



paa
Performance Arts Awards

Screen Acting

Syllabus Specification

PREMIERE - GRADE 8





Screen Acting

Syllabus Specification

Premiere to Grade 8



All supporting material can be downloaded from
www.rslawards.com

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Welcome to the RSL Performance Arts Awards syllabus in Screen Acting

This syllabus guide is designed to give teachers, learners and candidates practical information on the graded qualifications in Screen Acting run by RSL Awards.

This syllabus guide covers the following qualifications

- Graded qualifications in Screen Acting: Premiere to Grade 8

Period of operation

This syllabus specification covers graded qualifications in Screen Acting, from September 2021.

The Value of RSL Qualifications

Performance Arts Awards (PAA) are part of RSL Awards. With a reputation for excellence, RSL is committed to providing high quality education and training through its syllabuses, examinations, music and resources. RSL advocates an open access approach to qualifications, providing a range of syllabuses, designed to accommodate a wide variety of candidates of different ages, experience and levels of achievement.

PAA graded examinations in Performance are tailor-made to support and encourage learners of all levels and abilities, and are accessible to learners from all countries and cultures. Having effective skills in communication and performance can boost confidence, increase employability skills, and have a hugely positive impact on a learner's future life and career.

Candidates taking a PAA examination will not only gain practical performance and communication skills but are also encouraged to reflect on their performance and the rehearsal process, developing their understanding of the material and the creative choices made.

Recognition, Regulation and UCAS:

All PAA graded Screen Acting exams are recognised by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations (OFQUAL)

RSL Screen Acting Grades 6, 7 & 8 carry allocated points on the UCAS (Universities & Colleges Admissions Service) tariff. Many students find these highly beneficial for university applications and entrance interviews. For full details relating to the allocation of points for our qualifications, please visit:

www.rslawards.com/about-us/ucas-points

Safeguarding including Health & Safety

RSL takes the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults extremely seriously and has put in place as many preventative measures as possible within its assessment structure and processes. For more details of these please see here: www.rslawards.com/about-us/safeguarding

Qualification Structure

PAA graded qualifications in Performance consist of a range of both practical and knowledge-based tasks which are based on detailed requirements outlined in the relevant syllabus.

Requirements for each grade are set out in detail in the Unit Specifications. The Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria for each unit require skills, knowledge, and understanding of the syllabus requirements to be demonstrated at the grade entered.

Candidate Access and Registration

Access and registration

The qualifications:

- are available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- are free from any barriers that restrict access and progression
- offer equal opportunities for all who wish to access them

Entry requirements

These qualifications are open to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standard; there are no entry requirements. However, candidates should be aware that the content at the higher grades will require a level of knowledge and understanding covered in previous qualifications. At the point of application, RSL will ensure that all candidates are fully informed about the requirements and demands of the qualification.

Age groups

These qualifications are suitable for candidates in the under 16, 16–18 and 19+ age groups.

Exam entry

Candidates may enter for a PAA Screen Acting Recorded Video Exam at any time of the year. For further details, current fees, and to enter for a PAA graded qualification visit the RSL website at: www.rslawards.com

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- One candidate
- Two candidates

All candidates are individually assessed.

Recommended prior learning (RPL)

Learners are not required to have any prior learning for these qualifications. However, learners should ensure that they are aware of the requirements and expectations of each grade prior to entering for an assessment.

Progression – where the qualifications could lead

Graded qualifications provide a flexible progression route for learners. They are a positive means of determining progress, and enable learners to develop the necessary techniques to gain entry to further education and higher education courses. In addition, industry professionals are confident that candidates achieving the highest level of graded qualifications will have developed the skills necessary to enhance employment opportunities in other areas, as a result of increased confidence, communication and presentation skills.

Total Qualification Time Allocations for all PAA Graded Screen Acting Examinations

Qualification title	QAN	Guided Learning Hours	Total Qualification Time	Credit Value
RSL Entry Level Award in Performance: Premiere (Entry 2)	603/7121/3	8	30	3
RSL Entry Level Award in Performance: Debut (Entry 3)	603/7135/3	10	40	4
RSL Level 1 Award in Performance: Grade 1	603/7134/1	12	60	6
RSL Level 1 Award in Performance: Grade 2	603/7136/5	16	80	8
RSL Level 1 Award in Performance: Grade 3	603/7137/7	18	100	10
RSL Level 2 Award in Performance: Grade 4	603/7138/9	20	130	13
RSL Level 2 Award in Performance: Grade 5	603/7139/0	24	150	15
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Performance: Grade 6	603/7140/7	26	170	17
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Performance: Grade 7	603/7141/9	30	190	19
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Performance: Grade 8	603/7142/0	40	240	24

Assessment Summary

Assessment	
Form of Assessment	All assessments are carried out by external examiners. Candidates are required to carry out a range of practical tasks underpinning the technical and performance assessment.
Unit Format	Unit specifications contain the Title, Unit Code, Credit Level, Credit Value, Learning Outcomes, Assessment Criteria, Grade Descriptor, and types of evidence required for the unit.
Bands of Attainment	There are four bands of attainment (Distinction, Merit, Pass and Unclassified) for the qualification as a whole.
Quality Assurance	Quality Assurance ensures that all assessments are carried out to the same standard by objective sampling and re-assessment of candidates' work. A team of external examiners is appointed, trained and standardised by RSL.

Expectations of Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

The graded examination system is based on the principle of 'progressive mastery': each step in the exam chain demonstrates learning, progression and skills in incremental steps.

Successful learning is characterised by a mastery of the fundamental skills demanded in each grade. Learners will be able to complete practical tasks and be tested on their underpinning knowledge (the complexity and variety of tasks are determined by which qualification is being attempted), which allow them to demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding relevant to the grade. These skills set a firm platform for further technical and creative development by the learner.

Quality Assurance

All RSL examinations and graded qualifications are standardised according to the processes and procedures laid down by RSL.

Examination Levels / Recommended Ages for PAA Examinations

PAA Screen Acting examinations are offered at four levels, in line with the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

Although RSL imposes no minimum or maximum age limit, it is advisable for candidates to enter at a level which is suitable and attainable for their age, overall maturity and ability to meet the Assessment Criteria published in this syllabus specification. The content of grades tends to reflect the typical ages of candidates entering for them. The following ages are **recommendations** only:

Grade Qualification	Suggested Entry Age	RQF Level
Premiere	4–5 years	Entry Level 2
Debut	5–6 years	Entry Level 3
Grade 1	7–8 years	Level 1
Grade 2	9–10 years	Level 1
Grade 3	11–12 years	Level 1
Grade 4	13–14 years	Level 2
Grade 5	15–16 years	Level 2
Grade 6	16+	Level 3
Grade 7	16+	Level 3
Grade 8	16+	Level 3

Further Information and Contact Details

Complaints and appeals

RSL's policy on complaints, enquiries and appeals for graded examinations is available at:

<https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>

Equal opportunities

RSL's Equal opportunities policy can be found at:

<https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>

Contacts for help and support

All correspondence should be directed to:

RSL

Harlequin House
7 High Street
Teddington
Middlesex
TW11 8EE

or info@rslawards.com

Unit specifications

Aims, Broad Objectives and Assessment Methodology

The aim of the PAA Screen Acting qualification is to motivate and encourage candidates of all ages and levels through a system of progressive mastery and a flexible approach to the development of skills, knowledge, and understanding required for screen acting.

These qualifications assess a range of interpretative skills, technical skills, and knowledge and understanding through the following components:

- Practical assessment: Performance tasks
- Knowledge and Understanding (Debut – Grade 8): Responding to questions relevant to the material presented

Learning Outcomes

A 'Learning Outcome' is a statement of what has been demonstrated as a result of successful completion of the assessment criteria.

The following are the broad Learning Outcomes which apply to all graded Screen Acting examinations, along with the relevant exam section. The Assessment Criteria, repertoire, technical challenges and knowledge requirements are set at each grade, and increase in difficulty as the grades progress:

Premiere to Grade 8 candidates:

Learning Outcome	Exam Section	Weighting
Learning Outcome 1: perform from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning of the chosen material	Tasks 1–3	30% of total marks
Learning Outcome 2: use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	Tasks 1–3	30% of total marks
Learning Outcome 3: use face and body in response to the material being presented	Tasks 1–3	30% of total marks
Learning Outcome 4 (Debut – Grade 8 only): * demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate) and rehearsal process (grades 5–8 only)	Task 4	10% of total marks

***Note that Premiere candidates do not undertake Task 4. For Premiere, total marks for Tasks 1–3 will be aggregated to a mark out of 100.**

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- One candidate
- Two candidates

Estimated Time Allowance

Each task must be recorded separately. The following timings refer to approximately how long each exam will take if each task is recorded one after the other. The timings allow for a minimal but reasonable amount of 'changeover' time between the recording of each task.

Premiere

- One candidate: 5 minutes
- Two candidates: 7 minutes

Debut

- One candidate: 8 minutes
- Two candidates: 12 minutes

Grade 1

- One candidate: 12 minutes
- Two candidates: 15 minutes

Grade 2

- One candidate: 13 minutes
- Two candidates: 17 minutes

Grade 3

- One candidate: 15 minutes
- Two candidates: 20 minutes

Grade 4

- One candidate: 17 minutes
- Two candidates: 23 minutes

Grade 5

- One candidate: 18 minutes
- Two candidates: 25 minutes

Grade 6:

- One candidate: 29 minutes
- Two candidates: 25 minutes

Grade 7

- One candidate: 25 minutes
- Two candidates: 35 minutes

Grade 8

- One candidate: 30 minutes
- Two candidates: 45 minutes

Examination Format

PAA Screen Acting examinations are offered as Recorded Video Exams only.

Process:

For RSL recorded video exams to be valid, there are a number of rules that must be adhered to. The Procedure Guide for RSL Recorded Video Screen Acting Exams can be found [here](#). Candidates and teachers must read the guidance in full, to ensure they have the best chance of submitting a video that we can accept for submission.

As an overview, the following conditions apply, irrespective of whether tasks/scenes are performed as a solo or in twos.

- **Only one camera / phone must be used when filming.**
- **A separate video must be made for each and every task.**
- **Videos must not be edited.**
- Each video must be clearly labelled with the candidates' name(s) and the task number.
- Videos must be uploaded as one package, clearly labelled with the candidate's name(s) and the grade taken. Candidates entering in twos upload the videos to one package, clearly labelled with both of their names and the grade taken.
- Knowledge and Understanding Video (Grades Debut – 8):
 - This must be filmed separately. Candidates announce their name and present their prepared response(s) to the questions (the number of which is dependent upon the grade), direct to the camera.
 - For exams with two candidates, one recording may be made, in which case each candidate should state their name and present their prepared responses, in turn.

General notes for all Screen Acting examinations:

- Own choice scenes: For Task 1 (Grades 1-8), Task 3 (Grade 6), and Task 3a (Grades 7/8), each candidate must play only **one character** in the chosen scene (i.e. solo candidates perform a monologue and candidates entering in twos perform a duologue).
- **Candidates perform all examination tasks from memory. Reading from a script is not permitted.**
- **Candidates entering in twos must be taking the same grade.**
- Chosen scenes: Pdf copies of the scripts of Task 1 scenes (Grades 1-8), Task 3 scenes (Grade 6), and Task 3a scenes (Grades 7/8) must be provided at least 14 days before the date the exam is due to be recorded. This can be done at the point of booking the exam, or as soon after as possible.
- Chosen scenes must not have been performed before by the same candidate within an RSL exam.

Camera shots:

- All camera shots required for PAA Screen Acting examinations are outlined from page 50, as well as in the demonstration video, found [here](#). Note that the video will guide you through the process when using a smartphone, which we consider to be the most suitable device to achieve the required shots straightforwardly. If another device is used, e.g. a digital camera, candidates and teachers may adapt the guidance accordingly. As an overview:
 - The camera phone may be operated by another person
 - The camera phone may be held in place using a tripod or similar stabilising device
 - Once positioned, the camera should remain static throughout the task. Note that the camera operator may make **minimal** adjustments during the course of a task if necessary in order to ensure the candidate(s) are fully visible within the required shot, but any adjustments **must not** cause the camera shot to differ from that required for the relevant task.
- Only the candidate(s) and one chaperone/camera phone operator are permitted to be present in the room at the time of recording the examination tasks.
- The chaperone/camera phone operator must not lead or interact with the candidate(s) at any time.
- The camera phone operator may call "Action" at the start of any scene or scenario and "Cut" at the end if required, but this is not mandatory. Note that this may be helpful for the close-up scenarios, due to the discontinuous nature of the scene/scenario.

Minimum and maximum Task timings:

- Tasks have set minimum and maximum durations. Please note that:
 - if a Task is below the minimum duration this may be reflected in the mark awarded
 - if a Task is over the maximum duration the examiner reserves the right to stop assessing once the maximum duration has been reached

Introductions:

- Prior to the performance of all tasks, candidates state their name, the exam grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator.
- Prior to performing Task 1, Grades 6-8 candidates should clearly display valid photographic identification (such as Passport, Driving Licence, Student Union Card, ID Card) for at least ten seconds, in line with our policy.
- (Grades 1-8): For Task 1, after introducing themselves, candidates should then introduce the scene, stating the title, author and character(s), and a brief outline of the context of the scene. For more information on introductions, including an example, please refer to the Teacher Support & Repertoire Suggestions document, found [here](#).
- Note that, from Grade 4, contextual introductions are required for some other tasks. These are specified at each grade.
- For exams with two candidates, the introduction may be shared as desired.
- Introductions should be no more than 30 seconds in duration.
- Note that the purpose of introductions is to assist the smooth-running of the exam and are not assessed.
- Grade 6-8 candidates should read the entire text of any play or screenplay from which a scene has been chosen, in preparation for the Knowledge and Understanding component of the exam.
- Scenes must be performed in English. Any published translation of a non-English text is permitted.
- Comfortable clothing must be worn. Costume is not permitted, although long skirts may be worn over clothing if required for period scenes.
- Small handheld props are permitted. If a mobile phone is used as a prop it must be switched off.

Knowledge and Understanding

For the final component of the examination, candidates must prepare and present a response to chosen questions. Questions are based on the performed tasks and, from Grade 5, the rehearsal process.

Candidates select the appropriate number of questions as indicated, and prepare their response(s) to those questions.

The Knowledge and Understanding video should be filmed separately, as a mid-shot.

- Facing directly to camera, each candidate should announce their name. They should then state their (first) chosen question and present their prepared response to that question.
- For Grades 1-8, candidates repeat the same process for the second question.
- For exams with two candidates, one video may be made. Candidates may present their prepared responses one after the other, in any order.
- Responses must not be read, but simple note cards may be used if required as a memory aid. The note card could be handheld or positioned behind the camera.

Choosing Monologue/Duologue Scenes (Grades 1-8)

PAA encourages creativity and does not make any compulsory recommendations for scene selection. However, the following may help teachers and candidates when selecting scenes:

- Each candidate must play only one character in the chosen scene (solo candidates perform a monologue and candidates entering in twos perform a duologue).
- Teachers should ensure that the content is suitable for the individual age and overall maturity of the candidate(s).
- Scenes should be selected carefully to ensure that they provide suitable opportunity for candidates to demonstrate the relevant assessment criteria.
- Candidates are reminded that if a chosen piece does not meet these requirements this may impact on the level of achievement possible within the examination.
- Monologues:
 - Solo candidates may choose to perform a soliloquy, or a monologue involving another character or characters. If you choose the latter, you should perform solo, directing your speech to the imagined character(s) as appropriate.
 - If a chosen monologue is a direct address to the audience, candidates should perform the monologue directly to the camera.
- When choosing duologues for two candidates, care must be taken to ensure that each candidate has a similar proportion of involvement in the scene.
- The content of the scenes must demonstrate a comparable level of technical and interpretative demand to those suggested in the PAA online catalogue of suitable material at each level.
- Use of accent/dialect: For Grades 1 to 5, it is not a requirement to use accents/dialect. However, Grades 6-8 candidates are required to employ the accent/dialect that reflects the author's intention.
- Published scenes may be edited if necessary, and dialogue spoken by other characters edited out; however the overall meaning of the scene must be maintained. Adding your own dialogue to scenes from published plays is not permitted.
- When adapting a scene from a novel, it is permissible to add dialogue, providing that the overall meaning, character, and style of the scene are maintained. For example, within the narrative there may be a description of a character's thoughts or feelings, which may be adapted into dialogue.
- When adapting a scene from a novel, it is advisable to consider the overall structure, including how it begins and ends, and the character's journey through the scene.
- Grade 6-8 candidates have the option of performing an original scene, devised and written by the candidate(s), for Task 3 or 3a. If this option is chosen, the scene must be scripted, and the above recommendations considered carefully.
- Although it is not mandatory for candidates taking grades 1 to 5 to read the whole play, film screenplay or novel from which the scene has been taken, it is important that they have an awareness of the context of the scene. Grade 6-8 candidates should, however, read the entire text of any play or screenplay from which a scene has been chosen.

Assessment, Marking and attainment bands

All candidates, whether entering for their exam as a solo, or in twos or threes, are assessed individually by the examiner, and receive an individual mark and (on passing their exam) certificate. The examiner will award marks in line with the published assessment criteria for the relevant grade taken, full details of which can be found later in this document, within the Content Specifications for each grade.

The exams are marked out of 100. The attainment bands are as follows:

Marks received	Attainment level
85 and above	Distinction
65–84	Merit
50–64	Pass
0–49	Unclassified

Examination Content, Assessment Criteria and Grade Descriptors

The PAA Screen Acting exam content is designed to encourage learners to develop vocal, physical and interpretative skills in screen acting. Each grade includes specific performance tasks, followed by the Knowledge and Understanding component (grades Debut–8 only), in which candidates communicate their ideas in response to specific questions. Performance pieces for Task 1 (Grades 1–8), Task 3 (Grades 6) and Task 3a (Grades 7/8) are chosen by the candidate or teacher.

The PAA online catalogue of suitable material, along with further guidance for teachers, can be found [here](#).

ENTRY LEVEL

PREMIERE | CONTENT

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- One candidate (Total Time Allowance: 5 minutes)
- Two candidates (Total Time Allowance: 7 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Prepare and perform the following scenario. The scenario must be filmed as a **wide shot**.

For solo candidates:

Your character is with a friend (unseen). The friend gives them a party invitation. The character reacts to the invitation and talks to their friend.

- Candidates decide on who their character is, and must not play themselves
- The scenario must include prepared dialogue
- The unseen friend may speak a maximum of one line of dialogue (ie to invite the character to their party), but this is not mandatory
- The scenario must be a minimum of 10 seconds and a maximum of 20 seconds in duration

For two candidates:

Two friends find out that they have both been invited to a party. They react to the news and talk to each other about it.

- Candidates decide on who their character is, and must not play themselves
- The scenario must include prepared dialogue
- The scenario must be a minimum of 15 seconds and a maximum of 25 seconds in duration

Task 2a

Prepare and perform Task 1 filmed as a **mid-shot**.

- Candidates perform either solo or in twos, the same as in Task 1.
- The duration parameters are the same as Task 1.
- The scenario must include the same prepared dialogue as in Task 1

Task 2b

Performed as a **non-verbal solo** only, as a **close-up**.

Think of the exact moment in Task 1 when your character reacts to the news and perform that moment as a 3-5 second non-verbal solo.

- Candidates must not look directly at the camera, but slightly beyond the side edge of the camera, focussing on the imagined other character (the friend)
- This task must be 3-5 seconds in duration and performed solo, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos

Task 3

Performed **solo** only, and filmed as a **mid-shot**. Prepare and perform the following:

Speaking directly to the camera, describe your favourite toy and why you like it.

- This task must be a minimum of 20 seconds and a maximum of 30 seconds in duration

PREMIERE | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
Learning Outcome 1: Perform the chosen material, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning	1.1 Perform with a sense of fluency and a general understanding of meaning and mood 1.2 Demonstrate some ability to adjust performance in relation to the distance of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	2.1 Demonstrate generally appropriate use of voice to reflect meaning and mood	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3
Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented	3.1 Demonstrate basic use of movement and/or body language appropriate to meaning and mood 3.2 Demonstrate some ability to convey meaning and mood through facial expression and/or eyes, as relevant to the situation and proximity to the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3

DEBUT | CONTENT

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- One candidate (Total Examination Time: 8 minutes)
- Two candidates (Total Examination Time: 12 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Prepare and perform the following scenario. The scenario must be filmed as a **wide shot**.

For solo candidates:

The character (played by the candidate) is with their parent or guardian (unseen), who has just told them that they will be moving to a different country. The character reacts to this and tries to persuade their parent/guardian to change the plan.

For two candidates:

Two characters (played by the candidates) are siblings and are with their parent or guardian (unseen), who tells them that they will be moving to different country. Both characters react to this and try to persuade parent/guardian to change the plan.

- Candidates decide on who their character is (they must not play themselves), the location and how the character reacts
- The scenario must include prepared dialogue
- The unseen parent/guardian may speak a maximum of one line of dialogue (ie to tell the character(s) that they are moving), but this is not mandatory
- For solo candidates, this task must be a minimum of 20 seconds and a maximum of 40 seconds
- For two candidates, this task must be a minimum of 30 seconds and a maximum of 50 seconds

Task 2a

Prepare and perform Task 1 filmed as a **mid-shot**.

- Candidates perform either solo or in twos, the same as in Task 1
- The duration parameters are the same as Task 1
- The scenario must include the same prepared dialogue as in Task 1

Task 2b

Performed as a **non-verbal solo** only, and filmed as a **close-up**.

Think of the exact moment in Task 1 when your character reacts to the news and perform that moment as a 3-5 second non-verbal solo.

- Candidates must not look directly at the camera, but slightly beyond the side edge of the camera, focussing on the imagined other character (the parent/guardian)
- This task must be 3-5 seconds in duration, and performed solo, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos

Task 3

Performed **solo** only, and filmed as a **mid-shot**. Prepare and perform the following:

Speaking directly to the camera, describe something exciting that happens in a favourite story book or film.

- This task must be a minimum of 20 seconds and a maximum of 40 seconds

Task 4: Knowledge & Understanding

Candidates prepare and present a response to questions based on the material presented. Each candidate must prepare a response to both of the following questions, relating to Task 1. Facing directly to camera, and filmed in mid-shot, candidates present their prepared responses to each question.

For exams with two candidates, present responses in turn. The total time taken to present both responses should be a minimum of 30 seconds, and not exceed 1 minute, per candidate.

Question 1: In Task 1, describe the location of the scenario.

Question 2: In Task 1, describe how your character is feeling.

DEBUT | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
Learning Outcome 1: Perform the chosen material, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning	1.1 Perform from memory with a sense of fluency and understanding of the character, meaning and mood 1.2 Demonstrate some ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	2.1 Demonstrate use of voice to reflect character, meaning and mood	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3
Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented	3.1 Demonstrate basic use of physicality appropriate to the character and mood 3.2 Demonstrate some ability to convey meaning and mood through facial expression and/or eyes, as relevant proximity to the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate)	4.1 Communicate an understanding of the feelings of the character portrayed, and the location of the scenario	Task 4

ENTRY LEVEL (PREMIERE/DEBUT) | GRADE DESCRIPTORS

PREMIERE/DEBUT

Distinction (85 marks and above)	The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to a consistently high standard throughout, or almost throughout. An understanding of content and meaning was consistently evident, with appropriate use of physicality, voice, face, and/or eyes to reflect character, mood and proximity to the camera. (Debut only) The candidate will have described their character's feelings and the location, in detail and with confidence.
Merit (65–84 marks)	The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to a secure standard for the majority. An understanding of content and meaning was generally evident. There was evidence of appropriate use of physicality, voice, face, and/or eyes to reflect character, mood and proximity to the camera, most of the time. (Debut only) The candidate will have given a secure description of their character's feelings and the location.
Pass (50–64 marks)	The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to an acceptable standard for the majority, or a secure standard some of the time. There was some evidence of appropriate use of physicality, voice, face, and/or eyes to reflect character, mood and proximity to the camera. There may have been evidence of more secure skills, but these were not sustained. (Debut only) The candidate communicated some understanding of their character's feelings and the location.
Unclassified (0–49 marks)	The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were not demonstrated to an acceptable standard for the majority, or throughout. There was little or no evidence of appropriate use of physicality, voice, face, and/or eyes to reflect character, mood and proximity to the camera. (Debut only) There may have been very limited or no evidence of an understanding of their character's feelings and the location, or the response was not attempted.

ENTRY LEVEL | WEIGHTING

PREMIERE/DEBUT

Exam Section	Learning Outcome	Maximum marks
Task 1	L01	10
	L02	10
	L03	10
Task 2 (a&b)	L01	10
	L02	10
	L03	10
Task 3	L01	10
	L02	10
	L03	10
Task 4 (Debut only) *	L04	10

*Note that Premiere candidates do not undertake Task 4. For Premiere, total marks for Tasks 1-3 will be aggregated to a mark out of 100.

LEVEL 1

GRADE 1 | CONTENT

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- **One candidate:** (Total Time Allowance: 12 minutes)
- **Two candidates:** (Total Time Allowance: 15 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Perform a scene from a published play, film screenplay, anthology of monologues/duologues, or a scene adapted from dialogue in a published novel. The scene must be filmed as a **wide shot**.

- For solo candidates, the monologue should be a minimum of 1 minute and no more than 1½ minutes
- For two candidates, the duologue should be a minimum of 1½ minutes and no more than 2 minutes

The candidate(s) should introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance.

Task 2a

Prepare and perform the following scenario, filmed as a **mid-shot**.

One or two characters are watching a sports match and their team is doing badly. They react to what is happening in the match.

- Candidates decide on who their character is, and must not play themselves
- The candidate(s) decide on the type of match, the character(s), and how they react
- For solo candidates, another (unseen) character may be included, or they may be on their own watching the match
- For two candidates, the scenario must be a duologue
- The scenario must include the use of voice and/or speech, and be a minimum of 30 seconds and a maximum of 45 seconds in duration

Task 2b

Performed as a **non-verbal solo** only, and filmed as a **close-up** shot.

Think of a moment in Task 2a when your character reacts to something the team has done. Perform a 3-5 second non-verbal scenario showing their reaction

- The candidate must not look directly at the camera, but look beyond the edge of the camera, focussing on the imagined moment in the match
- This task must be 3-5 seconds in duration, and performed solo, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos

Task 3: Devised commercial

Devise, prepare and perform a commercial, speaking directly to the camera, filmed as either a wide shot or a mid-shot, based on **one** of the following titles:

1. *The Comb That Changes Your Hair Colour.*
2. *The 'Borrow A Toy' Company.*
3. *Bargain Trips to The Moon.*

- The commercial must be devised and prepared by the candidates
- For solo candidates, the commercial must be a minimum of 30 seconds and a maximum of 1 minute
- For two candidates, the commercial must be a minimum of 45 seconds and a maximum of 1½ minutes
- For two candidates, the candidates may interact with each other as well as speaking directly to camera

Task 4: Knowledge & Understanding

Candidates prepare and present a response to questions based on the material presented.

Candidates select **one** question from List A, and **one** question from List B, and prepare a response to their chosen questions.

Facing directly to camera, and filmed in mid-shot, candidates announce their chosen questions followed by presenting their prepared responses to each question.

For exams with two candidates, present responses in turn.

The total time taken to present both responses should be a minimum of 1 minute, and not exceed 2 minutes per candidate.

List A:

Question 1: In Task 1, describe how your character is feeling in the scene.

Question 2: In Task 2a, describe how your character is feeling in the scenario.

List B:

Question 1: In Task 1, describe what is happening in the scene.

Question 2: In Task 2a, describe what is happening in the match.

GRADE 1 | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
Learning Outcome 1: Perform from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning of the chosen material	1.1 Perform from memory with a sense of fluency 1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of character, meaning and mood 1.3 Demonstrate some ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	2.1 Demonstrate appropriate use of voice to reflect character, meaning and mood 2.2 Demonstrate some ability to adjust nuances of vocal delivery in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3
Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented	3.1 Communicate a physical response appropriate to the character and mood 3.2 Demonstrate a basic ability to convey meaning and mood through facial expression and/or eyes, as relevant to the character, situation and proximity to the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate)	4.1 Communicate an understanding of the feelings of the character portrayed, and what is happening, in one of the performed tasks	Task 4

GRADE 2 | CONTENT

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- **One candidate:** (Total Time Allowance: 13 minutes)
- **Two candidates:** (Total Time Allowance: 15 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Perform a scene from a published play, film screenplay, anthology of monologues/duologues, or a scene adapted from dialogue in a published novel. The scene must be filmed as a **wide shot**.

- For solo candidates, the monologue should be a minimum of 1½ minutes and no more than 2½ minutes
- For two candidates, the duologue should be a minimum of 2 minutes and no more than 3 minutes

The candidate(s) should introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance.

Task 2a

Prepare and perform the following scenario, filmed as a **mid-shot**.

One or two characters discover a bird's nest in a tree, then they are amazed when two baby birds suddenly look out of the nest at them.

- The scenario must include the use of voice and/or speech, and be a minimum of 20 seconds and a maximum of 30 seconds in duration
- Candidates decide on who their character is, and must not play themselves
- Candidates decide on the location and how their character reacts
- For solo candidates: Your character may be with another (unseen) character, or be on their own
- For two candidates, the scenario must be a duologue

Task 2b

Performed as a **non-verbal solo** only, and filmed as a **close-up** shot.

Think of the exact moment in Task 2a when your character reacts. Perform a 3-5 second non-verbal scenario showing their reaction.

- The candidate must not look directly at the camera, but slightly beyond the side edge of the camera, focussing on the imagined bird's nest
- This task must be 3-5 seconds in duration, and performed solo, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos

Task 3: Devised commercial

Devise, prepare and perform a commercial, speaking directly to the camera, filmed as either a wide shot or a mid-shot, based on **one** of the following titles:

1. *The Hat That Makes You Intelligent.*
2. *Bottled Water From Mars.*
3. *Shrinkable Furniture.*

- The commercial must be devised and prepared by the candidates
- For solo candidates, the commercial must be a minimum of 40 seconds and a maximum of 1 minute
- For two candidates, the commercial must be a minimum of 1 minute and a maximum of 1½ minutes
- For two candidates, the candidates may interact with each other as well as speaking directly to camera

Task 4: Knowledge & Understanding

Candidates prepare and present a response to questions based on the material presented.

Candidates select **one** question from List A, and **one** question from List B, and prepare a response to their chosen questions.

Facing directly to camera, and filmed in mid-shot, candidates announce their chosen questions followed by presenting their prepared responses to each question.

For exams with two candidates, present responses in turn.

The total time taken to present both responses should be a minimum of 1 minute, and not exceed 2 minutes per candidate.

List A:

Question 1: In Task 1, describe your character's feelings through the scene.

Question 2: In Task 2a, describe your character's feelings and explain why they feel that way.

List B:

Question 1: In Task 1, describe the location and what is happening in the scene.

Question 2: In Task 2a, describe the location of the scenario, and what was happening just before the character(s) saw the bird's nest.

GRADE 2 | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
Learning Outcome 1: Perform from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning of the chosen material	1.1 Perform two scenes from memory, with fluency and an understanding of meaning and mood 1.2 Demonstrate an awareness of situation, character and other characters in the space, as appropriate 1.3 Demonstrate some ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	2.1 Demonstrate appropriate use of voice to reflect character, meaning and mood 2.2 Demonstrate some ability to adjust nuances of vocal delivery in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3
Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented	3.1 Communicate a physical response appropriate to the character and situation 3.2 Demonstrate a basic ability to convey meaning and mood through facial expression and/or eyes, as relevant to the character, situation and proximity to the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate)	4.1 Communicate an understanding of the character's feelings and the context of one of the performed scenes	Task 4

GRADE 3 | CONTENT

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- **One candidate:** (Total Time Allowance: 15 minutes)
- **Two candidates:** (Total Time Allowance: 20 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Perform a scene from a published play, film screenplay, anthology of monologues/duologues, or a scene adapted from dialogue in a published novel. The scene must be filmed as a **wide shot**.

- For solo candidates, the monologue should be a minimum of 1½ minutes and no more than 2½ minutes
- For two candidates, the duologue should be a minimum of 2 minutes and no more than 3 minutes

The candidate(s) should introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance.

Task 2a

Prepare and perform the following scenario, filmed as a **mid-shot**.

One or two characters are taking their pet to the vet. The vet (unseen) tells them what is wrong with their pet and they react and respond.

- For exams with one candidate, perform the scenario as a solo
- For exams with two candidates, perform the scenario together
- Note that the candidate(s) must be the owner(s) of the pet – the vet is unseen
- Candidates decide on who their character is, the pet, what has happened to the pet, and how their character reacts
- The scenario must include the use of voice and/or speech, and be a minimum of 30 seconds and a maximum of 1 minute

Task 2b

Performed as a **non-verbal solo** only, and filmed as a **close-up** shot.

Think of the exact moment in Task 2a when your character reacts. Perform a 3-5 second non-verbal scenario showing their reaction.

- The candidate must not look directly at the camera, but slightly beyond the side edge of the camera, focussing on the imagined other character (the vet)
- This task must be 3-5 seconds in duration, and performed solo, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos

Task 3: Devised commercial

Devise, prepare and perform a commercial based on the following scenario, filmed as a **mid-shot**:

A character, or two characters, are sceptical that a certain product will work. They try it and it does. They are amazed and delighted. Then, speaking directly to the camera, they recommend it.

- For one candidate, the commercial must be a minimum of 40 seconds and a maximum of 1 minute
- For two candidates, the commercial must be a minimum of 1 minute and a maximum of 1½ minutes
- The candidates decide on the product, character(s), context and what happens in the commercial

Task 4: Knowledge & Understanding

Candidates prepare and present a response to questions based on the material presented.

Candidates select **one** question from List A, and **one** question from List B, and prepare a response to their chosen questions.

Facing directly to camera, and filmed in mid-shot, candidates announce their chosen questions followed by presenting their prepared responses to each question.

For exams with two candidates, present responses in turn.

The total time taken to present both responses should be a minimum of 1 minute, and not exceed 2 minutes per candidate.

List A:

Question 1: In Task 1, describe your character's feelings and the reasons for them.

Question 2: In Task 2a, describe your character's feelings and reactions in the scenario.

List B:

Question 1: In Task 1, what was the most challenging part of the performance for you, and why?

Question 2: Compare the character you portrayed in Task 1 with the character you portrayed in Task 2a, describing any similarities and/or differences.

GRADE 3 | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
Learning Outcome 1: Perform from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning of the chosen material	1.1 Perform from memory with fluency and understanding of the meaning and mood 1.2 Demonstrate an awareness of character, situation and other characters as appropriate 1.3 Demonstrate some ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	2.1 Demonstrate appropriate use of vocal modulation to reflect character, meaning and mood 2.2 Demonstrate some ability to adjust nuances of vocal delivery in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3
Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented	3.1 Communicate a physical response appropriate to the character and situation 3.2 Demonstrate a basic ability to convey meaning and mood through facial expression and/or eyes, as relevant to the character, situation and proximity to the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate)	4.1 Communicate an understanding of the feelings of the characters portrayed, as well as similarities/differences between characters portrayed or challenges of performance	Task 4

LEVEL 1 (GRADES 1–3) | GRADE DESCRIPTORS

Distinction (85 marks and above)	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to a consistently high standard throughout, or almost throughout. A full understanding of character and meaning was consistently evident. Relevant vocal and physical skills effectively complemented the performance, along with an ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera.</p> <p>In their response to the selected questions, the candidate demonstrated a full understanding of the characters portrayed and (if applicable) performance challenges.</p>
Merit (65–84 marks)	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to a secure standard for the majority. A generally assured understanding of character and meaning was evident. Relevant vocal and physical skills complemented the performance most of the time, along with a generally secure ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera.</p> <p>In their response to the selected questions, the candidate demonstrated a secure understanding of the characters portrayed and (if applicable) performance challenges.</p>
Pass (50–64 marks)	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to an acceptable standard for the majority, or a secure standard some of the time. Some understanding of character and meaning was evident. Relevant vocal and physical skills were sometimes evident, along with some ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera. There may have been evidence of more secure skills, but these were not sustained.</p> <p>The candidate's response to the chosen questions was sound overall, but may have lacked understanding.</p>
Unclassified (0–49 marks)	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were not demonstrated to an acceptable standard for the majority, or throughout. There may have been little or no understanding of character and meaning evident, and/or very limited or no evidence of relevant vocal and physical performance skills. An ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera may not have been evident, or may have been extremely limited.</p> <p>The candidate's response to the selected questions revealed very limited understanding, or the response was not attempted.</p>

LEVEL 1 | WEIGHTING

GRADES 1–3

Exam Section	Learning Outcome	Maximum marks
Task 1	LO1	10
	LO2	10
	LO3	10
Task 2 (a&b)	LO1	10
	LO2	10
	LO3	10
Task 3	LO1	10
	LO2	10
	LO3	10
Task 4	LO4	10

LEVEL 2

GRADE 4 | CONTENT

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- **One candidate:** (Total Time Allowance: 17 minutes)
- **Two candidates:** (Total Time Allowance: 23 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Perform a scene from a published play, film screenplay, TV script, anthology of monologues/duologues, or a scene adapted from dialogue in a published novel. The scene must be filmed as a **wide shot**.

- For solo candidates, the monologue should be a minimum of 2 minutes and no more than 3 minutes
- For two candidates, the duologue should be a minimum of 2½ minutes and no more than 3½ minutes

The candidate(s) introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance.

Task 2a: Solo close-up extract

Prepare and perform a short extract from the scene in Task 1, reworked and filmed as a **close-up shot**.

- The extract must include some use of voice and/or speech, and be a minimum of 20 seconds and a maximum of 30 seconds in duration
- For two candidates:
 - one camera should still be used. The extract must be filmed twice, with the camera focussed on each candidate in turn, framed in close-up. An over-the-shoulder close-up is permitted
 - the candidate not in focus will not be assessed, but should still perform the extract as normal
 - different extracts may be chosen by each candidate

Task 2b: Non-verbal solo close-up

Filmed in **close-up**, perform a **non-verbal** scenario based on the following:

Your character reacts to news in a message received on a device.

- The scenario must be performed **solo**, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos
- The candidate decides on who their character is, and the contents of the message
- The candidate must **introduce the scenario**, stating who the character is, and the contents of the message, prior to the performance of this close-up task
- The scenario must be a minimum of 8 seconds and a maximum of 15 seconds in duration

Task 3

Prepare and perform the following scenario, filmed as a **mid-shot**.

Two characters are on the phone to each other, discussing a plan. Both appear to be enthusiastic, however, deep down, neither of them wants to go through with it.

- The candidate(s) may sit or stand, facing forward but not looking directly at the camera
- For two candidates, the characters are beside each other but in different locations (as if it was a split screen)
- For solo candidates, the scenario is the same. The candidate may select either role, speaking to the other (unseen) character on the phone
- The candidate(s) choose who the characters are, what plan they are discussing, and why each doesn't really want to go through with it but still wants to appear enthusiastic.
- The scenario must be between 40 seconds and 1 minute in duration
- If a mobile phone is used as a prop, it must be switched off

Task 4: Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates prepare and present a response to questions based on the material presented.

Candidates select **one** question from List A, and **one** question from List B.

Facing directly to camera, and filmed in mid-shot, candidates announce their chosen questions followed by presenting their prepared responses to each question.

For exams with two candidates, present responses in turn.

The total time taken to present both responses should be a minimum of 2 minutes, and not exceed 4 minutes per candidate.

List A:

Question 1: In Task 1, describe your character's feelings and reactions through the scene and the reasons for them.

Question 2: In Task 2b, describe your character's feelings and reactions, and the reasons for them.

List B:

Question 1: In Task 1, describe the physicality of your character, including the reasons for their movement and/or body language.

Question 2: In Task 3, describe your character's feelings during the phone call, as well as the relationship between the characters.

GRADE 4 | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
Learning Outcome 1: Perform from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning of the chosen material	1.1 Perform from memory with fluency and a sense of spontaneity 1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of the character's thoughts and feelings 1.3 Demonstrate an awareness of situation and other characters as appropriate 1.4 Demonstrate a developing ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	2.1 Demonstrate use of vocal skills to convey characterisation and mood 2.2 Demonstrate adequate breath support in response to the vocal demands of the scenes/scenarios 2.3 Demonstrate a developing ability to adjust nuances of vocal delivery in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3
Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented	3.1 Communicate a physical response appropriate to the character and situation 3.2 Demonstrate an ability to convey meaning and emotion through facial expression and/or eyes as appropriate 3.3 Demonstrate a developing ability to adjust nuances of physicality in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate)	4.1 Communicate an understanding of the characters portrayed, including feelings and reactions, and physicality or character relationships (as appropriate).	Task 4

GRADE 5 | CONTENT

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- **One candidate:** (Total Time Allowance: 18 minutes)
- **Two candidates:** (Total Time Allowance: 25 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Perform a scene from a published play, film screenplay, TV script, anthology of monologues/duologues, or a scene adapted from dialogue in a published novel. The scene must be filmed as a **wide shot**.

- For solo candidates, monologues should be a minimum of 2 minutes and no more than 3 minutes
- For two candidates, duologues should be a minimum of 2½ minutes and no more than 4 minutes

The candidate(s) must introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance.

Task 2a: Solo close-up extract

Prepare and perform a short extract from the scene in Task 1, reworked and filmed as a **close-up**.

- The extract must include some use of voice and/or speech, and be a minimum of 20 seconds and a maximum of 30 seconds in duration.
- For two candidates:
 - The extract must be filmed twice, with the camera focussed on each candidate in turn, framed in close-up
 - An over-the-shoulder close-up is permitted
 - The candidate not in focus will not be assessed, but should still perform the extract as normal
 - Different extracts may be chosen by each candidate

Task 2b: Non-verbal solo close-up

Perform a **non-verbal** scenario, filmed in **close-up**, based on the following:

Your character is waiting for something

- The scenario must be **performed solo**, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos
- Candidates interpret this scenario as they choose, ie, they decide on the character, context, and what it is their character is waiting for
- The candidate must **introduce the scenario**, stating who the character is and what they are waiting for prior to the performance of this close-up task
- The scenario should be a minimum of 10 seconds and a maximum of 20 seconds in duration

Task 3

Prepare and perform the following scenario, filmed as a mid-shot:

Two characters are sitting side by side in a train. They have recently had an argument, and are still angry with each other. The argument is not mentioned at first - they are talking about something else, but we can sense tension in the air. During the scenario we see a change in the mood when one says or does something to appease the other.

- Candidates should sit facing forwards, but must not look directly at the camera
- The candidate(s) decide on the characters and their relationship, what they have argued about, and what leads to the change in mood
- For **solo** candidates, the scenario is the same. The candidate should direct their speech to the other, unseen, character
- For solo candidates, the scenario must be between 30 seconds and 1 minute in duration
- For two candidates, the scenario must be between 40 seconds and 1 minute in duration

Task 4: Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates prepare and present a response to questions based on the material presented.

Candidates select **one** question from List A, and **one** question from List B, and prepare a response to their chosen questions

Facing directly to camera, and filmed in mid-shot, candidates announce their chosen questions followed by presenting their prepared responses to each question.

For exams with two candidates, present responses in turn.

The total time taken to present both responses should be a minimum of 2 minutes, and not exceed 4 minutes per candidate.

List A:

Question 1: In Task 1, describe the feelings and overall objectives of the character you portrayed.

Question 2: In Task 3, describe the feelings and overall objectives of the character you portrayed.

List B:

Question 1: In rehearsals/preparation for Task 2a, what did you find most challenging, and how did you meet that challenge?

Question 2: In rehearsals/preparation for Task 3, what did you find most challenging, and how did you meet that challenge?

GRADE 5 | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
Learning Outcome 1: Perform from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning of the chosen material	1.1 Perform from memory with fluency and a sense of spontaneity 1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of the character's feelings and overall objectives 1.3 Demonstrate an awareness of situation and other characters as appropriate 1.4 Demonstrate a developing ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	2.1 Demonstrate use of vocal skills to convey characterisation, intention and mood 2.2 Demonstrate adequate breath support in response to the vocal demands of the scene/scenario 2.3 Demonstrate a developing ability to adjust nuances of vocal delivery in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3
Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented	3.1 Communicate a physical response appropriate to the character and situation 3.2 Demonstrate an ability to convey character, emotions and reactions through facial expression and/or eyes as appropriate 3.3 Demonstrate a developing ability to adjust nuances of physicality in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate) and rehearsal process (Grades 5–8 only)	4.1 Communicate an understanding of the feelings and overall objectives of one of the characters portrayed, and rehearsal challenges.	Task 4

LEVEL 2 (GRADES 4–5) | GRADE DESCRIPTORS

<p>Distinction (85 marks and above)</p>	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to a consistently high standard throughout, or almost throughout. A detailed understanding of character and overall objectives was evident through use of a wide range of relevant vocal and physical performance skills. The performances had a sense of spontaneity, and there was consistent evidence of an ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera.</p> <p>The candidate demonstrated excellent understanding and awareness in response to the chosen questions.</p>
<p>Merit (65–84 marks)</p>	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to a secure standard throughout, or for the majority. An understanding of character and overall objectives was evident through use of a range of relevant vocal and physical performance skills. A sense of spontaneity, along with a developing ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera, was evident most of the time.</p> <p>The candidate demonstrated secure understanding and awareness in response to the chosen questions.</p>
<p>Pass (50–64 marks)</p>	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to an acceptable standard for the majority, or a secure standard some of the time. An understanding of character and overall objectives was sometimes evident, through use of a relatively narrow range of relevant vocal and physical performance skills. There was a sense of spontaneity at times, along with some evidence of a developing ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera. There may have been evidence of more secure skills, but these were not sustained.</p> <p>The candidate's response to the chosen questions was sound, but may have lacked understanding and awareness.</p>
<p>Unclassified (0–49 marks)</p>	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were not demonstrated to an acceptable standard for the majority, or throughout. There was limited or no evidence of an understanding of character, overall objectives, and/or a sense of spontaneity. There may also have been little or no evidence of relevant vocal and physical performance skills.</p> <p>There was very limited or no evidence of a developing ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera.</p> <p>The candidate's response to the selected questions revealed very limited understanding, or the response was not attempted.</p>

LEVEL 2 | WEIGHTING

GRADES 4–5

Exam Section	Learning Outcome	Maximum marks
Task 1	L01	10
	L02	10
	L03	10
Task 2 (a&b)	L01	10
	L02	10
	L03	10
Task 3	L01	10
	L02	10
	L03	10
Task 4	L04	10

LEVEL 3**GRADE 6 | CONTENT**

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- **One candidate:** (Total Time Allowance: 20 minutes)
- **Two candidates:** (Total Time Allowance: 35 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Perform a scene from a play or film screenplay, filmed as a **wide shot**.

- For solo candidates, monologues should be a minimum of 2 minutes and no more than 3 minutes
- For two candidates, duologues should be a minimum of 2½ minutes and no more than 3½ minutes

The candidate(s) must introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance.

Task 2a: Solo close-up extract

Prepare and perform a short extract from the scene in Task 1, reworked and filmed as a **close-up**.

- The extract must include some use of voice and/or speech, and be a minimum of 20 seconds and a maximum of 40 seconds in duration
- For two candidates:
 - The extract must be filmed twice, with the camera focussed on each candidate in turn, framed in close-up
 - An over-the-shoulder close-up is permitted
 - The candidate not in focus will not be assessed, but should still perform the extract as normal
 - Different extracts may be chosen by each candidate

Task 2b: Non-verbal solo close-up

Perform a **non-verbal** scenario, filmed in **close-up**, based on the following, filmed in **close-up**:

Your character is pleased because they have achieved something.

- The scenario must be **performed solo**, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos
- Candidates should interpret this scenario as they choose, ie, they decide on who the character is, the context, and what the character has achieved
- The candidate must **introduce the scenario**, stating the character, context, and what the character has achieved, prior to the performance of this close-up task
- The scenario should be a minimum of 10 seconds and a maximum of 30 seconds in duration

Task 3

Perform a scene from a play, film screenplay, or TV script. The scene must be filmed as a **mid-shot**.

- For solo candidates, monologues should be a minimum of 45 seconds and no more than 1 minute
- For two candidates, duologues should be a minimum of 1 minute and no more than 1½ minutes
- The scene must provide a contrast with the scene performed in Task 1, in at least two of the following ways:
 - theme, character, situation, mood, historical period, writing style

The candidate(s) must introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance.

Task 4: Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates prepare and present a response to questions based on the material presented.

Candidates select **one** question from List A, and **one** question from List B, and prepare a response to their chosen questions

Facing directly to camera, and filmed in mid-shot, candidates announce their chosen questions followed by presenting their prepared responses to each question.

For exams with two candidates, present responses in turn.

The total time taken to present both responses should be a minimum of 2 minutes, and not exceed 4 minutes per candidate.

List A:

Question 1: In Task 1, describe your character's objectives in the scene, and the character's role within the entire play or screenplay from which the scene is taken.

Question 2: In Task 3, describe your character's objectives in the scene, and the character's role within the entire play, screenplay or TV script from which the scene is taken.

List B:

Question 1: In rehearsals/preparation for Task 2a, what processes did you use to enable you to adjust your performance for the close-up shot?

Question 2: In rehearsals/preparation for Task 2b, what processes did you use to help you develop an understanding of your character?

GRADE 6 | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
Learning Outcome 1: Perform from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning of the chosen material	1.1 Perform from memory with fluency and a sense of spontaneity 1.2 Communicate an understanding of characterisation, text and subtext 1.3 Communicate an understanding of the world of the character, including situation and other characters, as appropriate 1.3 Demonstrate an ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	2.1 Demonstrate use of vocal skills to convey subtleties of characterisation and mood 2.2 Maintain adequate vocal support in response to the demands of the scenes/ scenarios 2.3 Demonstrate an ability to adjust nuances of vocal delivery in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3
Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented	3.1 Communicate a physical response appropriate to the character and situation 3.2 Demonstrate an ability to use facial expression and/or eyes to convey internalised emotions and credible reactions, as appropriate 3.3 Demonstrate an ability to adjust nuances of physicality in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3
Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate)	4.1 Communicate an understanding of the characters portrayed, context and rehearsal processes	Task 4

Table continued on next page...

GRADE 7 | CONTENT

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- **One candidate:** (Total Time Allowance: 25 minutes)
- **Two candidates:** (Total Time Allowance: 35 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Perform a scene from a play or film screenplay, filmed as a **wide shot or mid-shot**.

- For solo candidates, monologues should be a minimum of 2 minutes and no more than 3 minutes
- For two candidates, duologues should be a minimum of 2½ minutes and no more than 3½ minutes

The candidate(s) must introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance

Task 2a: Solo close-up extract

Prepare and perform a short extract from the scene in Task 1, reworked and filmed as a **close-up**.

- The extract must include some use of voice and/or speech, and be a minimum of 20 seconds and a maximum of 40 seconds in duration
- For two candidates:
 - The extract must be filmed twice, with the camera focussed on each candidate in turn, framed in close-up
 - An over-the-shoulder close-up is permitted
 - The candidate not in focus will not be assessed, but should still perform the extract as normal
 - Different extracts may be chosen by each candidate

Task 2b: Non-verbal solo close-up

Filmed in close-up, perform a **non-verbal** scenario based on the following:

Your character is anxious about something.

- The scenario must be **performed solo**, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos
- Candidates should interpret this scenario as they choose, ie, they decide on who the character is, the context, and why the character is anxious
- The candidate must **introduce the scenario**, stating the character, context, and what the character is anxious about, prior to the performance of this close-up task
- The scenario should be a minimum of 10 seconds and a maximum of 30 seconds in duration.

Task 3a

Perform a scene from a play, film screenplay, or TV script. The scene must be filmed as a **mid-shot**.

- For solo candidates, monologues should be a minimum of 45 seconds and no more than 1½ minutes
- For two candidates, duologues should be a minimum of 1 minute and no more than 1½ minutes
- The scene must provide a contrast with the scene performed in Task 1, in at least two of the following ways:
 - theme, character, situation, mood, historical period, writing style

The candidate(s) must introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance.

Task 3b: Commercial

Perform **one** of the commercial scripts for Grade 7 found [here](#).

- For solo candidates, select a solo commercial
- For two candidates, select a duologue commercial
- The choice of camera shot for this task is that of the candidate(s)

Task 4: Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates prepare and present a response to questions based on the material presented.

Candidates select **one** question from List A, and **one** question from List B, and prepare a response to their chosen questions

Facing directly to camera, and filmed in mid-shot, candidates announce their chosen questions followed by presenting their prepared responses to each question.

For exams with two candidates, present responses in turn.

The total time taken to present both responses should be a minimum of 2 minutes, and not exceed 4 minutes per candidate.

List A:

Question 1: In Task 1, explain your character's objectives in the scene and how these change or develop. Also, explain your character's role within the context of the play or film screenplay from which the scene was taken.

Question 2: In Task 3a, explain your character's objectives in the scene and how these change or develop. Also, explain your character's role within the context of the play, screenplay or TV script from which the scene is taken.

List B:

Question 1: Select either Task 3a or 3b. Explain how the writer's style influenced your performance and the rehearsal process for that task.

Question 2: In rehearsals/preparation for Task 2b, what processes did you use to help you develop an understanding of your character?

GRADE 7 | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
Learning Outcome 1: Perform from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning of the chosen material	1.1 Perform from memory with a sense of spontaneity and realism 1.2 Communicate an authentic interpretation of text, subtext, and character 1.3 Communicate an understanding of the world of the character, including situation and other characters, as appropriate 1.4 Demonstrate an ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera, including the internalisation of thoughts and emotions where appropriate	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3 (a & b)
Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented	2.1 Demonstrate use of vocal skills to convey truthful and dynamic subtleties of characterisation and mood 2.2 Maintain adequate vocal support in response to the demands of the scenes/ scenarios 2.3 Demonstrate an ability to adjust nuances of vocal delivery in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3 (a & b)
Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented	3.1 Communicate a convincing physical response appropriate to the character and situation 3.2 Demonstrate an ability to use facial expression and/or eyes to convey internalised emotions and credible reactions, as appropriate 3.3 Demonstrate an ability to adjust nuances of physicality in relation to the proximity of the camera	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3 (a & b)
Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate)	4.1 Communicate an understanding of the characters portrayed, context and/or rehearsal processes	Task 4

GRADE 8 | CONTENT

Candidates may enter for the exam as follows:

- **One candidate:** (Total Time Allowance: 30 minutes)
- **Two candidates:** (Total Time Allowance: 45 minutes)

Note: Each task must be recorded separately. Prior to the performance of each and every task, candidates state their name(s), the grade they are taking, and the task number, to camera. For younger candidates, this can be done by the camera phone operator. For guidance on how to achieve the camera shots required, please see page 50.

Task 1

Perform a scene from a play or film screenplay, filmed as a **wide shot or mid-shot**.

- For solo candidates, monologues should be a minimum of 2 minutes and no more than 3 minutes
- For two candidates, duologues should be a minimum of 2½ minutes and no more than 4 minutes

The candidate(s) must introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance

Task 2a: Solo close-up extract

Prepare and perform a short extract from the scene in Task 1, reworked and filmed as a **close-up**.

- The extract must include some use of voice and/or speech, and be a minimum of 20 seconds and a maximum of 40 seconds in duration
- For two candidates:
 - The extract must be filmed twice, with the camera focussed on each candidate in turn, framed in close-up
 - An over-the-shoulder close-up is permitted
 - The candidate not in focus will not be assessed, but should still perform the extract as normal
 - Different extracts may be chosen by each candidate

Task 2b: Non-verbal solo close-up

Filmed in close-up, perform a **non-verbal** scenario based on the following:

Your character is very upset about something.

- The scenario must be **performed solo**, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos
- Candidates should interpret this scenario as they choose, ie, they decide on who the character is, the context, and why they are very upset
- The candidate must **introduce the scenario**, stating the character, context, and what the character is anxious about, prior to the performance of this close-up task
- The scenario should be a minimum of 10 seconds and a maximum of 30 seconds in duration

Task 3a

Perform a **direct address monologue** from a play, film screenplay or TV script, filmed in **close-up**.

- The monologue must be written as a direct address to the audience, and filmed as a direct address to the camera, in close-up. Suggestions for suitable scenes can be found [here](#).
- The monologue must be performed solo, irrespective of whether candidates enter for the exam as a solo or in twos, and be a minimum of 45 seconds and no more than 1½ minutes in duration
- The monologue must provide a contrast with the scene performed in Task 1, in at least two of the following ways:
 - theme, character, situation, mood, historical period, writing style

The candidate(s) should introduce their scene, stating the title, author, character(s) and a brief outline of the context of the scene, prior to the performance.

Task 3b: Commercial

Perform **one** of the commercial scripts for Grade 8 found [here](#).

- For solo candidates, select a solo commercial
- For two candidates, select a duologue commercial
- The choice of camera shot for this task is that of the candidate(s)

Task 4: Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates prepare and present a response to questions based on the material presented.

Candidates select **one** question from List A, and **one** question from List B, and prepare a response to their chosen questions

Facing directly to camera, and filmed in mid-shot, candidates announce their chosen questions followed by presenting their prepared responses to each question.

For exams with two candidates, present responses in turn.

The total time taken to present both responses should be a minimum of 3 minutes, and not exceed 5 minutes per candidate.

List A:

Question 1: In Task 1, explain your character's objective in the scene **and** their super-objective in the play or film screenplay from which the scene is taken

Question 2: In Task 3a, explain your character's objective in the scene and their super-objective in the play, screenplay or TV script from which the scene is taken.

List B:

Question 1: Select either Task 1 or Task 3a. Explain what techniques or processes you used in rehearsal to help develop your character for performance.

Question 2: In Tasks 2a and 2b, what would you say was the most challenging aspect for you when acting in close-up, and what techniques or processes did you use in rehearsal/preparation to help you meet that challenge?

GRADE 8 | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Exam Section
<p>Learning Outcome 1: Perform from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the content and meaning of the chosen material</p>	<p>1.1 Perform from memory with a sense of spontaneity and realism</p> <p>1.2 Communicate an authentic and mature interpretation of text, subtext, and character</p> <p>1.3 Communicate a mature understanding of the world of the character, including situation and other characters, as appropriate</p> <p>1.4 Demonstrate an ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera, including the internalisation of thoughts and emotions where appropriate</p>	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3 (a & b)
<p>Learning Outcome 2: Use vocal skills in response to the material being presented</p>	<p>2.1 Demonstrate use of vocal skills to convey truthful and dynamic subtleties of characterisation and mood</p> <p>2.2 Maintain adequate vocal support in response to the demands of the scenes/ scenarios</p> <p>2.3 Demonstrate a mature ability to adjust nuances of vocal delivery in relation to the proximity of the camera</p>	Tasks 1, 2 (a), 3 (a & b)
<p>Learning Outcome 3: Use face and body in response to the material being presented</p>	<p>3.1 Communicate a convincing physical response appropriate to the character and situation</p> <p>3.2 Demonstrate an ability to use facial expression and/or eyes to convey internalised emotions and believable reactions, as appropriate</p> <p>3.3 Demonstrate a mature ability to adjust nuances of physicality in relation to the proximity of the camera</p>	Tasks 1, 2 (a & b), 3 (a & b)
<p>Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen material, including content, context and role (as appropriate)</p>	<p>4.1 Communicate a mature understanding of the characters portrayed, context and/ or rehearsal processes</p>	Task 4

LEVEL 3 (GRADES 6–8) | GRADE DESCRIPTORS

<p>Distinction (85 marks and above)</p>	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to an advanced standard throughout, or almost throughout. An authentic and convincing interpretation of the chosen material was evident. Performances were realistic, with subtleties of characterisation, mood, and an innate sense of spontaneity evident, through dynamic use of a wide range of relevant vocal and physical performance skills.</p> <p>An ability to use facial expression and/or eyes to convey internalised emotions and realistic reactions was consistently evident and appropriate.</p> <p>The candidate's responses to the questions were mature, insightful and detailed, revealing excellent understanding.</p>
<p>Merit (65–84 marks)</p>	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to a secure standard overall. An authentic interpretation of the chosen material was generally evident. Performances were mostly realistic, with subtleties of characterisation, mood, and a sense of spontaneity often evident, although these may have lacked consistency. There was evidence of dynamic use of a range of relevant vocal and physical performance skills for the majority.</p> <p>An ability to use facial expression and/or eyes to convey internalised emotions and realistic reactions was mostly evident and appropriate.</p> <p>The candidate demonstrated secure understanding and awareness in response to the chosen questions.</p>
<p>Pass (50–64 marks)</p>	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were demonstrated to an acceptable standard overall. There may have been evidence of more secure skills, but these were not sustained. An authentic interpretation of the chosen material was sometimes evident. Performances may have been realistic at times, with subtleties of characterisation, mood, and a sense of spontaneity evident, although these will have lacked consistency. There was evidence of use of a relatively narrow range of relevant vocal and physical performance skills.</p> <p>An ability to use facial expression and/or eyes to convey internalised emotions and realistic reactions was evident at times.</p> <p>The candidate's response to the chosen questions was sound overall, but may have lacked some understanding and awareness.</p>
<p>Unclassified (0–49 marks)</p>	<p>The assessment criteria for the relevant grade and task were not demonstrated to an acceptable standard for the majority of the time, or throughout. There was limited or no evidence of an authentic interpretation of the chosen material. Performances may have lacked credibility, a sense of spontaneity and subtleties of characterisation and mood for the majority, or throughout. There was limited or no evidence of relevant vocal and physical performance skills.</p> <p>An ability to use facial expression and/or eyes to convey internalised emotions and realistic reactions was not evident, or was very limited.</p> <p>The candidate's response to the selected questions revealed very limited understanding, or the response was not attempted.</p>

LEVEL 3 (GRADES 6–8) | WEIGHTING

GRADES 6

Exam Section	Learning Outcome	Maximum marks
Task 1	LO1	10
	LO2	10
	LO3	10
Task 2 (a&b)	LO1	10
	LO2	10
	LO3	10
Task 3	LO1	10
	LO2	10
	LO3	10
Task 4	LO4	10

GRADE 7–8

Exam Component	Learning Outcome	Maximum marks
Task 1	LO1	10
	LO2	10
	LO3	10
Task 2 (a & b)	LO1	10
	LO2	10
	LO3	10
Task 3 (a & b)	LO1	10
	LO2	10
	LO3	10
Task 4	LO4	10

Filming guidance

Introduction

RSL has worked closely with BAFTA Award winning cinematographer Jack Burton, to create a detailed guide to filming your videos and achieving the correct camera shots required by the PAA Screen Acting syllabus:

Full guidance on how to submit your PAA Screen Acting Recorded Video Exam, including a video demonstration, can be found [here](#). The guidance below reflects the contents of the demonstration video, so should be read in conjunction.

Note that the video will guide you through the process when using a smartphone, which we consider to be the most suitable device to achieve the required shots straightforwardly. If another device is used, e.g. a digital camera, candidates and teachers may adapt the guidance accordingly.

Remember, the applicant is responsible for ensuring that the correct shot is used as required by the syllabus specification, and that the candidates(s) are clearly visible within the frame.

Simplicity is key:

Your aim is to showcase your screen acting abilities to the examiner. Simplicity is key to this. The simpler everything else is in your video the more you and your skills will stand out.

Pick your outfit. Note that costume is not permitted, although long skirts may be worn for period scenes if required. Choose something that is comfortable and practical for your performance. Some jewellery, man-made fabrics and shoes can make loud noises when you move a lot so avoid these items if you notice their sounds. Please wear simple colours.

Only one camera/smart phone must be used. Use the standard built-in camera in your smart phone. No third-party camera apps please.

All videos should be framed landscape not portrait. This means turning the phone on its side and filming a rectangular frame with the longest sides on the top and the bottom of the frame. Just like the shape of a standard TV screen.

All videos should be filmed in colour and not black and white. The video must be filmed in standard mode with no filters.

All videos should be filmed indoors and have the simplest background you are able to achieve. Preferably the entire background should be one solid colour. Avoid patterned wallpaper if possible; stick to muted, soft colours. White is always a safe bet but also soft greys, blues and cream work well, amongst many others. You want to be the centre of attention, not the background colour. Your videos should not have items in the foreground either (e.g. furniture and plants). Another option would be to enquire about an interior space away from home such as your school or college.

Music and/or sound effects must not be played in the videos.

Try not to have any contrasting light in your frame as this might cause your phone to alter the intended exposure. Aim to achieve a frame that doesn't have any shadows. If filming your video on a very bright sunny day that is casting shadows, you could control the light coming through the window by hanging a white sheet - this way light can still pass through the sheet without it being too harsh and contrasting to the rest of the frame.

In summary:

- **Simplicity is key**
- **Simple plain clothes** (no costume)
- **Videos to be filmed:**
 - On one camera/phone
 - Landscape frame (like a TV screen)
 - Standard phone camera (no third-party apps)
 - No filters
 - Colour mode

- **Filmed indoors:**
 - A simple plain background
 - Soft coloured backdrop. White is always good
 - Avoid TVs, picture frames, patterned wallpaper
 - Consider using a large bed sheet
 - Consider a location other than your home
- **No foreground objects in frame**
- **No sound effects or music**
- **Avoid high contrasting light in your video:**
 - No bright light from windows in the background
 - Possibly diffuse the light with a white sheet

Camera Shots

The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the correct shot is used as required by the syllabus specification, and that the candidates(s) are clearly visible within the frame.

There are three different shot sizes required. Candidates and teachers/applicants are advised to watch the video demonstration for further clarification.

1. Wide shot

This is a full body shot and should be wide enough to not cut out any part of the body. Ensure you set the camera to take in the whole scene, along with any movement. Consider moving around, stretching your arms and legs to reach the parameters of the space you are intending on using. For exams with two candidates, both of you should do this. If any part of either of either candidate cuts out of the frame, position the camera further away until this doesn't happen.

2. Mid-Shot

This shot is achieved by moving the camera nearer to you than the wide shot. Position the camera at a distance from you that shows you from approximately the waist up. Note this is approximate, it is recognised that your scene/scenario may include small movements and physicality, which might result in a slight deviation, but, generally 'waist-up' is what is expected.

The mid shot is more-or-less representative of how you might see a person if you were having a conversation with them. It allows for a little movement, whilst retaining the main focus on your face.

3. Close-up

This is a shot of your face and is achieved by moving the camera in further to you than the mid-shot. We want to see your whole head so be careful to not cut off the top of your head or the bottom of your chin. A good guideline is to leave the very tops of your shoulders inside the frame as well as a small gap above you within frame. This way you can ensure you do not cut anything out of frame that is required.

NB. For guidance on acting for close-up, please see the Definitions section, found later in this guide.

For solo candidates:

In your close-up task, if you are directing your speech to another, imagined character, do not look directly at the camera, but slightly beyond the side edge of the camera, focussing on the imagined other character.

For candidates entering in twos:

If your close-up task requires performing an extract from a duologue scene, the extract must be filmed twice, with the camera focused on each candidate in turn, framed in close-up.

If you're the other actor in someone else's close-up scene, get as close to the camera as possible without it catching you (unless it's an over-the-shoulder shot – see below) so the main actor is captured clearly in the frame.

It is suggested (but not mandatory) that you also have the edge of the other person in frame as well as yourself. This is known as an over-the-shoulder shot, and is a common way of filming dialogue between two people. It is important to maintain eye contact with your acting partner for this shot. Remember not to look directly at the camera.

Framing an Over-the-Shoulder Close-up:

This shot is achieved by moving the camera closer to you, just as if you were performing by yourself but then rotating yourself and your partner's body around so that you both remain within the backdrop and frame. As you are intending to have the edge of your performing partner's face as well as your own in shot you most likely will not need to move the camera in quite as close as if you were performing by yourself.

Now that you have done the close-up shot for yourself you just need to repeat this shot so that your partner is the main focus and only the edge of yourself is seen.

The simplest way to achieve this is by adjusting positions with each other and not altering the frame of the camera, whilst also swapping the shoulder you are filming over. For example, if you filmed over the right shoulder of the first person, film over the left shoulder of the second person.

It is worth checking this before recording and maybe making slight adjustments, but in most cases, you will not have to move the camera.

How to position your camera / smartphone:

The Screen Acting syllabus has been created for **static** camera shots. A static shot is a shot that is devoid of camera movement. This is why planning your shot first is useful.

If another person is going to be holding the camera phone, they should keep the footage as steady as possible. If you can use a tripod or some other kind of camera mount, that would be ideal. If the camera phone is handheld, please ensure you keep the video as stable as possible, and stick to the same guidelines below. Zooming in or out is not permitted.

If you do not have a tripod, you need to hold the camera phone in place by other means. Hardback books, paper weights, place mats, whatever you find that works for you.

Find something that can hold your phone when recording at different heights.

- For the wide shot you will need the phone to be fairly low, around the height of a standard chair or stool.
- For the mid-shot and close-up shots you will need the phone to be positioned higher so that the camera is set to eye level without looking up or down on you.

Definitions

The following definitions are intended as a guide for teachers and candidates, to give further guidance in relation to specific assessment criteria within the PAA Screen Acting syllabus.

Objective: The objective is what the character wants, or what the character's goal is. What is the reason for the character's intentions and/or actions? What is the character trying to achieve?

Intention: This is related to the objective, but is more specifically about the character's thoughts and/or intended actions related to the objective. For example, what the character intends to do to achieve their objective.

Super-objective: This is what the character wants more than anything throughout the play or screenplay. An overarching objective, which may be linked to the overall outcome in the play or screenplay. A character's objective in a scene may be directly linked to their journey towards their super-objective.

The ability to adjust nuances of performance in relation to the proximity of the camera:

At Entry Level and Level 1 (Grades Premiere–3) candidates are expected to demonstrate some ability to adjust their performance in relation to the proximity of the camera, at Level 2 (Grades 4–5) a developing ability and at Level 3 (Grades 6–8) a full ability. To help them achieve this, candidates should be aware of the following:

Make sure you know the camera shot used for your scene so you have a good sense of how you need to adjust your performance. For example, a scene filmed as a close-up shouldn't be performed in exactly the same way as a wide shot.

Acting for Close-up:

Acting for close-up requires specialised acting skills. The closer you get to a camera, the more it is all about internalising your character's thoughts and feelings. The performance must be grounded in truth and believability. Of course, you may still use your body and voice, but you must be able to convey your thoughts and emotions with minimum movement, and mostly through your eyes. Consider the following:

- Your inner thoughts are really important. Anything that you are really thinking, feeling or seeing will come across, so avoid trying to "show" the audience what your character is feeling – it will look too big.
- Remember that even small movements like a glance aside, eye roll, or eyebrow raise could tell a story. Close-ups exaggerate everything.
- Your eyes are the most important feature in a close-up. Approach acting internally, and express thoughts through the eyes rather than the whole face. This will help eliminate unnecessary and distracting gestures. What you're doing with your eyes and your ability to tell your story through them is vital.
- In close-up scenes 'less is more', however this doesn't mean that you just have a blank face (unless the character's intention is to have a blank face!), because that would mean that you are not engaged and thinking in character. But remember that even tiny expressions are noticeable in close-up, so the maxim 'less is more' is important to consider.
- The closer you get to the camera, the faster you appear to go, so slow down and don't rush any powerful close-up moments.
- Listen. Even if you aren't speaking in a scene, listen intently to what's going on. Listening is interesting. Aim to listen with your eyes. One technique is to think of what you would say, but don't actually say it.

Commercial acting:

Commercial acting requires the ability to sell a product while also appearing natural and demonstrating a believable character.

Other technical terminology relevant to PAA Screen Acting exams:

Action: This is the director's cue for the actors to begin. As an actor, you should stay in character from before the director says "Action" until after he or she says "Cut".

Cut: This signals the end of a take and to stop the action. For PAA Screen Acting exams, it is important for the camera operator to know the scene well enough to call "Cut" at exactly the correct time.

Split screen: A film/TV technique which allows different scenes or locations to be shown on the screen at the same time.

Revision History

January 2023

Updated hyperlinks (pages 12, 41 and 44) to signpost teachers and candidates to additional online guidance and resources.