

## Course Information

**Award: Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Performing Arts (Acting Pathway)**

**UCAS Code: H882**

**Location:**

Southend Campus  
South Essex College of Further and Higher Education  
Luker Road  
Southend-on-Sea  
Essex  
SS1 1ND

**And**

South Essex College Thurrock Campus  
High Street  
Grays  
Essex  
RM17 6TF

The course timetable is predominately delivered at the Southend Campus, with final assessment rehearsals and performances being situated at the Grays Campus.

**Awarding Body:**

Pearson Education Ltd (BTEC).

Students who complete the course successfully will receive a Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Performing Arts. The agreement between South Essex College and Pearsons is reviewed on an annual basis for quality assurance purposes and was originally established in 2013.

**Professional Body Accreditation:**

N/A

**Duration:**

2 Years (full time)

**Academic Year:**

Full-time course: September 2019/2021

**Part-Time Study:**

No

**Work Placements:**

Throughout the programme, you will work with current industry practitioners on live unit briefs, providing a variety of vocational performance opportunities reflecting industry timescales and expectations, including our international collaborative site specific performance with an Italian based Theatre Company. The year two young director's festival acts as platform for you to showcase

independent performance work to industry specialists honing your skills as producers and company artistic directors.

### **Timetables:**

Timetables are normally available one month before registration, though we endeavour to let you know an outline as soon as possible. Please note that while we make every effort to ensure that timetables are as student-friendly as possible, scheduled teaching can take place on any day of the week and may include twilight sessions. Typically, year groups are expected to attend lessons for 15 hours a week spread over 3 days. We expect students to build on this learning through Independent Study for at least a similar period. For this time, we usually have space available within the Campus or at the Forum in Southend.

### **Entry Requirements:**

**Award:** Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Performing Arts (Acting Pathway)

**UCAS Code:** H822

### **Entry requirements 2019-20:**

You will need a minimum of 64 UCAS points from one or more of the following:

- At least two A-levels
- BTEC/UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma/Diploma/Subsidiary Diploma/Certificate [RQF]
- BTEC National Award/Certificate/Diploma [NQF]
- Access to Higher Education Diploma (minimum 15 credits at merit or above)
- International Baccalaureate
- AQA Baccalaureate
- Progression Diploma
- Advanced Diploma

You will also need GCSE English at grade C (old specification) or Grade 4 (new specification) or above OR a Level 2 equivalent such as functional skills qualification.

To find out how many points your qualifications are awarded, [view the UCAS Tariff tables](#).

You will also be required to undertake a portfolio-based interview. Portfolios should include examples of recent project work and may reference a variety of media.

### **Mature Entry:**

Applications from mature students who do not possess the entry requirements as listed above, but who possess related professional experience or professional qualifications are welcome to apply. You will need to demonstrate by interview, portfolio (this is likely to include evidence of paid or unpaid work experience) and/or written assessment that you are suitable for the course. In the first instance, we recommend you contact [HEAdmissions@southessex.ac.uk](mailto:HEAdmissions@southessex.ac.uk) to discuss your application.

### **International Applicants:**

If English is not your first language you will need an IELTS score of 6.0, with a minimum score of 5.5 in each component (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking), or an equivalent English.

## **Additional Requirements:**

### **Practical Audition and Interview**

As a prospective student, you will be required to present a monologue from a scripted play of your own choice (between 2 & 3 minutes in length). In addition, you will prepare a short presentation outlining a director's concept for a production of your choosing. The practical presentations will be followed by an interview with the course team. You will also need to provide an example of some written academic work. (Credit transfer and accreditation of prior learning or experience)

For further information, please visit our Credit Transfer page [\[link\]](#). Other qualifications and relevant work experience may also count for academic credit. Further information is available at our

### **Course Overview:**

Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Performing Arts (Acting Pathway)

The nature of the Performing Arts industry is extremely competitive and the opportunities for career diverse. The HND in Performing Arts (Acting Pathway) has been designed to provide a vocational based programme equipping you with the required skills to succeed in the range of career paths available. Our programme provides diverse and challenging learning experiences, whose aim is to extend and consolidate your expertise as a total performance maker. You will in part refine your live performance skills (vocal & physical) alongside developing greater understanding and command of specific techniques in multi disciplines including, directing, devising, producing, adaptation & stage craft. The selection of units enables you to nurture your creativity, developing your own voice as future innovators within the art form. The overriding focus of the programme is based on acknowledging the importance of versatility & diversity to allow for longevity, ensuring that you can become an all-round live performance maker & practitioner, skilled for successful careers in the ever-evolving Performing Arts industry.

### **Year 1 (Level 4)**

The first year units have been designed to introduce you to the broad spectrum of the Performing Arts Industry with focus on a live theatrical performance specific pathway. You will study some of the core skills of the live theatre performer including, vocal technique (both spoken & singing) & movement skills for actors. With the exploration of theory based studies allowing for the acquisition of a wider understanding of the historical and cultural context of theatre as an Art form. You will be encouraged to develop reflective and enquiring approaches to your work, drawing on independent research in order to underpin your own practice. Within this year you will have the opportunity to participate in a collaborative project with the theatre company Teatro dei Borgia, resulting in a site-specific piece performed in Italy.

### **Year 2 (Level 5)**

Throughout your second year, an emphasis is placed on theatre making, and honing the transferrable skills required ensuring that you are a viable industry ready performance practitioner. You will have the opportunity to explore current industry trends through developing a cutting edge Contemporary Theatre project in semester one. The second half of the year focuses on developing your skills as a director and producer. The programme will help to prepare you to start up your own performance company, in addition to nurturing your

own creativity and allowing you to pursue the diverse range of further education or employment routes current within the industry.

### **Unit Information:**

Unit map

This unit map provides a list of the units that make up your course.

Each unit is worth a specified number of credits: all are compulsory, enabling you to cover key subject knowledge while developing your own interests.

You must take units worth a total of 120 credits at each level of the course- equalling in a total of 240 credits for the complete qualification.

Our teaching is informed by research, and units change periodically to reflect developments in the discipline. You can always find the most up-to-date information about your units and who is teaching them through our VLE, Canvas and in the Course Handbook.

The units available on the course are as follows:

#### **Year 1 Full Time (*LEVEL 4*) Units – Actors Pathway**

Unit 1 – Performing Arts Industry

This core unit develops your awareness of key areas of working in performing arts and allows for exploration and research in all matters related to surviving and thriving within the performing arts industry. Employability, self-maintenance, managing finances and the increasing importance of online and offline marketing are all areas that will be covered throughout this unit. By the end of this unit, you will have a clear understanding of how the performing arts industry works and the steps that are required to access employment opportunities. You will also have developed your understanding of health and wellbeing within the performing arts environment.

Unit 2 – Professional Development

In this core unit you will explore the many potential avenues of employment that relate to your specialism, build an awareness of how to present yourselves to the market place and embark on a journey of professional development. On completion of this unit, you will have made decisions around your vocation and demonstrated the level of autonomy needed for success in the creative industry.

Unit 13 - Acting 1

The aim of the unit is to introduce you to accepted principles of acting technique. You will explore and develop technical and interpretive skills required to perform in a range of performance contexts and as such provide a foundation for future development, which, as your understanding of the acting process develops, you can shape to suit your own needs. On successful completion of this unit, you will understand key principles of the acting process including how to develop a character as well as an appreciation of the complexity and challenge of creating truthful performances.

## Unit 10 – Investigation of Specialism

The aim of this unit is to give you a grounding in the history of your specialist area, so that you may achieve a greater knowledge of their roots. Through the academic study of your chosen genre, you will also develop presentation and dissemination skills, refine your artist's voice, gain confidence and retain important historical information to use throughout your career. On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to disseminate and relate information relating to the history of your chosen specialist area and develop your presentation skills as a result. You will develop other skills such as writing, presenting, studying, recall, differentiation, discernment, cataloguing and indexing, all of which are crucial in today's digital world and are transferable skills, which cross over into any other career pathway.

## Unit 12 – Singing 1

This unit is designed to produce independent vocal practitioners. You will acquire a detailed physical understanding of the workings of the vocal mechanism and the technique and awareness required to achieve vocal performances of the highest possible standard. By the end of the unit, you will learn how to produce a more confident and tonally secure sound by developing their musical ear. You will learn a range of exercises and songs through which they will explore the fundamentals of good vocal production. The abdominal release required for effective singing is fundamentally opposed to the abdominal core strength required for the dance units. You will be encouraged to understand that you must develop the ability to master both requirements. By the end of this unit, you will be able to warm up, prepare your voices for performance effectively, and safely, be able to demonstrate basic breathing techniques and effective breath control understand the mechanisms of voice production and perform using the appropriate techniques.

## Unit 18 – Voice & Speech for Actors

This unit introduces you to the fundamental principles of vocal performance and how sound is formed physiologically. In this way, through the application of technique and exercises, you can develop an expressive and flexible vocal instrument capable of meeting the demands of a variety of material. Topics included in this unit are physiological sound formation, including the physical process of articulation, vocal health, voice production and vocal delivery. On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to understand the physiological formation of sound and how to develop and improve vocal quality through reflection and application of technique.

## Unit 19 – Movement for Actors

The aim of this unit is to provide you with an understanding of the importance of developing an expressive body as an essential component of their performance toolkit. You will acquire foundation skills in suppleness, strength and agility, which will facilitate the development of movement capability and physical presence. Topics included in this unit are identification of strengths and areas for improvement in terms of movement capabilities, exploration of movement methodologies, identifying a programme of exercises to develop somatic skills, and performing movement-based material. On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to demonstrate that you understand the strengths and weaknesses of your movement skills are able to address areas for improvement through a defined programme of exercises, develop material for performance and execute material for performance using appropriate movement skills.

## Unit 20 – Devising Theatre Performance

By the end of this unit, you will have developed a creative toolbox of methods, ideas, techniques that could all be applied to a devised work. You will also have improved your understanding of the contextual development of devising and its importance in today's creative arts industry. You will also have explored contemporary devising processes, including use of movement, text and ensemble, and developed your appreciation of the entire creative process and how it informs and links to the final product.

## **Year 2 Full Time (LEVEL 5) Units – Actors Pathway**

### **Unit 30 – Creative Research Project**

This unit will equip you from any area of interest with core research skills. Alongside learning qualitative and quantitative research methods, you will have the opportunity to apply these methods in the completion of a mini dissertation. With a strong emphasis on taking a creative approach to research, the completion of this dissertation will, in addition, demonstrate the academic requirements to progress into Level 6. By the end of this unit, you will be armed with the necessary tools to not only enter the final year of a university degree, but to embark upon any career path within the performing arts industry.

### **Unit 31 – Working in the Performing Arts Industry**

This unit has been designed in order to further explore working in the performing arts industry. It will help you to apply practical skills to prepare you for future employment as a performing art professional. In completing Level 4 of this qualification, you will have explored your career goals and your own individual skills in relation to future employment. This unit supports you in analysing those goals and how accessible they are, and the sustainability of your potential employment, so that you are fully informed about your intended progression route. By the end of this unit, you will have created a marketing strategy and online profile to enhance your future employability prospects. You will also have developed a personal strategy, having analysed health and wellbeing and your own development, to work towards a sustainable career in the performing arts industry.

### **Unit 42 – Acting 2**

Contemporary performance is dominated by the realistic tradition, whether it be through cinema, television, online or theatre. Central to this tradition is the dominance of Stanislavski-based systems as the essential component of actor training. While it should be acknowledged that Stanislavski was not intent on his system being solely applicable to realistic theatre, it has essentially become shackled to this genre. On successful completion of this unit, you will have explored a range of techniques and, in so doing, broadened your understanding of acting processes, developed your skill set and appreciated a more diverse range of theatrical practice.

### **Unit 40 – Physical Theatre**

The aim of this unit is to give you a focused overview of the genre known as physical theatre: setting up an understanding of what it means, where it's headed, its triumphs and landmarks. On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to use the required physical theatre movement-making language to develop and maintain a strong narrative foundation to use in the professional physical theatre. You will be able to apply both movement-making skills, as directed in class, as well as combine elements of dance technique and acting skills to create a piece of original work. You will also be able to present an authoritative project about your work.

## Unit 44 – Auditioning

This unit explores and prepares you for auditioning, whether it be professionally or for a higher-level course. Essential to the process is a considered and informed choice of material, which is honed and polished to present the performer in the best possible light. To make sound choices, you must understand your playing range, capabilities and what type of role you would be suitable for. On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to select a range of highly appropriate audition material for a variety of audition contexts, prepare your material vocally, physically and psychologically and present speeches demonstrating relevant performance and employability skills.

## Unit 52 – Performance Project

The purpose of training is to have the necessary abilities to be able to perform for an audience. This unit culminates in a public performance. This unit is designed to provide an opportunity to test the skills developed during training before an audience in either a live or recorded medium. You will gain knowledge of rehearsal processes as well as performance techniques. The intention should be that the rehearsal and performance aspects of the unit reflect professional working practices and give students an authentic experience of the workplace. On successful completion of this unit, you will have gained the satisfaction of producing a performance for an audience and appreciating the skills they have developed.

## Unit 68 - Directing

The role of director in any production requires a wide range of diverse skills and the ability to not only apply these skills, but to do so with a very clear creative vision. In this unit, you will explore the skills required to direct including exploring key directors and their techniques, interpreting and planning the realisation of creative content, working with a creative team to capture and inspire, the style and structure of a work and exploring the importance of having a strong understanding of the acting and writing process. Leadership and management skills and the skills required to create a healthy and creative working environment will also be explored. You will demonstrate your skill development through directing your own production, allowing you to develop your own unique style and artistry in a practical and relevant context. By the end of this unit, you will be able to carry out the role as a director and critically evaluate your directing process and skills.

### **Teaching and Learning:**

The learning outcomes in year one facilitate the discovery of key theories and principles, in acquiring basic practical skills, and in developing a knowledge framework with a limited amount of independence. In year two, the learning outcomes are geared towards industry requirements, in developing professional skills, and in synthesizing knowledge with independence. Throughout the programme, there is an emphasis on self-direction, working in teams, and in problem solving. These are inherent within the unit learning outcomes. Units are delivered through a variety of methods of teaching and learning. These include practical workshops and demonstrations, technique classes, group and individual projects, peer group presentations, lectures, seminars and tutorials. All courses emphasise active participation and experiential learning, in combination with the development of research, analytical and critical skills.

### **Independent learning:**

When not attending lectures, seminars and workshops or other timetabled sessions you will be expected to continue learning independently through self-study. Typically, this will involve reading

journal articles and books, working on individual and group projects, rehearsing, undertaking research in the library, preparing coursework assignments and presentations. A range of excellent facilities, including the library, the Learning Resource Centre and the Forum, supports your independent learning.

### **Overall workload:**

Total Guided Learning –Higher National Certificate (HNC) = 540 hours

Total Guided Learning –Higher National Diploma (HND) = 1080 hours

Your overall workload consists of class contact hours of around 15 hours per week, which is a full three days in college, split 5 hours theory and 10 hours practical. (120 credits per year).

There is an expectation for students to further develop their performance practice through rehearsal & workshops outside of timetabled classes for which the studio spaces will be made available. An additional 5 hours of Independent study is recommended.

The following information gives an indication of how much time you will need to allocate to different activities at each level of the course.

Level 4: 75% of your time is spent in timetabled teaching and learning activities

Teaching, learning and assessment: 540 hours

Independent learning: 180 hours (5 hours per week)

Level 5: 75% of your time is spent in timetabled teaching and learning activities

Teaching, learning and assessment: 540 hours

Independent learning: 180 hours (5 hours per week)

### **Assessment & Feedback:**

#### **Assessment:**

Coursework is assessed in a range of different ways in order to accommodate a variety of learning styles and aptitudes including workshops, rehearsals, performances, presentations, viva voce, written essays and research folders.

Percentage of the course assessed by coursework.

#### **Year 1- HNC**

**100% coursework: 75% Practical with a written element 25%**

#### **Year 2-HND**

**100% coursework: 75% Studio based with a written element 25%**

#### **Feedback:**

You will receive formative feedback as part of your one-to-one sessions with your unit teachers. You will also receive summative feedback on all formal assessments undertaken by coursework. Feedback is intended to help you learn and you are encouraged to discuss it with your unit leader tutor. Feedback can be given in a range of different ways in order to accommodate a variety of



learning styles and aptitudes including group critiques, recorded verbal feedback and written feedback.

We aim to provide you with feedback within 20 working days of hand-in for all summative coursework assessments.

### **Academic support:**

Our Academic Support Team provides help in the following areas:

- Study skills (including reading, note-taking and presentation skills)
- Written English (including punctuation and grammatical accuracy)
- Academic writing (including how to reference)
- Research skills (in conjunction with the library)
- Critical thinking and understanding arguments
- Revision, assessment and examination skills (including time management).

Our Disability Advice and Support Service helps students with additional needs resulting from disabilities such as sensory impairment or learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

### **Teaching staff:**

You will be taught by an experienced teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the units on the course. The team includes senior academics, professional practitioners with industry experience, co-ordinators and technical officers. Our teaching is informed by the research and consultancy we undertake, and all of our lecturers have a teaching qualification.

### **Course Costs:**

Course Name: **Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Performing Arts (Acting Pathway)**

Duration: 2 years (full-time)

Fees

For the academic year 2019-20, the tuition fees for this course are £7,500

	UK
Full-time	£7,000
Part-time	N/A (Full-time route only)

### ***The following course-related costs are included in the fees:***

- Overseas performance project to Italy working with internationally acclaimed theatre company Teatro dei Borgia.
- Workshops with current practitioners.
- A contribution to your end of year show from the Faculty of Higher Education.

### ***The following course-related costs are not included in the fees:***

- Educational visits per year – such as Art gallery trips & watching current performances work; from fringe venues to larger institutions including the National Theatre .
- Costumes & props costs for performance projects.

### **Accommodation and living costs not included in the fees**

This information can be obtained from our Accommodation Services home page

<https://www.southessex.ac.uk/higher-education/accommodation>

### **Sources of financial support:**

If you receive funding from Student Finance you may be eligible to apply for additional benefits.

Details can be obtained from our Student Services home page

<https://www.southessex.ac.uk/higher-education/fees-and-funding>