BOARD OF STUDIES
NEW SOUTH WALES

Drama
Years 7–10

Syllabus

June 2003

Contents

1   Introduction

1.1   The K–10 Curriculum

This syllabus has been developed within the parameters set by the Board of Studies NSW in its *K–10 Curriculum Framework*. This framework ensures that K–10 syllabuses and curriculum requirements are designed to provide educational opportunities that:
- engage and challenge all students to maximise their individual talents and capabilities for lifelong learning
- enable all students to develop positive self-concepts and their capacity to establish and maintain safe, healthy and rewarding lives
- prepare all students for effective and responsible participation in their society, taking account of moral, ethical and spiritual considerations
- encourage and enable all students to enjoy learning, and to be self-motivated, reflective, competent learners who will be able to take part in further study, work or training
- promote a fair and just society that values diversity
- promote continuity and coherence of learning, and facilitate the transition between primary and secondary schooling.

The framework also provides a set of broad learning outcomes that summarise the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes essential for all students to succeed in and beyond their schooling. These broad learning outcomes indicate that students will:
- understand, develop and communicate ideas and information
- access, analyse, evaluate and use information from a variety of sources
- work collaboratively with others to achieve individual and collective goals
- possess the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain a safe and healthy lifestyle
- understand and appreciate the physical, biological and technological world and make responsible and informed decisions in relation to their world
- understand and appreciate social, cultural, geographical and historical contexts, and participate as active and informed citizens
- express themselves through creative activity and engage with the artistic, cultural and intellectual work of others
- understand and apply a variety of analytical and creative techniques to solve problems
- understand, interpret and apply concepts related to numerical and spatial patterns, structures and relationships
- be productive, creative and confident in the use of technology and understand the impact of technology on society
- understand the work environment and be equipped with the knowledge, understanding and skills to evaluate potential career options and pathways
- develop a system of personal values based on their understanding of moral, ethical and spiritual matters.

The ways in which learning in the *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus* contributes to the curriculum and to the student's achievement of the broad learning outcomes are outlined in the syllabus rationale.

In accordance with the *K–10 Curriculum Framework*, the *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus* takes into account the diverse needs of all students. It identifies essential knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes. It enunciates clear standards of what students are expected to know and be able to do in Years 7–10. It provides structures and processes by which teachers can provide continuity of study for all students, particularly to ensure successful transition through Years 5 to 8 and from Year 10 to Year 11.

The syllabus also assists students to maximise their achievement in Drama through the acquisition of additional knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes. It contains advice to assist teachers to program learning for those students who have gone beyond achieving the outcomes through their study of the essential content.

1.2   Students with Special Education Needs

In the K–6 curriculum, students with special education needs are provided for in the following ways:
- through the inclusion of outcomes and content in syllabuses which provide for the full range of students
- through the development of additional advice and programming support for teachers to assist students to access the outcomes of the syllabus
- through the development of specific support documents for students with special education needs
- through teachers and parents planning together to ensure that syllabus outcomes and content reflect the learning needs and priorities of individual students.

Students with special education needs build on their achievements in K–6 as they progress through their secondary study and undertake courses to meet the requirements for the School Certificate.

It is necessary to continue focusing on the needs, interests and abilities of each student when planning a program for secondary schooling. The program will comprise the most appropriate combination of courses, outcomes and content available.

Life Skills
For most students with special education needs, the outcomes and content in sections 6 and 7 of this syllabus will be appropriate but for a small percentage of these students, particularly those with an intellectual disability, it may be determined that these outcomes and content are not appropriate. For these students the Life Skills outcomes and content in section 8 and the Life Skills assessment advice below can provide the basis for developing a relevant and meaningful program.

Access to Life Skills outcomes and content in Years 7–10
A decision to allow a student to access the Drama Years 7–10 Life Skills outcomes and content should include parents/carers and be based on careful consideration of the student's competencies and learning needs.

The decision should establish that the outcomes and content in sections 6 and 7 of the *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus* are not appropriate to meet the needs of the student. Consideration should be given to whether modifications to programs and to teaching, including adjustments

to learning activities and assessment, would enable the student to access the syllabus outcomes and content.

As part of the decision to allow a student to access the Drama Years 7–10 Life Skills outcomes and content, it is important to identify relevant settings, strategies and resource requirements that will assist the student in the learning process. Clear time frames and strategies for monitoring progress, relevant to the age of the student, need to be identified and collaborative plans should be made for future needs.

It is not necessary to seek permission of the Office of the Board of Studies for students to undertake the Drama Years 7–10 Life Skills outcomes and content, nor is it necessary to submit planning documentation.

Life Skills assessment
Each student undertaking a Drama Years 7–10 Life Skills course will have specified outcomes and content to be studied. The syllabus content listed for each outcome forms the basis of learning opportunities for students.

Assessment should provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in relation to the outcomes and to generalise their knowledge, understanding and skills across a range of situations or environments including the school and the wider community.

Students may demonstrate achievement in relation to Drama Years 7–10 Life Skills outcomes independently or with support. The type of support will vary according to the particular needs of the student and the requirements of the activity. Examples of support may include:
· the provision of extra time
· physical and/or verbal assistance from others
· the provision of technological aids.

2 Rationale

Drama is an artform with a discrete body of knowledge including conventions, history, skills and methods of working. It is an integral aspect of our society and is taught in school curricula worldwide. Drama fosters an understanding of continuity and change, and of the connections between different times and cultures. It provides opportunities to explore social, cultural, ethical and spiritual beliefs, including the diverse values of Australian culture.

Drama encourages a cooperative approach to exploring the world through enactment. The collaborative nature of this artform engages students in a creative process of sharing, developing and expressing emotions and ideas. It is a form of action in which students take on a role as a means of exploring both familiar and unfamiliar aspects of their world. They portray aspects of human experience while exploring the ways people react and respond to different situations, issues and ideas.

In Drama, students can communicate in complex and powerful ways how they perceive the world. They can investigate, shape and symbolically represent ideas, interests, concerns, feelings, attitudes, beliefs and their consequences. Drama can reflect the external world and the inner world of thoughts and feelings through fictional contexts. Learning experiences in Drama are provided which involve the intellect, emotions, imagination and body, and engage the whole person. Self-confidence, motivation and self-esteem are developed through the devising, workshopping, rehearsing and performing of individual and collaborative works.

This syllabus draws on the contemporary drama and theatre practices of making, performing and appreciating drama. These practices are active, experiential, critical and reflective. While students develop knowledge, understanding and skills that pertain to each of these practices, it is vital to integrate experiences in these areas in order to effectively realise the outcomes. In their appreciation of drama and theatre, students are aware of the collaborative contribution of actors, directors, playwrights, designers and technicians to productions. Manipulation of a wide range of technologies including traditional, electronic and digital applications helps students achieve particular dramatic intentions.

In the *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus*, both the processes and performances of drama are valued equally. Participants in drama processes create meaning by interacting actively, creatively and imaginatively through improvised, spontaneous and structured responses. Participants in drama performance create meaning through their relationship with the audience and experience of this engagement is essential in dramatic presentations.

Drama is a dynamic learning experience that caters for a diverse range of students and prepares them for effective and responsible participation in society, taking account of moral, ethical and spiritual considerations. The study of drama engages and challenges students to maximise their individual abilities through imaginative, dramatic experiences created in cooperation with others.

3   The Pathway of Learning for Drama in the K–12 Curriculum

Early Stage 1 – Stage 3

Creative Arts K–6 Syllabus

Stages 4 and 5

Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus
(including Life Skills
outcomes and content)

Drama Stage 6 Syllabus
Preliminary and HSC courses

Community, other education and learning, and workplace
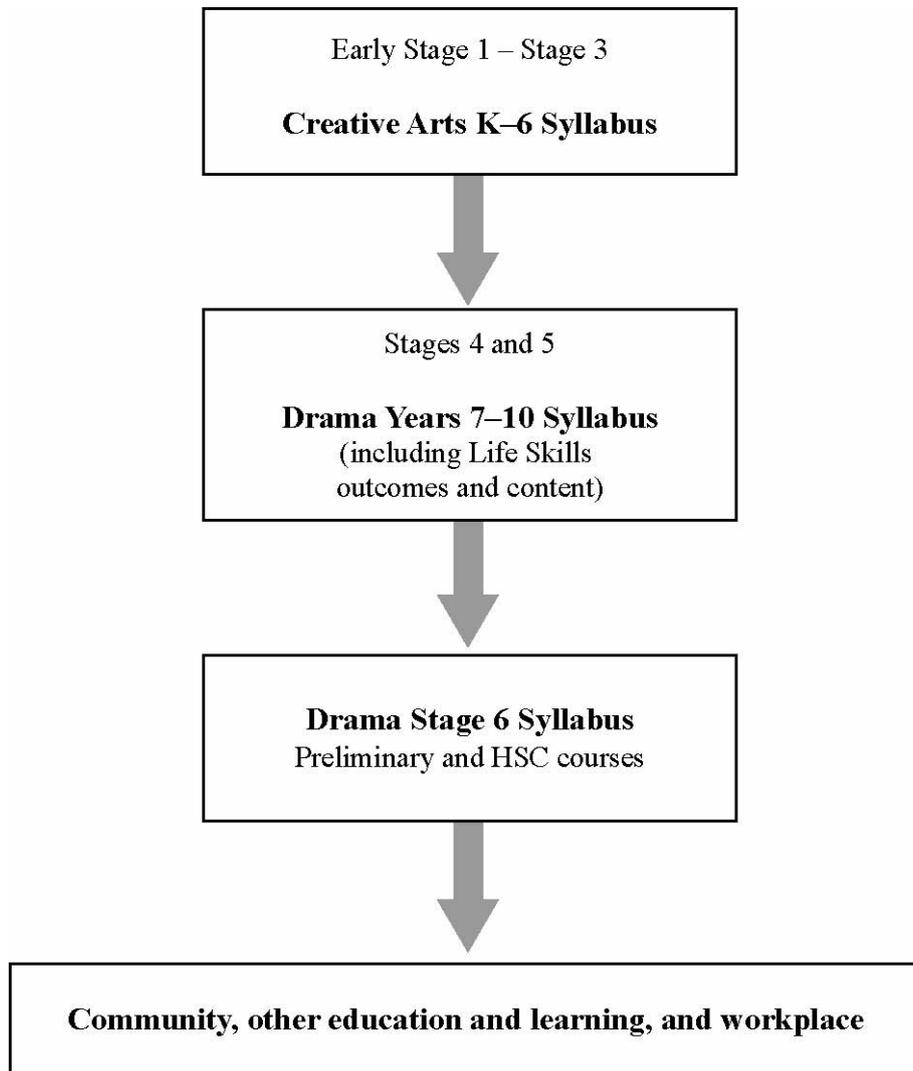
4 Aim

The aim of the *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus* is to engage and challenge students to maximise their dramatic abilities and enjoyment of drama and theatre through making, performing and appreciating dramatic and theatrical works.

5 Objectives

Knowledge, understanding and skills
Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through:
1 **making** drama that explores a range of imagined and created situations in a collaborative drama and theatre environment
2 **performing** devised and scripted drama using a variety of performance techniques, dramatic forms and theatrical conventions to engage an audience
3 **appreciating** the meaning and function of drama and theatre in reflecting the personal, social, cultural, aesthetic and political aspects of the human experience.

Values and attitudes
Students will value and appreciate:
• the collaborative and diverse nature of drama and theatre
• the contribution of drama and theatre to enriching and sustaining cultures and societies.

6   Outcomes

The *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus* provides an elective study linked to Stage 5 standards. Stage 4 outcomes have been provided to assist the assessment and reporting of student achievement in those schools that choose to begin elective study before Year 9.

Objectives	Stage 4 Outcomes		Stage 5 Outcomes	
Students will develop:	A student:		A student:	
1. knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through **making** drama that explores a range of imagined and created situations in a collaborative drama and theatre environment	4.1.1	identifies and explores the elements of drama to develop belief and clarity in character, role, situation and action	5.1.1	manipulates the elements of drama to create belief, clarity and tension in character, role, situation and action
	4.1.2	improvises and playbuilds through group-devised processes	5.1.2	contributes, selects, develops and structures ideas in improvisation and playbuilding
	4.1.3	devises and enacts drama using scripted and unscripted material	5.1.3	devises, interprets and enacts drama using scripted and unscripted material or text
	4.1.4	explores a range of ways to structure dramatic work in collaboration with others.	5.1.4	explores, structures and refines ideas using dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques, theatrical conventions and technologies.
2. knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through **performing** devised and scripted drama using a variety of performance techniques, dramatic forms and theatrical conventions to engage an audience	4.2.1	uses performance skills to communicate dramatic meaning	5.2.1	applies acting and performance techniques expressively and collaboratively to communicate dramatic meaning
	4.2.2	experiments with performance spaces and production elements appropriate to purpose and audience	5.2.2	selects and uses performance spaces, theatre conventions and production elements appropriate to purpose and audience
	4.2.3	explores and uses aspects of dramatic forms, performance styles, theatrical conventions and technologies to create dramatic meaning.	5.2.3	employs a variety of dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques, theatrical conventions and technologies to create dramatic meaning.

Objectives	Stage 4 Outcomes	Stage 5 Outcomes
Students will develop:	A student:	A student:
3. knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through **appreciating** the meaning and function of drama and theatre in reflecting the personal, social, cultural, aesthetic and political aspects of the human experience	4.3.1 identifies and describes elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, techniques and conventions in drama 4.3.2 recognises the function of drama and theatre in reflecting social and cultural aspects of human experience 4.3.3 describes the contribution of individuals and groups in drama using relevant drama terminology.	5.3.1 responds to, reflects on and evaluates elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques and theatrical conventions 5.3.2 analyses the contemporary and historical contexts of drama 5.3.3 analyses and evaluates the contribution of individuals and groups to processes and performances in drama using relevant drama concepts and terminology.

Life Skills

For some students with special education needs, particularly those students with an intellectual disability, it may be determined that the above outcomes are not appropriate. For these students, Life Skills outcomes and content can provide the basis for the development of a relevant and meaningful program – see section 8.

7 Content

7.1 Organisation of Content

In Drama Years 7–10 students engage in an integrated study of:
- the **elements** of drama
- through the **practices** of making, performing and appreciating
- within the **context** of a range of dramatic forms, performance styles and their dramatic techniques and theatrical conventions.

This content is organised under the practices and is presented as what students learn to do and what they learn about. The elements of drama and the dramatic contexts are integrated within each practice. Further details regarding the elements and the contexts are presented in sections 7.3 and 7.4.

Learning in Drama in Years 7–10 must always begin with the essential content and then progress through the additional content based on the hours implemented at each school. Schools with students undertaking Drama in Years 7 and/or 8 may develop courses that begin with the essential content linked to the corresponding Stage 4 outcomes. Information regarding the requirements for School Certificate credentialling can be found in section 5 of the *Assessment, Certification and Examination (ACE) Manual* (Board of Studies NSW, 2002).

Essential content
In Drama Years 7–10, the essential content constitutes 100 indicative hours of students engaging in an integrated study of the **elements** through the **practices** within the context of **playbuilding** and *at least one* other **dramatic form** or **performance style**.

Additional content
Additional content is included for courses of 200 hours and beyond. For each additional 100 indicative hours of Drama, students are provided with opportunities to explore aspects of drama in greater depth and/or breadth by engaging in an integrated study of the **elements** through the **practices** within the context of **playbuilding** and *at least two* other **dramatic forms** or **performance styles**.

A 200-hour course includes the essential content (100 hours) followed by additional content (100 hours). As students progress through content there should be an emphasis on increasing the complexity and sophistication of their engagement with the syllabus outcomes and content. For schools wishing to offer Drama courses beyond 200 hours, the syllabus provides a wide range of dramatic contexts that may be drawn from to develop programs that broaden, deepen and extend students' knowledge, understanding and skills in Drama learning.

Content overview

Practices
- **Making** refers to participating in the creation of drama and theatre process work. Students develop and explore imagining and creating fictional situations in both dramatic and theatrical environments. Improvisation and playbuilding are key methods of making which involve a group of students collaborating to devise their own work.

- **Performing** refers to students actively engaging in acting and performing drama and theatre for different audiences.

- **Appreciating** refers to students responding to, inquiring into, investigating and critically studying a range of drama and theatre experiences.

Elements of drama (See section 7.3)
The elements of drama are the features that give drama unique shape and form. They are interrelated and interdependent but distinct and distinguishable. They can be expressed in the following way:
- *Role* and *character* are directed by *focus* driven by *tension*, made explicit in *time*, *place* and *situation* through the use of *space*, *structure*, *language*, *sound*, *movement*, *rhythm* and *moment* to evoke *atmosphere* and *symbol*, which together create *dramatic meaning* and *audience engagement*.

Contexts (See section 7.4)
The contexts of dramatic forms, performance styles and theatrical conventions in Drama Years 7–10 refer to ways in which we engage in and shape dramatic action. The context is the dramatic situation and framework constructed for studying the elements of drama and engaging in the practices of making, performing and appreciating.

- **Dramatic forms** are an established set of structural principles by which drama and/or theatre is produced and/or appreciated. A dramatic form is shaped by the framework through which it exists. As such, a particular dramatic form is recognisable by its structure, techniques and conventions which allow it to stand as an identifiable dramatic entity.

- **Performance styles** are the distinguishing aesthetic features of any part of the process of making and performing a drama work. It is the style in which a drama work is performed. Thus, one text may be performed in a number of different performance styles.

- **Dramatic techniques and theatrical conventions** are the common principles of dramatic forms and/or performance styles shared by performers and audiences. They are the defining features, customs and practices which are associated with a particular dramatic form or performance style. They are usually defined by tradition but sometimes they are negotiated within the performance.

Life Skills
Life Skills outcomes and content are in section 8.

Cross-curriculum content
Cross-curriculum content assists students to achieve the broad learning outcomes defined in the Board of Studies *K–10 Curriculum Framework*. It is incorporated in the content of the *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus* in the following ways:

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
The integration of ICT into the *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus* provides opportunities for students to engage with a range of technologies used in the practices of making, performing and appreciating drama.

Drama allows for students to demonstrate achievement in the areas of ICT. In particular, teachers should allow students the opportunity to explore different information communication technologies in their class work.

Students should use, access and engage with ICT applications in a variety of ways. This should include:
- using **word processing** in a range of individual, group or class activities such as scriptwriting, writing reports, assignments and essays
- using **electronic communication including the internet** to research and analyse data or communicate with individuals or organisations.

Schools may also use other ICT to facilitate learning in Drama. Examples of these include:
- video cameras, editing, sound and lighting equipment
- databases to research, compile, organise and analyse drama materials such as sound effects, plays, reviews, and information on writers and directors
- multimedia to make, perform and appreciate drama by using computer-based software to enhance learning strategies in areas such as set design, scriptwriting, story-boarding or animation
- graphics programs to create, import and manipulate images to produce theatre posters, programs and flyers, costume, lighting and set designs.

Work, Employment and Enterprise
In Drama, students develop skills, competencies, understandings and attributes, which equip them to identify potential areas of employment in drama and theatre. In Drama, work and employment opportunities relate to each of the learning experiences of making and performing and appreciating. As students engage in these activities they will develop an understanding of the roles of actors, writers, directors, and other drama and theatre practitioners, as well as other key roles in the theatre, film and television industries. These industries are globally significant and provide potential international opportunities. Drama develops communication skills vital to all employment areas.

Aboriginal and Indigenous
Aboriginal and Indigenous cross-curriculum content in Years 7–10 Drama is applicable to the study of plays and texts which deal with Indigenous issues and present a range of Aboriginal characters. An exploration of the ways in which Aboriginal characters are portrayed in contemporary drama and the role of Aboriginal writers and performers in contemporary society may be explored. The content allows students to develop an understanding of the importance of drama and ritual to Aboriginal people and the significant role of drama in fostering cross-cultural understanding.

Civics and Citizenship

Students will explore the work of particular Australian writers and performers who have made a contribution to drama and theatre in this country. Students have the opportunity to engage in a range of dramatic forms, performance styles and theatre conventions related to Australian theatre in order to develop a broad understanding of our cultural heritage and the characteristics of the Australian psyche.

Difference and Diversity

An appreciation of difference and diversity is achieved by engaging in the practices of:

- making drama, which emphasises improvisation and self-devised and group-devised activities according to individual interests which may deal with personal, social and cultural difference and diversity;
- performing drama, which allows students to perform in a diverse range of dramatic forms and performance styles with their associated theatrical conventions and technologies; and
- appreciating drama, which allows students to respond to different viewpoints and beliefs in order to develop mature awareness, understanding and acceptance of difference and diversity.

Environment

Environmental issues are explored in Drama as students become aware of the impact of performance spaces and conventions by performing in a diverse range of spaces and environments. Thus students become aware that they are a part of the environment's interconnected structure, that drama and theatre is made and performed in different environments and is also affected by them. Students may study dramatic forms such as environmental and event theatre, engage in making and performing street theatre or make drama that centres on environmental issues.

Gender

Students will explore the notion of gender in the context of the syllabus by considering the achievements of significant female and male writers, performers and practitioners. They will explore the contribution of significant women in the traditionally male-dominated field of drama and theatre and analyse the social construction and portrayal of gender stereotypes in dramatic and theatrical texts.

Key Competencies

Key competencies are embedded in the Drama curriculum to enhance student learning.

The key competencies of *collecting, analysing and organising information, communicating ideas and information,* and *planning and organising activities* are integral to the nature of drama education.

Students ***collect***, ***analyse and organise information*** as the basis of making, performing and appreciating dramatic material. For example, these competencies underpin all playbuilding activities. Students undertake research and investigation into drama texts, issues and practitioners, as well as dramatic forms, performance styles and theatrical conventions of both a historical and contemporary nature.

Communicating ideas and information is pivotal to Drama and is undertaken creatively through performance, or may be presented in other oral, written or visual forms. Performing devised or scripted works, writing an essay or conducting a multimedia presentation are all part of everyday Drama practice.

Students work as individuals and collaboratively in classroom activities, and through this the key competency of ***working with others and in teams*** is addressed. Collaboration is an integral aspect of the process of drama especially in making and performing drama.

The nature of Drama requires students to consistently engage in problem-solving activities. They make decisions about the inclusion and exclusion of materials, ideas, design and production elements for playbuilding and performing scripted works. They solve problems regarding the making and performing of Drama work through a synthesis of dramatic forms, performance styles and theatrical conventions, thus addressing the key competency of ***problem-solving***.

Literacy
The *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus* provides scope within the content for students to develop skills in various literacies. This may take the form of understanding subject-specific and general vocabulary. The reading and writing of scripts and texts will assist students in their acquisition of literacy skills, as will responding to and evaluating their own works and the works of others. In Drama, students extensively explore a range of literacies in a broad range of contexts. As both performers and audience members, students become aware of reading the signs, symbols and meanings of performances.

Multicultural
In Drama Years 7–10, students develop an understanding and appreciation of a variety of cultural contexts. In Drama this is most effectively done through improvising and playbuilding about the diversity of cultures, beliefs, attitudes, values and customs in Australian society, or through the study of particular texts dealing with issues associated with the social and cultural experiences of different groups at different times in Australia's history. Drama allows students to create their own works based on issues of special interest, taking into account aspects such as the cultural and linguistic diversity in Australian communities.

Numeracy
The development of skills in numeracy is achieved through experiencing drama content. Students apply problem-solving techniques in everyday practice. They incorporate concepts such as spatial relationships in constructing performance spaces and through deciding positions on a stage, and they apply mathematical principles in areas such as design. The awareness and calculation of time plays a vital role in drama.

7.2   Content for Years 7–10

Making – Essential Content

Objective 1
Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through **making** drama that explores a range of imagined and created situations in a collaborative drama and theatre environment.

Outcome 4.1.1:	A student identifies and explores the elements of drama to develop belief and clarity in character, role, situation and action.
Outcome 5.1.1:	A student manipulates the elements of drama to create belief, clarity and tension in character, role, situation and action.

Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• recognise, create and develop elements of drama to produce dramatic action and meaning	• the identification and development of the elements of drama which together create dramatic meaning and audience engagement
• develop a range of created and imagined situations which explore the familiar and unfamiliar	• using elements of drama to enhance a range of created and imagined situations
• explore roles/characters and relationships through improvisation techniques within fictional situations and dramatic action	• using improvisation to approach role/character within fictional situations and dramatic action
• create roles/characters of their own imaginings by experimenting with plot and narrative structures	• exploring roles/characters using realistic, surreal and abstract narratives
• develop fundamental vocal and physicalisation techniques appropriate to conveying role/character	• the processes of developing and sustaining a role/character through voice, stance, gesture and status
• develop and use language appropriate to a role/character	• identifying and responding to the internal factors of role/character and translating these into voice and language that are unique to a role/character
• explore basic movement techniques in relation to roles/characters	• ways in which movements assist character development
• explore role and character through script, dramatic forms, performance styles and playbuilding	• the function of characters/roles in different forms of drama
• develop roles/characters with commitment	• the role of the individual in the collaborative process of drama
• use appropriate terminology to discuss and write about dramatic activities while making drama.	• the use of drama terminology to express ideas.

Making – Additional Content

Objective 1

Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through **making** drama that explores a range of imagined and created situations in a collaborative drama and theatre environment.

Outcome 5.1.1:	A student manipulates the elements of drama to create belief, clarity and tension in character, role, situation and action.

Students learn to:	Students learn about:
• manipulate elements of drama in a variety of dramatic forms and styles	• the role of focus, tension, time, space staging, structure, language, sound, movement, rhythm, moment, atmosphere and symbol, which together create dramatic meaning and audience engagement
• develop sophisticated vocal and physicalisation techniques appropriate to role/character	• the process of developing and sustaining a believable role/character
• explore movement techniques in relationship to fully realised or abstract roles/characters	• the different functions of drama elements in creating character, role or image
• explore pertinent drama elements to reveal interaction between role/characters	• identifying and responding to the internal factors of role/character using focus, tension, time, space, rhythm, atmosphere and symbol
• explore and reveal aspects of role/character in dramatic situations	• the use of varied conventions and techniques to explore role/character such as objectives, motivations, tactics, status, independent activities, backgrounds, experiences
• explore fully realised characters with clear and or simple/complex situations and actions.	• the process of developing and sustaining a believable role/character
• explore role/character through scripts, dramatic forms, performance styles and playbuilding	• the function of roles/characters in different forms of drama
• evaluate and refine the effectiveness of their role/characterisation through experimentation in rehearsal.	• the use of stagecraft and rehearsal skills appropriate to process work.

Making – Essential Content

Outcome 4.1.2:	A student improvises and playbuilds through group-devised processes.
Outcome 5.1.2:	A student contributes, selects, develops and structures ideas in improvisation and playbuilding.

Students learn to:	Students learn about:
• make, accept and extend offers in improvisation	• the process of improvisation and contributing ideas in spontaneous and rehearsed improvisations
• play improvisation games to develop improvisation skills	• the process of extending and developing improvisation skills through established games and rules
• use improvisation as a form as well as a key technique to devise playbuilding	• the process of using an active, collaborative process to create group or self-devised works
• playbuild using a variety of stimuli	• a variety of ways to approach playbuilding including setting, theme, narrative, character, issues and personal experiences
• link playbuilding scenes	• creating a cohesive performance by using transitions such as music, punchlines, exits, blackouts, freezes, movements, repeated dialogue, images, poetry etc
• use elements of drama to manage the action in playbuilding	• the creation and enhancement of dramatic meaning through elements of drama such as tension, moment or symbol
• create narrative structures to convey dramatic meaning	• the development of various plot structures in playbuilding (simple, complex, compound, linear, non-linear)
• research material from a number of sources such as local and Indigenous communities to use in playbuilding.	• ways to develop different styles of group-devised plays by drawing on community sources such as local identities, Indigenous communities, media, government bodies and institutions, libraries or the internet.

Making – Additional Content

Outcome 5.1.2: A student contributes, selects, develops and structures ideas in improvisation and playbuilding.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• develop sophisticated improvisation skills through improvisation games and processes	• a variety of ways to use improvisation in spontaneous and rehearsed situations
• develop, structure and use improvisation as a key technique to devise works	• the process of using an active, collaborative process to create devised works
• playbuild using a variety of familiar and unfamiliar stimuli	• a variety of ways to approach playbuilding. including current or historical, social, cultural, political issues, themes or philosophies
• create narrative structures to convey a dramatic intention	• the complexity of plots and narrative structures in playbuilding
• link playbuilding scenes in different ways	• creating a cohesive performance and the impact and effect of a range of appropriate transitions and linking devices
• create dramatic metaphors to communicate ideas	• a variety of ways to create comparisons in group-devised work
• apply theatrical dialectics to communicate ideas	• a variety of ways to present conflicting or contrasting ideas in a dramatic work
• research material from a number of local, community and global sources	• ways to develop sophisticated styles of self-devised or group-devised plays by drawing on a range of sources including the internet
• research material which is issue-specific to explore personal, social and cultural difference and diversity	• the presentation of key social and cultural issues such as multicultural, gender, Aboriginal, Indigenous or environmental issues through drama and theatre
• adapt aspects and conventions from a range of dramatic forms and performance styles to develop works.	• conventions which exist in dramatic forms and performance styles, eg stock characters in *commedia dell'arte* which they can adapt in their own works.

Making – Essential Content

Outcome 4.1.3:	A student devises and enacts drama using scripted and unscripted material.
Outcome 5.1.3:	A student devises, interprets and enacts drama using scripted and unscripted material or text.

Students learn to:	Students learn about:
• explore and/or devise and enact scripts and texts in different dramatic forms or performance styles, written by themselves or others	• the conventions and techniques associated with writing or enacting scripts or texts
• analyse and interpret scripts and texts	• the inter-relationship of features such as form, style, theme, purpose and intended audience in drama scripts or texts
• write, draft and edit scripts or texts	• computer-based technologies including the use of word-processing software programs to devise scripts or texts
• use improvisation techniques to explore the dramatic structures of scripts and texts	• a variety of approaches to explore scripts or texts
• identify and respond to the use of stage space and stage geography within their script and text work	• the use of improvisation and stagecraft in shaping and interpreting initial script/text work
• set up a basic student script book	• the process of preparing and recording the rehearsal process
• explore character and character relationships in drama works and develop a sustained character and/or role	• the dynamics of relationships in scripted works and developing character and/or role interaction on stage
• use drama elements when creating or enacting scripts or texts	• the application of elements of drama such as focus, tension, time, space, rhythm, atmosphere and symbol to dramatic works
• experiment with voice and movement activities that develop their understanding of the script or text in action	• the transformation of the words of a text into a dynamic and active experience
• contribute ideas, collaborate and support the collective process to create effective drama	• the way in which group dynamics impacts on the creation of drama
• explore techniques used for refinement during the rehearsal process	• different structures of refinement in rehearsal for the performance of a script or text
• explore and use drama terminology when making drama.	• the use of appropriate language and literacy in script and text making.

Making – Additional Content

Outcome 5.1.3:	A student devises, interprets and enacts drama using scripted and unscripted material or text.

Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• devise, explore and enact a variety of texts, scripts or plays including an Australian component	• the conventions and techniques associated with Australian and/or world plays, texts, scripts and playwrights and the characteristics of such works in a multicultural world
• recognise and apply the conventions of script or text when making drama	• the function of language, plot structure, subtext, climax and relationships
• devise and enact scripts or texts of different dramatic forms or performance styles	• the conventions, techniques and technologies associated with various forms and performance styles
• analyse, interpret and explore simple or multi-layered scripts and texts	• the interrelationship of features such as form, style, theme, purpose and intended audience in a drama script or text
• select and use appropriate information and communication technologies in the process of devising collaborative dramatic works	• the role and function of word processing, video, sound and lighting, multimedia, graphics and electronic communication when constructing drama
• set up an actor's blocking/script book	• the process of preparing, recording and reflecting on the rehearsal process
• explore character and character relationships and develop sustained characters and/or roles	• the effect of believable interaction on stage and the difference between a fully developed character and a role
• demonstrate a range of metaphoric and literal interpretations of the dramatic action	• identifying the use of symbols and metaphors in theatrical texts and creating them in their own works
• explore the scope and breadth of visual elements in creating drama	• identifying the use of visual elements such as staging, properties, costumes and lighting in drama
• explore the social relationships between text, performance and audience.	• identifying the appropriateness of chosen texts, styles and performance spaces for an audience.

Making – Essential Content

Outcome 4.1.4:	A student explores a range of ways to structure dramatic work in collaboration with others.
Outcome 5.1.4:	A student explores, structures and refines ideas using dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques, theatrical conventions and technologies.

Students learn to:	Students learn about:
• develop linear scene and plot structures to communicate dramatic ideas	• the format of traditional plot structures including beginning, build-up, climax and denouement
• develop non-linear plot structures and use shifting time frames to present dramatic ideas	• the effect of overturning traditional plot structures
• use different dramatic theatrical techniques and conventions to vary dramatic presentations	• the presentation of dramatic material in a variety of ways using techniques such as chorus, mask, narrator, tableau/still image and flashback
• refine work in collaboration with others	• the nature of an ensemble and the collaborative process
• research and apply the conventions and techniques of chosen forms or styles	• the conventions applicable to various dramatic forms and performance styles
• adapt features of established dramatic forms to create their own group-devised works.	• the flexibility of approaches available to create works by drawing on established dramatic forms and their conventions.

Making – Additional Content

Outcome 5.1.4: A student explores, structures and refines ideas using dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques, theatrical conventions and technologies.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• manipulate a variety of scene and plot structures in order to structure particular dramatic forms	• the creation of traditional and/or innovative plot structures in different dramatic forms
• manipulate a variety of dramatic and theatrical techniques to enhance dramatic texts in different forms and styles	• the application and effect of a range of techniques, conventions and technologies in a variety of forms and styles
• use techniques such as juxtaposition to create contrast in dramatic works	• the presentation of ideas in stimulating ways to provoke audience thought
• research and apply concepts of relevant drama practitioners and their works	• the adaptation of features of dramatic forms or performance styles to self-devised and group-devised works
• adapt features of established dramatic forms to create their own group-devised works.	• the flexibility of approaches available to create works by drawing on established dramatic forms and their conventions.

Performing – Essential Content

Objective 2
Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through **performing** devised and scripted drama using a variety of performance techniques, dramatic forms and theatrical conventions to engage an audience.

Outcome 4.2.1: A student uses performance skills to communicate dramatic meaning.	
Outcome 5.2.1: A student applies acting and performance techniques expressively and collaboratively to communicate dramatic meaning.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• use vocal skills to communicate dramatic meaning	• the importance of breath, voice and expression in performance
• use movement skills to enhance performance	• realistic and abstract movements in performance
• use body language and physicalisation to help an audience to read performance	• aspects of body language and physicalisation such as posture, gesture and facial expression
• move through and act with confidence in a designated performance space	• performing with confidence in a variety of spaces and developing trust and collaboration with others
• develop timing in performance	• the contribution of timing to the creation of impact and dramatic tension in dramatic works
• use techniques to create a character/role	• different techniques to approach the creation of a character/role, eg observation, animal characteristics, physicality and status
• create and maintain clarity of focus in dramatic action	• maintaining clarity of focus as action advances – using props, gestures, eye contact, language and voice
• create a basic actor/audience relationship in a variety of performance situations.	• the function of the actor/audience relationship.

Performing – Additional Content

Objective 2
Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through **performing** devised and scripted drama using a variety of performance techniques, dramatic forms and theatrical conventions to engage an audience.

Outcome 5.2.1: A student applies acting and performance techniques expressively and collaboratively to communicate dramatic meaning.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• use breath and voice as key instruments of performance	• breathing and vocal skills such as projection, clarity, tone, pitch, pace, pause and dynamics and diaphragmatic breathing
• use movement and stillness to enhance performance	• the significance of movement skills such as energy, spatial awareness, dynamics, flexibility and control in performance
• create sub-text and emotional complexity in performance	• the effect of a multi-dimensional dramatic action
• explore the dynamics of timing in performance	• the creation of impact and dramatic tension in dramatic works through control of line delivery, responses to cues, awareness of rhythms, pace and tempo
• apply acting techniques to create a fully realised or stock character	• established systems of actor training and their techniques such as observation, emotional memory, motivation, objectives and given circumstances
• create a dynamic actor-audience relationship in a variety of performance situations.	• a variety of ways to perform dramatic works according to audience and purpose.

Performing – Essential Content

Outcome 4.2.2:	A student experiments with performance spaces and production elements appropriate to purpose and audience.
Outcome 5.2.2:	A student selects and uses performance spaces, theatre conventions and production elements appropriate to purpose and audience.

Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• improvise and explore some of the collaborative roles of the production team in a drama, theatre production or workplace	• various roles in the theatre (eg actor, stagehand, technician, director, designer, dramaturge, audience member) and their input into the theatrical experience
• explore the variety of performance spaces through managing and manipulating imagined or created spaces	• the visual impact of design in a space, using elements such as shape, colour or composition to enhance a performance
• design/alter the performance space to suit particular playbuilding, dramatic form or performance-style needs	• identifying performance spaces, eg arena, amphitheatre, thrust, closed and open stages/spaces, for various dramatic forms and styles
• appreciate that performance spaces and production elements must take into account their potential audience	• the relationship between performers and audience according to the type of production and the chosen theatre space, eg hospital, nursing home, primary school, arena spectacular or street theatre
• understand and use some production elements creatively in a performance situation	• the impact of production elements on the theatrical experience, eg costume, set, sound, front of house, stage management, publicity and technologies
• explore and use theatre conventions and production elements which affect the actor-audience relationship	• a range of theatre conventions and production elements from differing dramatic forms and contexts, eg the use of a chorus, mask or music
• use a range of improvisation techniques to explore performance spaces and production elements.	• using improvisation techniques while exploring performance spaces and production elements.

Performing – Additional Content

Outcome 5.2.2: A student selects and uses performance spaces, theatre conventions and production elements appropriate to purpose and audience.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• improvise and explore the collaborative roles of the production team in a drama, theatre production or workplace	• various roles in the theatre, eg actor, stagehand, technician, director, designer, dramaturge, audience member and their input into the theatrical experience
• understand and manipulate elements of stagecraft and production, using them perceptively and creatively in a performance situation	• the impact of stagecraft and production elements on the theatrical experience, eg costumes, makeup, sets, sound, front of house, back stage, or publicity
• explore and perform in a variety of performance spaces	• the conventions associated with spaces such as classrooms, blackbox theatres, thrust stages, theatres-in-the-round, outdoor venues, empty spaces or a proscenium arch
• explore the nature of different theatre companies and their dramatic function in relationship to an audience	• the different configurations and uses of performance spaces and positioning of audiences by different theatre groups and practitioners in areas such as theatre in education, mainstream theatre, physical theatre, community theatre or street theatre
• use dramatic techniques suitable to explore different performance spaces, dramatic meanings and audience relationships	• using and exploring a range of improvisation, acting and playbuilding approaches appropriate to different performance spaces
• use theatre conventions and production elements suitable for different purposes and audiences.	• theatre conventions and production elements applicable to a variety of performances and audiences.

Performing – Essential Content

Outcome 4.2.3:	A student explores and uses aspects of dramatic forms, performance styles, theatrical conventions and technologies to create dramatic meaning.
Outcome 5.2.3:	A student employs a variety of dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques, theatrical conventions and technologies to create dramatic meaning.

Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• actively demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding of chosen dramatic forms or performance styles	• a variety of dramatic contexts and their conventions
• explore drama technologies to create dramatic meaning	• the technologies and conventions associated with small screen, video, radio, design software, lighting and sound that enhance dramatic meaning
• use improvisation skills, where appropriate, to explore dramatic contexts	• the different conventions and techniques of forms and styles that create particular dramatic meanings
• explore and use an Australian dramatic form and/or performance style to communicate ideas	• the diversity of Australian cultural beliefs, attitudes and values
• explore and enact dramatic forms in their own right	• the specific conventions associated with various dramatic forms
• use dramatic forms and performance styles in playbuilding performances	• ways to adopt or adapt features of dramatic forms in playbuilding
• select and explore performance styles in their own right	• devising and performing work in a particular performance style
• develop acting, performance and physical skills to enhance specific performance styles	• using acting or performance techniques in areas such as voice, movement, mask, mime, characterisation, role-play, script or on-camera production
• explore, understand and use the dynamics of space	• the ways in which levels, physical proximity and groupings can affect dramatic meaning
• understand the dynamics of the actor audience relationship	• identifying the importance of the actor/ audience relationship
• demonstrate appropriate acting skills to communicate with different audiences	• the nature of actor/audience relationships
• develop terminology appropriate to dramatic contexts and technologies.	• terminology associated with dramatic forms, styles and technologies.

Performing – Additional Content

Outcome 5.2.3: A student employs a variety of dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques, theatrical conventions and technologies to create dramatic meaning.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• explore and use some Australian, Aboriginal, gender-specific and/or cross-cultural dramatic forms and performance styles to communicate ideas	• different drama and theatre constructs and how they can delve into diverse cultures, beliefs, attitudes and values to create dramatic action, meaning and actor/audience reflection
• select, explore and enact specific dramatic forms	• the specific conventions of various dramatic forms
• select, explore and use specific performance styles	• devising and performing work in a particular performance style, eg realism
• use knowledge and understanding of dramatic forms and performance styles to shape and refine their own playbuilding and performance work	• investigating and examining dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic devices, technologies and conventions in order to create a desired dramatic intention
• demonstrate acting skills appropriate to the chosen dramatic context and to communicate with an audience	• the nature of the actor/audience relationship
• explore the actor/audience relationship in light of a particular dramatic focus or intention	• the different effects that dramatic forms, performance styles and their conventions can have on an audience, eg comedy, realism (forms and styles), alienation, spect-actors (conventions)
• use terminology appropriate to dramatic contexts and technologies.	• the terminology associated with different dramatic forms, performance styles, technologies and conventions.

Appreciating – Essential Content

Objective 3
Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through **appreciating** the meaning and function of drama and theatre in reflecting the personal, social, cultural, aesthetic and political aspects of the human experience.

Outcome 4.3.1:	A student identifies and describes elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, techniques and conventions in drama.
Outcome 5.3.1:	A student responds to, reflects on and evaluates elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques and theatrical conventions.

Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• recognise and discuss elements of drama in a variety of drama activities for dramatic meaning	• the identification and importance of the elements of drama that together create dramatic meaning and audience engagement
• recognise and discuss the techniques, conventions and technologies of various dramatic forms and performance styles	• conventions, techniques and technologies applicable to various forms and styles
• describe the conventions, techniques and technologies used in different performances	• the roles of the performer and audience and ways to read and respond to performance
• respond appropriately to their work and the dramatic work of others	• recording their ideas in a drama workbook or in other forms such as oral/aural, visual representation, discursive, written or word-processed forms
• exhibit appropriate audience behaviour when watching various dramatic forms or performance styles	• conventions associated with experiencing a live performance in comparison to cinematic and small screen viewings
• describe and respond to the conventions, dramatic techniques and technologies used in different performances.	• the role of the performer and audience, and ways to read and reflect on performance.

Appreciating – Additional Content

Objective 3
Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills, individually and collaboratively, through **appreciating** the meaning and function of drama and theatre in reflecting the personal, social, cultural, aesthetic and political aspects of the human experience.

Outcome 5.3.1: A student responds to, reflects on and evaluates elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques and theatrical conventions.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• reflect on and evaluate elements of drama in a variety of dramatic forms and performance styles	• the identification, manipulation and importance of the elements of drama that together create dramatic meaning and audience engagement.
• reflect on and evaluate the nature of different dramatic forms and performance styles	• recording, analysing and evaluating their ideas in a drama workbook or in other forms such as oral presentations, formal essays etc
• analyse and respond to conventions and techniques used in different performances	• the various roles of performers and audiences, and ways to read performance – its signs, symbols and meanings
• identify specific social, cultural, gender, aesthetic and political issues in dramatic forms and performance styles	• the ways dramatic forms have reflected or facilitated change in various societies
• respond appropriately to their work and the work of others, and exhibit appropriate audience behaviour	• the effect that different dramatic forms and performance styles can have on an individual or a group
• recognise and apply a range of responses as an audience member.	• the diverse roles an audience member may have such as viewer, participant or spect-actor.

Appreciating – Essential Content

Outcome 4.3.2: A student recognises the function of drama and theatre in reflecting social and cultural aspects of human experience.
Outcome 5.3.2: A student analyses the contemporary and historical contexts of drama.

Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• experience and appreciate dramatic and theatrical performances	• various ways to read and appreciate drama and theatre performances
• investigate the issues and themes present in a range of scripts, texts and performances	• the ways in which writers and practitioners present social and cultural issues through drama texts and performances
• inquire into the nature of various contemporary and historical dramatic forms and performance styles	• the ways in which people have used drama since the beginning of time to represent their ideas
• respond to and express ideas about drama in a variety of oral, written, active or computer-based formats	• ways to reflect on their ideas, such as in a drama workbook, essay, dramatic presentation, debate, speech, monologue, discussion, multimedia presentation, video or through other appropriate forms
• investigate, discuss and debate the representation of gender-based, racial and cultural stereotypes in various dramatic forms or performance styles	• the development of critical questioning in order to appreciate and understand the role of drama and theatre in provoking questions, thoughts and ideas about race, gender and culture
• value and use information and communication technologies in drama and theatre to help reflect on aspects of human experience.	• the use of a range of computer-based technologies, such as databases, multimedia, graphics programs and electronic communication, to enhance dramatic meaning in their playbuilding, scripts, texts, and performances.

Appreciating – Additional Content

Outcome 5.3.2: A student analyses the contemporary and historical contexts of drama.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• experience and appreciate a range of dramatic and theatrical performances	• various ways to read, appreciate and evaluate drama and theatre performances
• deconstruct and analyse contemporary and historical texts and forms	• the way the study of different contexts can inform contemporary practice
• understand the contemporary and historical contexts of drama and theatre	• the impact of social, political, economic and cultural influences on the creation and performance of drama and theatre in different forms and styles
• analyse and debate the representations of difference and diversity related to race, gender and culture in drama and theatre	• the significance of contemporary and historical contexts in shaping views through texts and performances
• enjoy the aesthetic and dynamic nature of drama.	• the fact that entertainment is a powerful form of learning.

Appreciating – Essential Content

Outcome 4.3.3:	A student describes the contribution of individuals and groups in drama using relevant drama terminology.
Outcome 5.3.3:	A student analyses and evaluates the contribution of individuals and groups to processes and performances in drama using relevant drama concepts and terminology.

Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• investigate and analyse dramatic ideas through enactment, drama workbook, discussion and debate	• the selection and use of various ways to present ideas and information about drama
• use appropriate language individually and within the group when devising, enacting, discussing, debating or writing about drama	• the value of a shared terminology
• reflect on their own work and the work of others	• the importance of accepting positive, constructive feedback, evaluation and analysis of group or individual works
• recognise dramatic problems and solve them individually and in a group	• the process of refinement through trial and error
• recognise the contribution and commitment of individuals and groups to drama and acknowledge a diversity of views	• respecting and appreciating commitment in the collaborative process and the diverse approaches to drama making and performing
• value the collaborative nature of drama work	• acknowledging the attitudes and views of others through working collaboratively in the development of dramatic meaning
• enjoy drama and theatre as a community activity.	• the ways drama and theatre can provide enriching experiences for young people.

Appreciating – Additional Content

Outcome 5.3.3:	A student analyses and evaluates the contribution of individuals and groups to processes and performances in drama using relevant drama concepts and terminology.
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• investigate, analyse and synthesise dramatic ideas through enactment, workbook, formal writing, discussion and debate	• expressing emotion and ideas, thinking critically, enacting, discussing and writing dramatic material in various ways
• use appropriate drama terminology	• key drama terms and concepts
• recognise and negotiate dramatic problems and solve them individually and in a group	• the process of refinement through trial and error in process drama
• research the contribution of various historical and contemporary drama practitioners and groups	• appreciating innovative dramatic approaches of individuals and groups in different social, cultural, political and historical contexts
• consistently value and respond to the collaborative nature of drama work	• acknowledging the attitudes and views of others through working collaboratively in process drama
• critically reflect on their own work and the work of others	• the value of reflective practices in drama and theatre
• enjoy and experience drama and theatre as a community activity.	• social/cultural competencies and the enjoyment and enrichment that drama provides for lifelong learning.

Life Skills

For some students with special education needs, particularly those students with an intellectual disability, it may be determined that the above content is inappropriate. For these students, Life Skills outcomes and content can provide a basis for the development of a relevant and meaningful program – see section 8.

7.3 The Elements of Drama

Role and character
Role: Embracing a role involves representing a point of view and identifying with a particular set of values and attitudes. When a role is assumed, relationships can be established pivotal to dramatic action such as relationships between people, between people and ideas, between people and the environment. This negotiation of the situation and roles is an important and necessary phase in all drama.

Character: Characterisation is the process of developing from a role to build a complex personality and background for a particular character. Intention, status and attitude are integral ingredients for a character's motivation and belief. Complexity in character can be developed through interaction and relationship with others.

Focus
In Drama Years 7–10, two types of focus are developed. The first point of focus is the performer's focus, used to create and sustain concentration and belief. The second type of focus refers to the point where the dramatic action is directed. The focus of any dramatic situation can be planned to help frame the action and can be created by attention to space, motifs, props, gestures, eye contact, language, voice and contrasts. As the drama progresses, a sharp focus must be maintained; otherwise the action will become blurred and the direction lost.

The following techniques could assist in maintaining clarity of focus:
- Space: levels, physical proximity and groupings are all means of focusing an action
- Motifs: dramatic action will provide opportunities for characters to create things to do, which can be repeated regularly throughout the drama. Once these patterns have been established a clear focus for the action is ensured every time the character returns to the motif
- Props: props are often essential to dramatic action; when introduced they can serve to focus the drama
- Gesture: any gesture which concentrates attention (for example, pointing, facing the action, touching), also helps establish focus
- Eye Contact: eye contact between individuals and within groups is an important way of controlling and focusing the action
- Language and Voice: focus is determined not just by who is speaking, but also by what is being said and the way it is being said
- Contrasts: focus is also achieved through contrasting images, eg all performers moving quickly except one who is still; all performers speaking together softly except one who speaks above the others; all performers in darkness except one who is in the light.

Tension
Tension is the force which drives all drama. It creates a powerful and complex form of energy on stage which, in turn, generates a level of excitement in the audience. There are four major ways of creating and intensifying dramatic tension:
- the creation of a problem or *task* that characters must complete in order to achieve a goal or not
- the development of *relationships* between characters and managing the relationships, eg someone may change, someone may leave
- the creation of *surprise* where the characters and audience don't know what's ahead. Suddenly the circumstances unfold and a shock occurs
- the development of a notion of *mystery* with the characters and audience not knowing what it all means. The action moves forward; everything becomes clear.

Time
Time refers to the period in which the dramatic action can occur. Time can remain constant or shift, depending on the circumstances and contexts of the drama. Time affects the place and situation that characters find themselves in.

Place
All dramatic action occurs at a time and place. Different settings dictate other characters that might be introduced, certain settings will intensify the action, multiple locations can enable us to explore many aspects of the situation, while the use of contrasting settings can help to build the dramatic tension.

Situation
Situation refers to the circumstances the characters are in. Characters and their relationships are shaped by the situation. The situation is also created by the intentions or motivations of the characters.

Space
Space refers to both the shape of the stage/performance space and the spatial design contained in the performance space. Awareness of spatial dynamics and spatial relationships within the design are essential to the realisation of dramatic coherence. The physicality of the performer's body in relation to other performers' bodies and the spatial design of the performance area constantly create meanings, which are visually read or interpreted by the audience.

Structure
The structure is the framework through which the content of the drama is presented. Structural elements such as narrative and plot can shape or order the nature of how the dramatic message is communicated.
- Narrative: Drama is comprised of a narrative structure. The events in a narrative are not random, but linked by cause and effect.
- Plot lines: The plot line carries the dramatic action forward. Plot lines can be simple, complex or cyclic. They can be linear or non-linear. The plot line creates a dramatic framework for the narrative.

Language
In drama, ideas, feelings and needs are expressed through verbal and non-verbal language. Dramatic action is enriched when vocal and physical dynamics are carefully used to reinforce and strengthen the language.

Sound
Sound incorporates many aural devices to enhance performance, create mood and establish atmosphere, generate emotion and build dramatic tension. Sounds may be as diverse as the use of realistic sound effects, music or soundscapes through to the use of body percussion.

Movement
Movement expresses action and, like language, is dictated by situations, roles and relationships. It can be realistic or abstract. Mood, symbols and motifs can be expressed in movement, which can enrich the dramatic action and create powerful meanings.

Rhythm
Rhythm is the manipulation of timing through pace and tempo. It involves an awareness of the internal patterns within the performance. Rhythms are manipulated according to focus, situation, characters and dramatic tension, which impacts on the desired audience reaction.

Moment
Moments in the drama are fundamental to the pacing of the dramatic action. The tempo, which refers to the management of time in a broad sense, is often punctuated by the moment. The precise use of time from one moment to the next is called timing. It is an integral factor in building dramatic tension. The control or manipulation of key moments affects the audience's engagement and understanding of the performance.

Atmosphere
Atmosphere is the feeling or mood that is created by, and emerges through, dramatic action. It is closely linked with tension: as the tension in a drama builds so too does the mood and this strengthens the tension. Drama appeals to the senses to evoke the atmosphere and the emotions to intensify the mood.

Symbols
Symbols can help you understand and focus the drama – they can sum up the meaning of the performance, sometimes on a subconscious level. They can be expressed through the visual imagery of language, movement, gesture, objects, design and staging, helping to reinforce the meaning of the whole experience.

Dramatic meaning
Dramatic meaning is created through the manipulation of the elements of drama which are interrelated and interdependent. The purpose of any piece of drama is integral to its form or style. Dramatic meaning is what is communicated between the performers and the audience to create an actor-audience relationship.

Audience engagement
The level and type of an audience response depends on the drama maker's awareness and control of the desired actor-audience relationship in relation to the chosen form or style, and within the context of the performance space. The purpose of the performance impacts on the type of audience engagement created, from laughter to alienation, and makes clearer dramatic meaning.

7.4 Dramatic Contexts

The contexts of dramatic forms, performance styles and their dramatic techniques and theatrical conventions refer to the ways in which we engage in and shape dramatic action. Dramatic forms and performance styles, as terms, are somewhat interchangeable in the *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus*. For example, mime is a dramatic form as is street theatre. However, a single text may be done in many different performance styles such as realistic, comic or absurd styles or in the style of a morality play (even though a Medieval Morality play is a dramatic form in its own right).

Each form or style has its own recognisable techniques and conventions. These techniques and conventions can be taught as part of the form or style, or separated out. For example, playbuilding could incorporate the conventions of chorus or mask (from Ancient Greek theatre) and shadow puppets (Theatres from Asia) and the dramatic technique of juxtaposition. Improvisation might use the conventions of a Shakespearian sonnet or rhyming couplets, encouraging audience members to become spect-actors (Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed) or it might use stock characters (commedia). These are indicative of some techniques or conventions associated with established forms and styles.

Compulsory context – playbuilding

Playbuilding is the compulsory dramatic context and a unit of playbuilding must be studied in every 100 hours of drama undertaken. It is a key method of making, as well as a style of performance, and it stands alone as a dramatic form in its own right.

Playbuilding refers to a group of students collaborating to make their own piece of drama. Through playbuilding students should be able to explore their own worlds, create worlds beyond their immediate environment and investigate the social/cultural context of the human experience. Students should playbuild in response to a range of different stimuli and investigate a range of dramatic forms and performance styles to assist them to devise and structure their own works.

Other dramatic contexts

At least one other dramatic form or performance style must be studied as part of the essential content. At least two other dramatic contexts must be studied for each subsequent 100 hours of additional drama content. The dramatic forms and performance styles listed below, together with their associated dramatic devices, technologies and theatrical conventions, may be used as a starting point for in-depth study or an integrated unit of drama-learning, depending on students' age and experience. Other appropriate forms or styles may be studied.

Examples of relevant dramatic forms and performance styles appropriate to study in Drama Years 7–10 include:

Improvisation
Inter-cultural drama and theatre
Political/protest theatre
Theatres from Asia
Small screen drama
Physical theatre
Creative movement

Scripted drama
Aboriginal performance
Medieval drama
Ancient Greek drama
Mime
Puppetry
Commedia dell'arte
Clowning/comedy
Vaudeville
Mask
Realism
Shakespeare
Melodrama
Street and environmental theatre

Improvisation
Improvisation is spontaneous, unscripted performance, used either as a key method of making drama, or as a rehearsal or live performance technique to communicate ideas and construct drama. Students use spontaneous or rehearsed improvisations to develop situations and dramatic meaning through the use of their imagination and increasing level of skills.

Inter-cultural Drama and Theatre
Inter-cultural drama refers to devising text that draws on a range of features from different cultures to develop and perform drama. For example, students may devise their own playbuilt piece using languages other than English or incorporate various cultural features such as dance, movement, songs, lullabies, images or costumes from their own or other cultures. Examining segments of texts such as 'Tess Lysotis' 'The Forty Lounge Café' may be beneficial.

Protest/Political Theatre
Protest/political theatre involves devising a piece of drama as a response to a chosen issue. Students explore their own world and worlds beyond their own environment to experience a sense of empowerment by utilising aspects of this form of theatre. Protest theatre usually involves presenting one view, a protest in relation to an issue, while political theatre may present a dialectic. Experimentation with different performance spaces and the conventions of working with different audiences would be beneficial. Research into a chosen issue and into drama practitioners who use political theatre, such as Boal, Fo or Brecht, may be advantageous.

Theatres from Asia
This dramatic context involves drawing on the conventions of traditional and contemporary Asian theatrical forms to create an original piece of drama in a particular performance style. Such dramatic forms may include: Japanese Kabuki, Noh, Bhutto or Bunraku puppet theatre, Indonesian Wayang puppetry, Chinese Opera, Indian Sanskrit drama or other Asian forms. Research into theatres from Asia and practitioners who use their conventions such as Suzuki may be advantageous.

Small Screen Drama
TV, film and video drama involves a group of students collaborating to create dramatic meaning using screen production technology. Students should investigate skills and techniques for devising, structuring and performing their own screen works. They should use appropriate technologies to shoot, edit and present their works.

Physical Theatre
Physical theatre is created from physical action, characterisation and stage composition. Inspiration and training is drawn from several performing arts disciplines, including improvisation, acrobatics, circus skills, mime, pantomime, street theatre, stage combat, buffooning, clowning, commedia dell'arte etc. Movement, dynamic stillness, gesture and physicalisation are its primary means of expression. Students should explore and present issues in a primarily physical yet safe way. Examining the work of groups such as 'Legs on the Wall' may be advantageous.

Creative Movement
Creative movement involves the interpretation and expression of a concept, symbol, theme, text, narrative etc through movement. Students focus on the body as the primary vehicle of expression and may research and experience the work of practitioners such as Laban in order to assist their own expression through movement.

Scripted Drama
Scripted drama involves the interpretation and performance of a written play text. Students should experience a variety of ways to approach and perform a script according to purpose and audience. Workshopping and performing whole or part segments of scripts from a range of styles and periods, including Australian theatre, would be advantageous.

Aboriginal Performance
A study of Aboriginal performance traditions involves students in researching the significance of performance in Indigenous cultures. Students may explore the significance of various conventions such as movement, makeup and markings, storytelling, narratives etc in order to understand the form and to inform contemporary practice. A further exploration of the ways in which Aboriginal characters are portrayed in contemporary drama and the role of Aboriginal writers and performers in contemporary society would be advantageous.

Medieval Drama
Medieval drama explores the role of the Christian Church in bringing theatre to life in the Middle Ages. Students might explore the social and historical context, form, content and staging of the Mystery, Miracle and Morality plays, and may experiment with ways to present such material in both traditional and contemporary ways. Presenting contemporary issues in the form of a modern Morality play would be advantageous.

Ancient Greek Drama
Ancient Greek drama grew out of celebrations, rituals and religious festivals. Historical perspectives in the study of this form could inform contemporary practice. Students might explore the conventions of comedy, tragedy, chorus, mask, costuming and performance styles relevant to this form through devising their own piece of drama or experimenting with scripts. They can experience staging through both indoor and outdoor settings.

Mime

Mime is a nonverbal form of expression that involves visual communication through gesture and actions. Students explore the distinct physical techniques of mime, both literal and abstract, through: experimenting with mimicking everyday actions; exaggerating actions; or presenting moments from stories, visual images from poetry or creations of their own imagination. Research into the conventions of the form and drama practitioners who have used it may be advantageous.

Puppetry

Puppetry involves the use of inanimate objects and a puppeteer's skill in breathing life into these objects. The study of this area could include traditional forms, from marionette and hand and rod puppets, to cultural forms of shadow puppetry (eg Wayang Kulit), lifesize puppetry (eg Banraku), to experimental forms where any object can become a puppet. Research into the innovative practices of companies such as Handspan in Australia and Philippe Genty from France and other practitioners would be beneficial.

Commedia dell'Arte

Commedia dell'arte means the comedy of the professional players and it relies greatly on the skills of the performers. Students might use improvisation and the creation of spontaneous scenarios to explore the stock characters and plot situations inherent to this form of Italian comedy. Performance in mask is integral to commedia dell'arte and students could experiment with the intricacies of this acting style. Research into historical and social contexts would be advantageous.

Clowning/Comedy

The clown is the jester, joker or wild card in the pack that can take on any value. The clown is a social lubricant, a creator of laughter that shakes things loose – a liberator. The study of this form could lead students to discover and develop their own clown and their story as each of us has our own clown buried within, presenting an irreducible playful essence. Clowning techniques such as juggling, simple balancing work, tumbling, tricks and unicycling, all within safe practice, could also be explored. An exploration of comedy as a performance style, the features of modern comedy and comedians, and the techniques they use may assist students in creating their own work.

Vaudeville

Vaudeville is a form of light entertainment interspersed with song, dance, and revue, in which recent events and popular ideas are parodied. Classical styles combine singers, dancers, comedians, acrobats, magicians, ventriloquists and animal acts. Students could explore the variety of acts within this form and draw on individual strengths to create their own Vaudeville show with relevance to contemporary events.

Mask

The origin of the mask is embedded in early ritual. A mask's function, then and now, is as diverse as masks themselves. Masks can be used in the classroom in a wide variety of activities and contexts, including playbuilding, movement or script work. Mask work allows students to cross language and cultural barriers and can be used to tell stories, to understand and engage with different cultures and to create ritualistic forms of expression. Research into diverse forms such as commedia dell'arte, Noh, Greek, Roman, and masks such as masquerade, neutral and Basel may be advantageous and assist students in making and using their own character masks.

Realism

Realism is a performance style grounded in reality and truth at all stages of the drama process. It developed in response to artificial acting styles. Realism encourages a response to scripts, playbuilding and dramatic forms in a truthful way that allows the performer and audience to be 'in the moment'. Realism techniques range from students exploring answers to such questions as 'who?', 'where?', 'when?', 'what?' and 'why?' and building a specific physical and emotional profile for a character, to using more complex techniques to develop a character's actions, such as concentration, inner truth, given circumstances, attention to specifics, goals and objectives. Research into the methods of practitioners such as Stanislavski may be advantageous.

Shakespeare

Shakespearian drama involves active engagement in a range of segments of Shakespearian texts or an in-depth study of a particular play. An exploration of the emergence of professional theatre and the style of acting, language and staging employed, as well as the social and historical context of Elizabethan England, may help inform contemporary practice. Students may choose to adapt ideas and narratives to a contemporary setting or experiment in producing text in a variety of ways.

Melodrama

Melodrama was a popular form of theatre in the 19th century which used spectacular settings and stage effects, and was formulaic in its use of a hero, heroine, villain, romance, violence and tear-jerking sentiment. Students may explore segments of traditional scripts or adapt the conventions of this form to devise their own works in a contemporary performance style such as soap opera.

Street and Environmental Theatre

Street theatre or environmental theatre, often called site-specific theatre, involves students exploring the performance of group-devised works in an outdoor environment in response to a chosen issue. Experimenting with different performance spaces and exploring conventions such as large-scale visual imagery, colour, costume, repeated motifs, music and audience engagement would be beneficial.

8   Life Skills Outcomes and Content

The Board of Studies recognises that a small percentage of students with special education needs may best fulfil the mandatory curriculum requirements for Drama by undertaking Life Skills outcomes and content. (Requirements for access to Life Skills outcomes and content are detailed in Section 1.2.)

Life Skills outcomes will be selected on the basis that they meet the particular needs, goals and priorities of each student. Students are not required to complete all outcomes. Outcomes can be demonstrated independently or with support.

In order to provide a relevant and meaningful program of study that reflects the needs, interests and abilities of each student, schools may integrate Drama Life Skills outcomes and content across a variety of school and community contexts.

8.1   Outcomes

Objectives Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills through:	Outcomes A student:	
1 **making** drama that explores a range of imagined and created situations in a collaborative drama and theatre environment	LS.1.1	explores characters, roles, situations and actions through drama activities
	LS.1.2	explores a variety of playbuilding activities
	LS.1.3	participates in drama experiences in which role-taking is used to enhance their understanding of ideas and feelings
2 **performing** devised and scripted drama using a variety of performance techniques, dramatic forms and theatrical conventions to engage an audience	LS.2.1	explores dramatic forms and theatrical conventions
	LS.2.2	participates in the preparation of drama works and theatrical productions
3 **appreciating** the meaning and function of drama and theatre in reflecting the personal, social, cultural, aesthetic and political aspects of the human experience.	LS.3.1	experiences a variety of drama or theatre performances
	LS.3.2	identifies and responds to the elements of drama or theatre in performances
	LS.3.3	recognises that drama and theatre performances can communicate meaning and ideas.

8.2 Content

The content forms the basis for learning opportunities. Content will be selected on the basis that it meets the needs, goals and priorities of each student. Students are not required to complete all of the content to demonstrate their achievement of an outcome.

The examples provided are suggestions only.

Objective 1
A student will develop knowledge, understanding and skills through **making** drama that explores a range of imagined and created situations in a collaborative drama and theatre environment.

Outcome LS.1.1: A student explores characters, roles, situations and actions through drama activities.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• identify a range of familiar characters	• the characteristics of familiar roles/characters from live theatre, TV, film/video, literature, personal life
• explore familiar roles/characters in drama activities	• the characteristics of familiar roles/characters such as mothers, policemen, sporting heroes etc
• explore the use of verbal and non-verbal communication appropriate to roles/characters	• ways to create verbal and non-verbal communication such as voice, stance and gesture
• explore movement appropriate to roles/characters	• ways to use movement to create character, eg walk slowly, walk shyly, walk excitedly
• explore voice appropriate to roles/characters	• ways to use voice to create characters, eg speak in monotone, speak with a high-pitched voice, speak hesitantly
• explore roles/characters through improvisation techniques.	• the use of improvisation to explore roles/characters and relationships, eg a number of characters meeting in a variety of situations for a range of reasons.

Outcome LS.1.2:	A student explores a variety of playbuilding activities.
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• play improvisation games to develop improvisation skills	• improvisation skills through established games and rules
• playbuild using a variety of stimuli to communicate dramatic meaning	• playbuilding strategies such as improvisation, different stimuli (such as place, situation, theme, characters and issues)
• sequence playbuilt scenes in an ordered way.	• a dramatic sequence – beginning, middle, climax, end – to convey dramatic meaning.

Outcome LS.1.3:	A student participates in drama experiences in which role-taking is used to enhance their understanding of ideas and feelings.
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• participate in role-taking experiences	• the fact that taking on a role is like 'stepping into another person's shoes'
• display different ideas and feelings when in roles	• showing feelings such as happiness, anger, excitement in different roles
• display appropriate behaviour when stepping into the roles of others	• respect for others and collaboration in drama activities
• use role-taking as a technique, eg to communicate effectively with others.	• communicating ideas, negotiating with others, exploring other people's feelings and points of view, and exploring strategies for resolving problems.

Objective 2

A student will develop knowledge, understanding and skills through **performing** devised and scripted drama using a variety of performance techniques, dramatic forms and theatrical conventions to engage an audience.

Outcome LS.2.1: A student explores dramatic forms and theatrical conventions.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• explore a variety of dramatic forms and theatrical conventions in order to vary drama performances	• techniques and conventions such as improvisation, mime, puppetry, mask, chorus, monologue, narrator and movement
• use performance skills to participate in the making and performing of a variety of drama and theatre performances	• the use of performance and expressive skills in dramatic presentations such as voice, projection, movement, timing and facial expressions
• develop confidence when moving and acting in a designated performance space	• developing confidence, trust and collaboration with others
• maintain focus in a drama or theatre performance.	• concentration and focus in drama and theatre.

Outcome LS.2.2: A student participates in the preparation of drama works and theatrical productions.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• identify some of the different activities associated with a dramatic or theatrical production	• production elements such as acting, lighting, sound, costumes, makeup, sets, front of house, stage management and publicity
• participate in a range of activities involved in preparing for a dramatic or theatrical production.	• the operation of basic lighting and sound equipment, finding or making costumes, applying makeup, helping with sets, publicity, front of house or backstage work.

Objective 3

A student will develop knowledge, understanding and skills through **appreciating** the function of drama and theatre in reflecting the personal, social, cultural, aesthetic and political aspects of the human experience.

Outcome LS.3.1: A student experiences a variety of drama or theatre performances.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• recognise that drama may be performed in different forms and styles and for a range of purposes	• the variety of dramatic forms or styles and the different reasons that drama may be performed, eg comedy to make us laugh
• experience a range of live or recorded drama or theatre performances	• appreciating different performances, eg individual student and class performances, performances at school by visiting groups, performances in the community
• identify and display appropriate audience behaviour in different situations	• appropriate ways of engaging in audience participation, such as expressing appreciation at appropriate times, actively participating in performances when invited, listening attentively, entering and leaving performances at appropriate times, locating and sitting in an allocated seat
• enjoy drama and theatre as a community activity.	• the way drama can promote lifelong enjoyment and learning.

Outcome LS.3.2: A student identifies and responds to the elements of drama or theatre in performances.	
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• identify particular elements of a performance which are of special significance	• the way meaning and significance is conveyed through elements such as plot, characters, costumes, sets, lighting and sound
• indicate a preferred/favourite character in a drama and give reasons for their choice	• the main features or developments in a role/character in a drama or theatre performance which are appealing to an audience
• communicate responses to drama and theatre in different ways	• different ways to express ideas about drama, such as in a drawing or collage, class discussion, or on a computer
• communicate responses to their work or the work of others, or to live or recorded drama and theatre performances.	• different responses to drama, such as displaying empathy for a particular character in a drama, expressing enjoyment in response to a comedy, agreeing with an idea or issue raised in a performance, or describing how the interaction between characters affected the mood of a particular performance.

Outcome LS.3.3:	A student recognises that drama and theatre performances can communicate meaning and ideas.
Students learn to:	**Students learn about:**
• express their own ideas in a piece of drama	• ways to turn their ideas into a monologue or playbuilt scene
• recognise that drama and theatre are ways for individuals and groups to convey meaning and ideas	• the way an individual drama or theatre performance, TV show or film has conveyed ideas
• identify some key ideas conveyed through a drama or theatre performance.	• the fact that ideas can be presented in an entertaining way.

9 Continuum of Learning in Drama K–10

9.1 Stage Statements

Stage statements illustrate the continuum of learning in the *Drama Years 7–10 Syllabus* and are summaries of the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that have been developed by students as a consequence of achieving the outcomes for the relevant stage of learning.

Early Stage 1

Students who have achieved Early Stage 1 are able to take on basic roles and create imagined situations within their own dramatic play and in drama initiated by the teacher. In drama structured by the teacher, or with the teacher in role, students can respond within group roles, for example, all taking on the roles of 'market stall sellers' in the dramatic context. Fantasy characters and situations are taken from literature, the screen, and the students' imagination and from the representation of people and places in their everyday lives. Improvisation, movement, mime and storytelling forms convey the meaning of drama. Students are becoming aware that the elements of drama such as tension, contrast (loud/soft, fast/slow) and symbol can emphasise a specific aspect of the dramatic situation. Students reflect on their drama as makers and audience so that they begin to distinguish between imagined situations and everyday experiences.

Stage 1

Students who have achieved Stage 1 engage in many aspects of drama by taking on a range of imagined roles and situations, which may be sustained through changes in location or time. They explore roles of people with whom they are familiar and whom they observe in their everyday experiences. These include men and women of different ages from diverse social/cultural groups and involved in different occupations. They also create fantasy roles and situations.

Students make decisions with the teacher about how to establish the dramatic context by discussing dreaming stories, folk tales, selecting artifacts and adapting the classroom space or listening to music or a sound effect. Students demonstrate an understanding of extending imagined situations. For example, if the action of the drama revolves around a 'child' lost in the bush, then movement or storytelling could be used to explore the context of the lost, tired and hungry 'child' before they are found. In these ways students begin to understand narrative and alternative narrative structures in drama.

Students collaborate to make dramatic meaning about the human experience by investigating the forms of drama such as improvisation, movement, mime, storytelling, reader's theatre and puppetry.

Students develop their work using the drama elements of tension, contrast (loud/soft, fast/slow) symbol, time, space, focus and mood structured by the teacher. They are guided by the teacher to discuss these elements in their own and others' work. They reflect on drama from the perspective of the maker/deviser and audience.

Stage 2

Students who have achieved Stage 2 have taken on a diverse range of roles within various dramatic contexts. Students demonstrate an awareness of the drama processes of establishing the action of the drama, taking on roles and exploring a topic/issue in a dramatic context. Students refine aspects of role by sustaining their role either in their own groupings or with the teacher-in-role. They devise drama through playbuilding techniques, including improvising, researching, and sequencing dramatic episodes. Through playbuilding students explore alternative narrative sequences to convey the action of the drama and develop the dramatic context. For example, students create a still image or photograph that locates the drama at the beach then produce a series of sounds (sound-scape) that shifts the drama from the city to the forest. They make decisions on their own about movement, gesture, language and voice to develop the dramatic context and assist them in portraying distinctive characteristics of the diverse roles and situations they investigate.

Students have developed skills in the selection and use of the elements of drama including dramatic tension, contrast, symbol, time, space, focus and mood to portray a dramatic context. They are guided by their teacher in the use of the elements of symbol, the creation of dramatic mood and the inclusion of contrasts to convey meaning.

They can differentiate between and use the forms of drama such as improvisation, movement, mime, storytelling, puppetry, mask and playbuilding. They use these forms to create and portray imagined situations and role interactions. Students appreciate drama from the perspective of the maker/deviser, actor and audience.

Stage 3

Students who have achieved Stage 3 have developed and sustained roles and situations over extended periods of time within a diverse range of dramatic contexts. They have developed voice and movement skills that allow them to display more demanding aspects of their role such as status, which identifies the differences in the relationship between roles. Their role skills extend to portraying and challenging character stereotypes by placing emphasis on research and critical reflection. Their understanding of role, dramatic context, drama forms and elements enables the students to explore the nature of performance. They use various artefacts (items of significance), props, costumes, scripts, and texts (such as poems or screen material) to develop the action of the drama.

Students select and use the elements of drama — with decreasing dependence on the teacher — including dramatic tension, contrast, symbol, time, space, focus and mood to portray a dramatic context. They can differentiate between and use the forms of drama such as improvisation, movement, mime, storytelling, puppetry, mask, video drama and playbuilding. They are aware of the traditions associated with these and possibly other drama forms. Students recognise the elements and forms of drama and are able to talk about them with others. They recognise the importance of viewing drama from the perspective of deviser, actor and audience. They use these understandings to inform and challenge their own drama practice.

Stage 4

Students who have achieved Stage 4 Drama have made and explored imagined and created situations in a collaborative drama and theatre environment. They are able to identify and explore the elements of drama to create belief and clarity in character, role, situation and action. Students have developed skills in making drama through improvisation and playbuilding and exploring a range of ways to structure dramatic work using scripted and unscripted material.

Students have developed skills in performing drama using a variety of dramatic forms, performance styles, performance techniques and theatrical conventions and technologies to engage an audience and create dramatic meaning. They can create familiar and unfamiliar characters using expressive skills as key instruments of performance. Students have experimented with performance spaces and production elements appropriate to purpose and audience.

Students can appreciate the meaning and function of drama and theatre in reflecting the personal, social, cultural, aesthetic and political aspects of human experience. They are able to identify and describe elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques and theatrical conventions using drama terminology. Students recognise the contribution of individuals and groups in the creation of drama. They evaluate and interpret drama, viewing it from the perspectives of maker, performer and audience, and use these understandings to inform, guide and challenge their own drama practice in a collaborative manner.

Stage 5

Students who have achieved Stage 5 articulate a sophisticated understanding of the elements of drama through an engagement in the integrated practices of making, performing and appreciating drama within the context of playbuilding and other dramatic contexts. They manipulate the elements of drama to develop tension, belief and clarity in character, role situation and action. They demonstrate performance and acting skills that allow them to imagine, create and integrate demanding aspects of characters and roles, such as emotional complexity, physicality, status, motivation and intent. They are able to develop and enact a range of characters by placing emphasis on observation, research, and critical reflection and analysis.

Students have developed skills in making drama through improvisation and playbuilding, and through interpreting, creating and enacting scripts and texts. They enter into the collaborative process of devising drama through exploring and refining ideas and shaping their work using traditional and innovative dramatic structures. They have skills in using a range of dramatic devices and performance techniques to create and perform original and engaging work. They use dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques and theatrical conventions to shape dramatic meaning. Students have developed their skills in making drama in Stage 5 in areas such as design, direction, video-making and in manipulating the elements of production to meet a desired intention.

Students can perform drama using a range of dramatic forms and performance styles and they can manipulate performance spaces, technologies, and design and production elements, to communicate dramatic meaning. They apply appropriate acting and performance skills for a range of performance styles. They understand the significance of stagecraft and use appropriate voice and movement techniques to communicate effectively with an audience. Students can evaluate, use, adapt or manipulate aspects of chosen forms and styles to convey an intended meaning to an audience.

Students appreciate the function of drama and theatre in reflecting social and cultural aspects of human experience. They analyse and communicate the contemporary and historical contexts of drama, and can analyse contributions made by various individuals and groups to drama and theatre. Students evaluate and interpret drama using appropriate drama terminology, with an awareness of the unique relationship which exists between performer and audience. They use this understanding to make meaning of their world and to reflect and challenge audiences through devised and scripted works. Students have developed collaborative skills at each stage of their work and appreciate the notion of the ensemble in drama.

10 Assessment

10.1 Standards

The Board of Studies *K–10 Curriculum Framework* is a standards-referenced framework that describes, through syllabuses and other documents, the expected learning outcomes for students.

Standards in the framework consist of two interrelated elements:
* outcomes and content in syllabuses showing what is to be learnt
* descriptions of levels of achievement of that learning.

Exemplar tasks and student work samples help to elaborate standards.

Syllabus outcomes in Drama contribute to a developmental sequence in which students are challenged to acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills.

The standards are typically written for two years of schooling and set high, but realistic, expectations of the quality of learning to be achieved by the end of Years 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12.

Using standards to improve learning
Teachers will be able to use standards in Drama as a reference point for planning teaching and learning programs, and for assessing and reporting student progress. Standards in Drama will help teachers and students to set targets, monitor achievement, and, as a result, make changes to programs and strategies to support and improve each student's progress.

10.2 Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning in Drama is designed to enhance teaching and improve learning. It is assessment that gives students opportunities to produce the work that leads to development of their knowledge, understanding and skills. *Assessment for learning* involves teachers in deciding how and when to assess student achievement, as they plan the work students will do, using a range of appropriate assessment strategies including self-assessment and peer assessment.

Teachers of Drama will provide students with opportunities in the context of everyday classroom activities, as well as planned assessment events, to demonstrate their learning.

In summary, *assessment for learning*:
* is an essential and integrated part of teaching and learning
* reflects a belief that all students can improve
* involves setting learning goals with students
* helps students know and recognise the standards they are aiming for
* involves students in self-assessment and peer assessment
* provides feedback that helps students understand the next steps in learning, and plan how to achieve them
* involves teachers, students and parents in reflecting on assessment data.

Quality Assessment Practices

The following *Assessment for Learning Principles* provide the criteria for judging the quality of assessment materials and practices.

Assessment for learning:
- **emphasises the interactions between learning and manageable assessment strategies that promote learning**
  In practice, this means:
  – teachers reflect on the purposes of assessment and on their assessment strategies
  – assessment activities allow for demonstration of learning outcomes
  – assessment is embedded in learning activities and informs the planning of future learning activities
  – teachers use assessment to identify what a student can already do.

- **clearly expresses for the student and teacher the goals of the learning activity**
  In practice, this means:
  – students understand the learning goals and the criteria that will be applied to judge the quality of their achievement
  – students receive feedback that helps them make further progress.

- **reflects a view of learning in which assessment helps students learn better, rather than just achieve a better mark**
  In practice, this means:
  – teachers use tasks that assess, and therefore encourage, deeper learning
  – feedback is given in a way that motivates the learner and helps students to understand that mistakes are a part of learning and can lead to improvement
  – assessment is an integral component of the teaching-learning process rather than being a separate activity.

- **provides ways for students to use feedback from assessment**
  In practice, this means:
  – feedback is directed to the achievement of standards and away from comparisons with peers
  – feedback is clear and constructive about strengths and weaknesses
  – feedback is individualised and linked to opportunities for improvement.

- **helps students take responsibility for their own learning**
  In practice, this means:
  – assessment includes strategies for self-assessment and peer assessment emphasising the next steps needed for further learning.

- **is inclusive of all learners**
  In practice, this means:
  – assessment against standards provides opportunities for all learners to achieve their best
  – assessment activities are free of bias.

10.3   Reporting

Reporting is the process of providing feedback to students, parents and other teachers about students' progress.

Teachers can use evidence gathered from assessment to extend the process of *assessment for learning* into their *assessment of learning*. In a standards-referenced framework this involves teachers in making professional judgements about student achievement at key points in the learning cycle. These may be at the end of a year or stage, when schools may wish to report differentially on the levels of knowledge, understanding and skills demonstrated by students.

Descriptions of levels of achievement for Stage 4 and Stage 5 in Drama have been developed to provide schools with a useful tool to report consistent information about student achievement to students and parents, and to the next teacher to help plan the next steps in the learning process. These describe observable and measurable features of student achievement at the end of a stage, within the indicative hours of study. Descriptions of levels of achievement provide a common language for reporting.

At Stage 5 there are six levels of achievement. Level 6 describes a very high level of achievement in relation to course objectives and outcomes. Level 2 describes satisfactory achievement, while the level 1 description will help identify students who are progressing towards the outcomes for the stage.

At the end of Year 10, teachers of Drama Years 7–10 will make an on-balance judgement, based on the available assessment evidence, to match each student's achievement to a level description. This level will be reported on the student's School Certificate Record of Achievement.

At Stage 4 there are four levels of achievement. Level 4 describes a very high level of achievement; levels 2 and 3 describe satisfactory and high achievement that should provide a solid foundation for the next stage of learning. The level 1 description will help identify students who are progressing towards the outcomes for the stage.

For students undertaking Life Skills outcomes and content in Years 7–10, the content listed for each identified Life Skills outcome forms the basis of the learning opportunities for these students. It also provides examples of activities on which teachers can base judgements to report student progress in relation to individual learning goals.

10.4   Choosing Assessment Strategies

Planning for assessment is integral to programming for teaching and learning. In a standards-referenced framework, teachers assess student performance on tasks in relation to syllabus outcomes and make on-balance judgements about student achievement. Assessment relies on the professional judgement of the teacher and is based on reliable data acquired in a fair and challenging environment, from multiple performances in a variety of contexts. Assessment is fundamental for furthering student learning.

In planning programs, teachers, individually and collaboratively, review the syllabus and standards materials. They use these materials to describe for themselves what students should know and be able to do at a particular stage, and they consider the kinds of evidence their students could produce to show they have learnt what they needed to learn.

Students are provided with a description of the learning expected to be accomplished, opportunities to discuss the criteria on which judgements will be based, time to learn, and where possible, examples of what that learning looks like.

Assessment is used to determine the students' initial knowledge, understanding and skills, to monitor student progress and to collect information to report student achievement. The assessment cycle is continuous; students receive and give themselves feedback on what they have learnt, and what needs to be done to continue their learning. Students gain information about their learning through feedback from teachers and from self-assessment and peer assessment. The challenge and complexity of assessment tasks increase to enable students to develop evaluative independence as they assess their own knowledge, understanding and skills, and determine ways to improve their learning.

Teachers of Drama should employ a range of assessment strategies to ensure that information is being gathered regarding the knowledge and understanding that are being acquired, and the skills that are being developed. Strategies should be appropriate to the outcomes being addressed, be manageable in number and be supportive of the learning process. Teachers could work collaboratively in planning appropriate assessment strategies. Working collaboratively leads teachers to develop a shared understanding of the syllabus standards and also supports teachers in making consistent and comparable judgements of student achievement in relation to these standards.

In planning for assessment in Drama it is important for teachers to consider:
· the requirements of the syllabus
· the accessibility of the proposed activity in terms of language requirements
· the appropriateness of the challenge presented to individual students
· resource availability
· how the task will be administered
· the way in which feedback will be provided.

In planning for assessment, teachers of Drama need to consider how results will be recorded, with a view to ensuring that there is sufficient and appropriate information collected for making an on-balance holistic judgement of the standard achieved by the student at the end of the stage. The evidence collected should enable teachers of Drama to make consistent judgements to meet the various reporting requirements that the system, school and community may have.

A number of assessment techniques are used and integrated within the practices of making, performing and appreciating drama. Such assessment activities may include; inquiry-based research assignments and projects, presentations, peer assessment and self-assessment.

Making

Making allows students to contribute, select, develop, structure, create, interpret, enact, refine and manipulate (both individually and in a group) in the process of making drama. Making fosters an understanding of how drama/theatre works in both imagined and created situations.

Assessment activities might include:
- devising drama works and refining work in progress
- developing roles/characters through improvisation and/or text study
- creating small screen drama
- researching various social and cultural issues from a number of sources including the internet
- structuring playbuilding scenes using a range narrative and linking devices
- investigating and enacting conventions and techniques of chosen dramatic forms and/or performance styles.

When making is used for assessment purposes, students could be assessed on their ability to demonstrate:
- understanding of dramatic forms and performance styles in practice
- improvisation and creation of narrative structures, roles and characters from various stimuli
- development, expression and communication of ideas and intentions through selecting and enhancing appropriate elements of drama
- use of appropriate terminology when describing dramatic meaning while making
- performance, expressive and collaborative skills in process drama.

Performing

Performance allows students to demonstrate acting and performance skills using dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic devices, technologies and theatrical conventions to explore, structure and refine ideas. It is a collaborative process where meaning is created through the performers' relationship with the audience.

Assessment activities might include:
- performing group-devised playbuilding which demonstrates an understanding of the elements of drama and which achieves an intended meaning for an audience
- performing scripted drama such as monologues, duologues, short scenes or entire works
- performing playbuilding which explores features of dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic devices, theatrical conventions and technologies
- performing dramatic forms in their own right.

When performing is used for assessment purposes, students could be assessed on their ability to demonstrate their:
- acting and performance techniques that communicate dramatic meaning to a given audience
- ability to use performance spaces, theatre conventions and production elements and technologies appropriate to purpose and audience

- understanding of the features of various dramatic forms, styles, conventions and technologies for a variety of different audiences
- collaboration skills as a part of an ensemble.

Appreciating

Appreciation allows students to demonstrate their understanding, experience, investigation, development, and evaluation through a variety of methods both individually and in a group. Appreciating fosters reflection on the personal, social, cultural, aesthetic and political aspects of the human experience. It provides a cultural and historical context for drama as an artform. Appreciating is a pathway to dramatic literacy through interpretation and analysis.

Assessment activities might include:
- formal writing about dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic devices, theatrical conventions and technologies
- written drama workbook as a record of the development of understanding of the elements of drama, reflections and responses to process drama
- oral presentations critiquing drama/theatre processes and performances
- evaluation sheets (self & peer), feedback, character profiles, design worksheets relating to drama activities
- analysis of historical and contemporary contexts of drama including primary and secondary sources regarding performances, writers, texts, directors, designers and companies.

When appreciating is used for assessment purposes, students could be assessed on their ability to demonstrate their:
- understanding of the elements of drama and how they are used to create dramatic meaning and audience engagement
- understanding of the ways dramatic forms reflect the personal, social, cultural and political aspects of the human experience such as change or conflict
- understanding of performance styles and how to analyse and evaluate them
- understanding of the characteristics of different dramatic techniques, theatrical conventions and technologies
- ability to critically reflect on their work and the work of others in a variety of forms.

Peer assessment

Drama encourages the active involvement of students in the learning process. Opportunities exist for individual and collaborative work. Activities involving peer assessment might include evaluating the contribution of individuals to a group task, and reflecting on a peer presentation.

Self-assessment

In Drama students are encouraged to acquire basic skills to become self-directed learners. Opportunities exist for students to reflect on their progress towards the achievement of the syllabus outcomes. This reflection provides the basis for improving their learning. Developing self-assessment skills is an ongoing process, becoming increasingly more sophisticated and self initiated as a student progresses.