

Drama: Year 12

Why Study Drama?



“Drama and theatre studies will develop your creative and critical theatre skills whilst deepening your knowledge and understanding of drama.

You will improve your communication skills through academic analysis and improve your creative and practical skills through performance.”

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What background do I need?

- A GCSE in Drama or Performing Arts is a **good starting point** but not a necessity. However, you do need to have an **interest in live theatre** as you will need to participate in a number of **theatre trips** during the course.
- Good grades in English GCSEs are also a useful foundation for A level Drama and Theatre. You will have studied drama texts from a literary perspective and have developed effective essay writing skills.



What background do I need?

- Opportunities for theatre and costume design in the practical component of the course may well be of interest to you if you have done well in Art at GCSE.



TASK:

- Talk to as many different people in the group as possible about their reasons for choosing a Drama/Performing Arts/Theatre Studies based course and what they hope to gain from it.
- Are other people's reasons similar to, or very different from your own?
- How many different reasons can you list after your discussions and did any of them surprise you?

10 MINUTES



How many of the following did you come across?

"Drama is my passion. I have been involved in school plays/amateur dramatics from an early age and I just love it."

"I enjoyed GCSE Drama and did well."

"I thought it would go well with my English Literature course."

"I'm quite interested in getting involved in technical or design elements of theatre."

"I am looking at this as a 'stepping stone' to move on to Drama college. I want to be an actor."

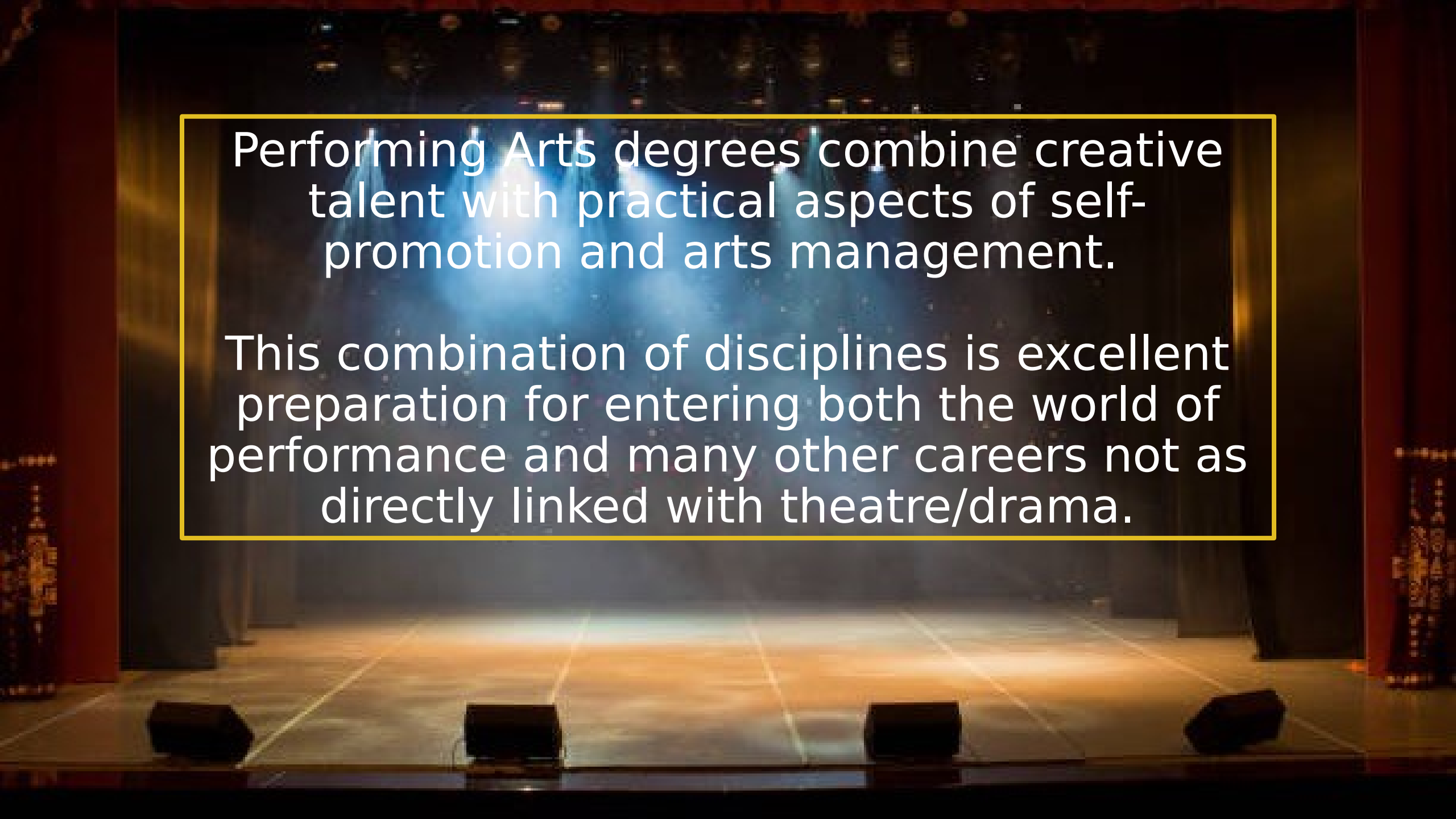
"I'm interested in going on to university to do a degree in Drama or Performing Arts and this seemed the most sensible route."

"To be honest, I thought it might be a bit easier than some of the other courses on offer."

"As a Science student, I wanted something to provide breadth when it came to university applications and give me some variety."

Here are some common misconceptions

- Drama is an easy option at A Level
- It is for non academics and won't be taken seriously post-18
- It is only for people who want to be actors
- It is only for very confident and talented performers

A photograph of a stage with several spotlights illuminating the floor. A yellow-bordered text box is overlaid on the upper half of the image. The text inside the box is white and discusses the combination of creative talent and practical aspects of self-promotion and arts management in performing arts degrees.

Performing Arts degrees combine creative talent with practical aspects of self-promotion and arts management.

This combination of disciplines is excellent preparation for entering both the world of performance and many other careers not as directly linked with theatre/drama.

Careers in performing arts

TASK:

- Divide a sheet of paper into two vertical columns.
- On one side, list the jobs you can think of which are directly linked to the performing arts.
- On the other side, list the jobs you can think of where an A-level or degree in a performing arts subject would be an advantage.



Are you interested in pursuing any of the areas listed below?

What could you add to the list?

- Actor
- Dancer
- Musician
- Design/technical theatre
- Community Arts
- Theatre-in-education
- Drama/music therapy
- Directing
- Choreography
- Arts administration
- TV presenter
- Film director
- Teaching
- Motivational speaker
- Theatre management
- Writing for film/theatre

What will I be doing?

- You will be engaging with a **variety of play texts and practitioners** to develop not only your knowledge, but also your practical skills as an actor, designer or director.
- You will work **collaboratively with others** to interpret and perform not only extracts from play texts but also devise theatrical pieces, so effective teamwork is essential.
- You will have to provide evidence, in the **form of a portfolio**, of how you have analysed, interpreted and evaluated your performances.



What will I be doing?

- You will need to **sit a written paper** which will assess your knowledge of live performance and wider understanding of theatre.
- You will need to **attend organised theatre trips** and experience as much live theatre as possible during the course. This will allow you to develop a deeper understanding of theatre, enabling you to answer the examination questions in more detail.



“It is not enough to discover the secret of a play, its thoughts and feelings – the actor must be able to convert them into living terms.”

Konstantin Stanislavski, Creating a Role



How can I prepare?

- ✓ **Reading plays, reviews and background information** will become an increasingly important aspect of your studies to help provide the necessary context to the texts and performances that you will be exploring through the course. Try to read as many plays as possible by a variety of different writers.
- ✓ Take the opportunity to experience as much live theatre as possible.



How can I prepare?

- ✓ If possible, join a local drama/theatre group so you are continuing to build on your own performance/design experience.
- ✓ Research a local performance venue or practitioner.
- ✓ For reviews, try looking at The Guardian, The Telegraph, The Stage or Whatsonstage



Home Study Task:

Find two (preferably contrasting) reviews of a recently performed live production and make notes on the following aspects:

- Which review would make you want to go and see this production?
- Which aspect(s) of the production do you feel made the biggest impression on the writer?
- Are any aspects of the production ignored by the writer(s) e.g. lighting, set design, and does this matter?
- How much time does each writer spend informing you about the plot/storyline of the play?
- How much insight is given into how the play has been interpreted by directors, designers and actors, its original context and relevance to audiences today?

A Career in Drama

Take a look at some options and some people's journey down this route:

<https://icould.com/explore/subject/drama+and+theatre+studies>

There are details of more possible job roles here:

<https://www.ucas.com/job-subjects/drama-music-and-performing-arts>



PiXL FUTURES

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