

# **THEATRE STUDIES AND DRAMA SYLLABUS PRE-UNIVERSITY H2**

Implementation starting with the 2019 Pre-University One Cohort



Ministry of Education  
SINGAPORE

© 2019 Curriculum Planning and Development Division. This publication is not for sale. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior permission of the Ministry of Education, Singapore

# REVISED THEATRE STUDIES AND DRAMA SYLLABUS

## CONTENTS

---

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3-7</b>
• AIMS	4
• LEARNING OUTCOMES	5
• 21 <sup>st</sup> CENTURY COMPETENCIES IN THEATRE STUDIES & DRAMA	6-8
<b>2. CONTENT</b>	<b>9-12</b>
• SYLLABUS FRAMEWORK	10
• AREA OF STUDY 1: ELEMENTS OF THEATRE & DRAMA IN CONTEXT	11
• AREA OF STUDY 2: PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE	12
<b>3. PEDAGOGY</b>	<b>12-13</b>
• PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING THEATRE STUDIES & DRAMA	13
<b>4. ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>14-15</b>

# REVISED THEATRE STUDIES AND DRAMA SYLLABUS

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

# REVISED THEATRE STUDIES AND DRAMA SYLLABUS

## 1. INTRODUCTION

---

First implemented in 1985, the Theatre Studies and Drama (TSD) course provides students with the opportunity to acquire knowledge and understanding of the language of theatre and drama in the contexts of history, theory and production. This will be encouraged through theoretical study and the creative exploration of dramatic text and theatrical performance. The study of TSD will engage students' affective, cognitive and aesthetic domains of learning and present ample opportunities for students to hone communication and collaborative skills that would prove applicable not only to TSD but also across other industries. The new TSD syllabus includes re-scoped areas of study to more clearly reflect the integrated relationship between theory and practice. Also, students will more broadly engage in the practice and production of theatre covering the following three key areas: Acting, Directing/Devising and Design<sup>1</sup>.

### AIMS

The syllabus aims to:

- i. Develop students' knowledge and understanding of, and critical thinking about, theatre and drama in a variety of historical and cultural contexts
- ii. Provide students with opportunities to develop practical skills related to performance, in essence the use of the visual, kinaesthetic and symbol systems of drama and theatre to communicate meaning
- iii. Integrate theory and practice as students realise a performance or presentation based on their understanding of critical concepts
- iv. Foster students' interest and enjoyment in theatre and drama both as participant and as informed members of an audience
- v. Encourage a deeper understanding and exploration of the human condition through their critical thinking and practice of theatre and drama

---

<sup>1</sup> While students will be exposed to design for performance as a whole, they can only choose to specialise either in Set Design or Costume and Make Up.

# REVISED THEATRE STUDIES AND DRAMA SYLLABUS

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

### **LO1 Critically assess the literary and dramatic qualities of play texts and theatrical performance**

- Examine a play text for its themes, language, characters, style, plot, setting and historical and cultural significance
- Evaluate the different ways in which play texts when staged are interpreted by different directors, designers, performers and audiences

### **LO2 Critically reflect on their theoretical study of theatre and drama against the practical process of theatre making**

- Understand the function and process of key practical components (acting, directing, set and props design, costume and make up) that are involved in theatrical performance
- Apply knowledge of the function and process of one key practical component towards conceptually and imaginatively interpreting a play text for performance
- Support practice with theoretical underpinnings by referencing appropriate primary and secondary resources

### **LO3 Demonstrate fluency and clarity in their written responses**

- Present a cogent and reasoned argument
- Use appropriate specialist terminology in their responses
- Write creatively and critically for self-expression and to communicate meaning according to purpose, audience, context and culture

### **LO4 Demonstrate effective communication**

- Articulate and express ideas in a cogent way
- Give and accept constructive criticism
- Use or modify dramatic and theatre conventions so as to communicate meaning appropriate to purpose, audience, context and culture

### **LO5 Embody effective collaboration**

- Be resourceful in solving problems relating to performance or presentation
- Recognise that failure and rejection is part of the creative process
- Negotiate and resolve conflict and disagreement during the creative process

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies in Theatre Studies and Drama**

To help our students thrive in a fast changing world, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has identified crucial competencies and infused them in the total curriculum. The emerging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies (21CC) necessary for living in a globalised world fall under three domains: Civic Literacy, Global Awareness and Cross-Cultural (CGC) skills; Critical and Inventive Thinking (CIT) skills; and Communication, Collaboration and Information (CCI) skills. According to the aims and outcomes of A-Level Theatre Studies and Drama, students taking the subject will acquire, develop and apply skills from all three domains. While these skills are described in the syllabus wherever they occur, a consolidated account of how A-Level Theatre Studies and Drama is aligned with the 21CC is given in the following table:

<b>A-Level TSD Syllabus</b>	<b>The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies (21CC) Domains</b>		
	<b>Civic Literacy, Global Awareness and Cross-Cultural (CGC) skills</b>	<b>Critical and Inventive Thinking (CIT) skills</b>	<b>Communication, Collaboration and Information (CCI) skills</b>
<b>Aims and Learning Outcomes (pp4-5)</b>	Under Aim I, V and LOs 1 and 2, students need to critically assess dramatic texts and performance within the context which they were written and/or created. This exposes students to the concerns of particular societies and cultures thereby honing students' global and cross-cultural sensitivities.	Under Aims i, ii, iii and V and LOs 1 and 2, students are required to both critically assess texts and translate their theoretical study into performance or technical production. The application of theory to practice is a process of reflection which requires students to think critically, and creatively as well as practically, as they must refine and reiterate through drafts and rehearsals.	Under Aim II and LOs 3, 4 and 5, students will have to develop strong writing skills, and linguistic and paralinguistic abilities in order to effectively communicate their ideas either to their intended audience and/or co-creators' during the production process.

## REVISED THEATRE STUDIES AND DRAMA SYLLABUS

<p><b>Areas of Study (pp10-11)</b></p>	<p>In formulating an understanding of the elements of theatre and drama in context (Area of Study 1), students will develop knowledge and understanding of the significant historical developments in world theatre. While students are not required to study every single historical period, teachers are encouraged to give students a broad historical trajectory of the evolution of theatre either specialising in a few choice periods or forms of which one is Singapore theatre. Therefore, students will not only be exposed to global contexts but also have the opportunity to engage with national issues through theatre and</p>	<p>Students will be exposed to practical skills in Area of Study 2. These areas are acting, directing/devising, and design. Students must go on to specialise in one of these. The process of initially exposing students to these three broad skills requires students to exercise critical and inventive thinking skills in first analysing scripted or non-scripted text for essential meaning and then formulating a creative interpretation for the stage. When students move on to decide on their area of specialisation, they must take ownership of their learning, as they need to realistically assess their options and consider their interest, creative ability and available resources and time order to choose their area of specialisation.</p>	<p>In the students' study of the elements of theatre and drama (Area of Study 1), students will not only assess how a text is written but also how it is performed i.e. how it effectively communicates meaning through the visual, aural, verbal and kinaesthetic. Students' assessment of such different forms of communication, gives them a deeper understanding of what constitutes effective communication. In addition, students subsequent engaging in performance and production, would</p>
--	---	--	--

## REVISED THEATRE STUDIES AND DRAMA SYLLABUS

	<p>and drama building upon their civic literary.</p>		<p>ensure students apply their understanding of effective communication. Finally, given that theatrical performance and production (Area of Study 2) naturally lends to a collaborative effort, students will have to learn to negotiate differences and compromise as they work through the creative process.</p>
<p><b>Principles of Teaching TSD (p13)</b></p>	<p>The different areas of teaching of TSD should be integrated and authentic. In learning about theatre studies and drama through the integrated lens of theory and practice, students will have to be open to accepting and synthesising multiple perspectives through self-reflection, group collaboration and the exploration of culturally diverse texts. This openness towards multiplicity is integral to developing students' global and cultural awareness. Teachers will also provide opportunities for students to experience a variety of both local and international productions that allow for comparison of perspectives across live cultural products. This is a truly authentic environment for the development of civic literary and global and cultural awareness skills.</p>	<p>The teaching of TSD should be considered, differentiated and self-directed. Students are encouraged to articulate their personal opinions about performance, and also express their opinions through performance. They are will be taught to do so in a considered manner recognising that critical thinking requires both analysis and a self-reflexive evaluation of their own opinions. Teachers must employ differentiated teaching strategies to engage the different intelligences (e.g. cognitive, emotional, procedural, performative) of the students. Students must also be self-directed in their learning as they are required to continue to explore and experiment with their ideas outside of the classroom. The strong emphasis on differentiated and self-directed learning creates an environment that encourages creativity and inventive thought.</p>	<p>The teaching of TSD should be inclusive. In needing to maintain an inclusive learning environment, it allows for students to practice collaboration and open communication. The strong emphasis on self-directed learning requires students to develop information skills as they explore and experiment with material from different sources to further develop their areas of interest.</p>



# REVISED THEATRE STUDIES AND DRAMA SYLLABUS

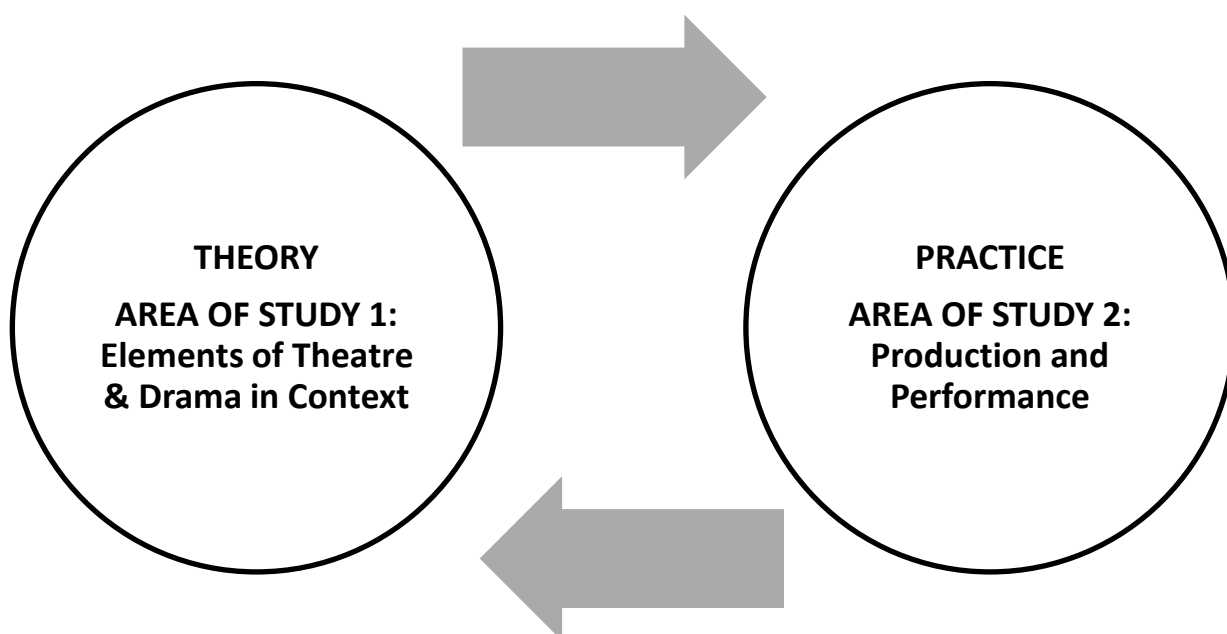
## SECTION 2: CONTENT

## 2. CONTENT

---

### SYLLABUS FRAMEWORK

The TSD syllabus adopts an integrated approach towards developing and deepening students' appreciation of theatre and drama. The critical, theoretical study of the discipline should not be devoid from the creative practice of theatre making and vice versa. It is important that students explore and understand the interplay between the literary mode of drama and theatrical production. The following diagram illustrates the two key areas of study and how the theoretical and practical components of the syllabus are connected:



The knowledge and skills to be developed within each area of study are presented below in the following sections

The recommended curriculum time for Theatre Studies and Drama in a two-year programme is 4 hours per week.

## **AREA OF STUDY 1: ELEMENTS OF THEATRE AND DRAMA IN CONTEXT**

### **Content:**

Students should develop knowledge and understanding of key elements of Theatre and Drama as they study how text and performance evolved within specific political, historical and cultural contexts:

- Key dramatic elements
- Key theatrical elements
- Work of practitioners  
Key practitioners to consider<sup>2</sup>  
Konstantin Stanislavski's system of acting  
Anne Bogart's Viewpoints  
Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theatre
- Significant developments in the history of World Theatre:  
Key areas to consider<sup>3</sup>  
**Classical:** Greek Drama, Roman Drama, Asian Theatre, Medieval Drama, Renaissance Drama, Restoration Drama  
**Modern:** 19th Century Drama- Early 20th Century, 20th Century Drama, Modern Asian/Singapore Theatre

## **AREA OF STUDY 2: PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE**

Students should be familiar with the different aspects of production and performance, subsequently applying their knowledge and understanding of the elements of theatre and drama towards the process of interpreting or creating text for performance within an area of specialisation:

- **Acting**
- **Directing/ Devising**
- **Designing**

---

<sup>2</sup> This list is not exhaustive. These practitioners were chosen to allow teachers to broadly survey contrasting styles of practice aiding students in their understanding of how elements of theatre and drama evolved and are developed through practice.

<sup>3</sup> Teachers need not teach every single period on the list. Instead, teachers should aim to give students a basic understanding of the genesis and development of theatre and drama through the ages but leverage on work/text across particular periods (or thematically) that would ultimately develop students' mastery of key dramatic and theatrical elements.

**SECTION 3:  
PEDAGOGY**

### **3. PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING THEATRE STUDIES AND DRAMA**

---

The teaching of TSD should be:

#### **INTEGRATED**

Teachers should encourage students to study text and performance through the integrated lens of theory and practice, and embrace the multiple perspectives that arise from exposure to a variety of contexts and mediums.

#### **CONSIDERED**

Teachers should encourage students to express their personal, critical response about performance and through production/performance, yet at the same time guide them to recognise that this should be done with balance and maturity.

#### **DIFFERENTIATED**

Teachers should employ differentiated teaching strategies towards engaging the different interests, abilities and intelligences of the student. Students of TSD should learn within both a physical classroom and studio environment.

#### **INCLUSIVE**

Teachers should aim to create a classroom climate of co-operation and acceptance that supports and validates students' varying ideas, contribution and work in progress.

#### **SELF DIRECTED**

Teachers should encourage students to independently further explore and experiment with their ideas outside of the classroom, and thus take ownership of their learning.

#### **AUTHENTIC**

Teachers should provide students with opportunities to watch live performances and/or attend workshops/masterclasses of theatre groups/expert practitioners. Thus students will authentically experience theatre in practice and benefit from a rich diet of diverse theatre experiences.

**SECTION 4:  
ASSESSMENT**

## 4. ASSESSMENT

---

### I. Our Beliefs of Assessment as espoused in the Singapore Curriculum Philosophy

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process, and must be closely aligned with curricular objectives, content and pedagogy. Both school-based assessment and national examinations play important and different roles in our education system. A balanced assessment system should have both Assessment of Learning (AoL) as well as Assessment for Learning (Afl). Whether implemented as national examinations<sup>4</sup> or in the classroom, assessment should lead to meaningful learning. The ‘what’ and ‘how’ of assessment should be anchored on the clarity of purpose (‘why’). There should be regular and meaningful gathering of quantitative and qualitative information about a learner’s progress and development, and such information should be used to inform learning and shape future teaching and learning practices.

### II. Assessment Objectives (AOs) for Formative and Summative Assessment

The Theatre Studies and Drama Syllabus Assessment Objectives (AOs) are as reflected in the following table:

<b>AO 1- Analyse and Evaluate</b>
Students should be able to analyse and evaluate play texts and theatrical performance within the contexts in which they were written, created or performed.
<b>AO 2- Clarity of Expression</b>
Students should be able to communicate informed and independent opinions in a fluent and cogent manner.
<b>AO3- Making Connections</b>
Students should be able to make connections between dramatic theory and practice in the interpretation of dramatic work, and as part of the theatre-making process.
<b>AO4- Application of Theatrical Skills</b>
Students should be able to apply theatrical skills to demonstrate artistic intention either individually or as a group, appropriate to purpose, context and culture.

---

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the National Assessment, refer to the Examination Syllabus available at [www.seab.gov.sg](http://www.seab.gov.sg)