Assessment should lead to school-wide evaluation processes
- Assessment should provide significant data for improvement of teaching practices.

The table below provides details of the assessment types for the Drama General Year 12 syllabus.

Summative assessments in this course must:

- be limited to eight tasks or less
- allow for the assessment of each assessment type at least once over the year/pair of units
- have a minimum value of five per cent of the total school assessment mark
- provide a representative sampling of the syllabus content.

Assessment tasks not administered under test or controlled conditions require appropriate authentication processes.

Assessment table – Year 12

Type of assessment	Weighting
Performance/production Exploring drama in different contexts to support making drama. Applying an understanding of drama in improvised, devised and scripted drama. Developing drama as an actor, director, designer (either costume, lighting, set, sound). Applying the use of drama skills, techniques, processes and technologies.	65%
Response Respond to and evaluate own, others' or professional drama works. Planning, presenting and justifying approaches to drama texts in performance. Responses may be oral or in written form and include supporting diagrams with annotations.	20%
Externally set task A written task or item or set of items of 50 minutes duration developed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and administered by the school.	15%

Teachers must use the assessment table to develop an assessment outline for the pair of units (or for a single unit where only one is being studied).

The assessment outline must:

- include a set of assessment tasks
- include a general description of each task
- indicate the unit content to be assessed
- indicate a weighting for each task and each assessment type
- include the approximate timing of each task (for example, the week the task is conducted, or the issue and submission dates for an extended task).

Externally set task

All students enrolled in the Year 12 Drama General course will complete the externally set task developed by the Authority. Schools are required to administer this task in Term 2 at a time prescribed by the Authority.

Externally set task design brief – Year 12

Time	50 minutes
Format	Written
	Conducted under invigilated conditions
	Typically, between two and five questions
	Can require students to refer to source materials like script excerpts or require students to refer to viewed performances (live or digital versions of live theatre), own performances or other drama processes in a reflective writing task
Content	The Authority informs schools during Term 3 of the previous year of the Unit 3 syllabus content on which the task will be based

Refer to the *WACE Manual* for further information.

Reporting

Schools report student achievement, underpinned by a set of pre-determined standards, using the following grades:

Grade	Interpretation
A	Excellent achievement
B	High achievement
C	Satisfactory achievement
D	Limited achievement
E	Very low achievement

The grade descriptions for the Drama General Year 12 syllabus are provided in Appendix 1. They are used to support the allocation of a grade. They can also be accessed, together with annotated work samples, on the course page of the Authority website (www.scsa.wa.edu.au).

To be assigned a grade, a student must have had the opportunity to complete the education program, including the assessment program (unless the school accepts that there are exceptional and justifiable circumstances).

Refer to the *WACE Manual* for further information about the use of a ranked list in the process of assigning grades.

The grade is determined by reference to the standard, not allocated on the basis of a pre-determined range of marks (cut-offs).

Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 12*

A	Effectively and creatively applies drama knowledge, techniques and processes in the realisation of published and devised drama performance/production.
	Effectively and collaboratively applies processes and techniques in all specified roles to support drama that communicates meaning and creates audience impact.
	Describes, in detail, the texts and contexts relevant to making meaning and creating audience impact with clear evidence and justification.
	Communicates clearly and coherently using accurate drama terminology.
	Structures work effectively and efficiently using all assigned oral and written communication forms.
B	Competently, and with some creativity, applies drama knowledge, techniques and processes in the realisation of published and devised performance/production.
	Competently and collaboratively applies processes and techniques in all specified roles to support drama that communicates meaning and creates audience impact.
	Describes, with some interpretation, the texts and contexts relevant to making meaning and creating audience impact with evidence and justification.
	Communicates clearly using relevant drama terminology.
	Structures work effectively using all assigned oral and written communication forms.
C	Adequately applies drama knowledge, techniques and processes in the realisation of published and devised drama performance/production.
	Adequately, with collaboration, applies processes and techniques in assigned roles to support drama that communicates meaning and creates audience impact.
	Describes the texts and contexts that make meaning and create audience impact using minimal evidence and/or justification.
	Communicates with relevant drama terminology.
	Structures work adequately using oral and written communication forms.
D	Uses limited drama knowledge, techniques and/or processes in the realisation of published and devised performance/production.
	Uses processes and techniques in some assigned roles to support drama that shows some meaning and/or limited audience impact.
	Briefly describes texts and/or contexts with some relevance to dramatic meaning.
	Communicates limited drama terminology.
	Meets task requirements, although efforts are sometimes inaccurate, incomplete and/or ineffective.
E	Does not meet the requirements of a D grade and/or has completed insufficient assessment tasks to be assigned a higher grade.

*Note: these grade descriptions will be reviewed at the end of the second year of implementation of this syllabus.

