



# Act Too Graduate Scheme

A new standard in the dramatic arts

A 3D architectural graphic consisting of several rectangular blocks in shades of red and grey, arranged in a perspective view. The blocks are interconnected, creating a sense of depth and structure. The red blocks have a fine, dotted texture, while the grey blocks are solid.

2010

# The Act Too Graduate Scheme

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## **Mission Statement:**

*“To provide a qualification based on accredited industry standards and backed by real practical experience in all three of the theatrical disciplines – Acting, Singing and Dance.”*

### **1. Overview:**

With so many of our young performers and students wishing to follow theatre arts as a career, we felt that it was time that we lead the way once again with a new type of certified qualification which would aid them in gaining places on further education theatre arts courses and would also effectively document the graduates true competence.

Many similar centres for teaching the arts to undergraduate students offer limited, if any, formal qualifications and when they do they are often limited to just one of the disciplines such as Drama exams with LAMDA, Singing exams and musical grading or Dance exams with the awarding bodies for dance such as ISTD, AAD or IDTA. However none of them provide the type of all round grading with additional practical performance elements and experience that we champion as the best route into further education in the arts.

To address this Act Too Arts Academy proudly introduces the ACT TOO GRADUATE SCHEME [ATGS].

ATGS aims to bring together formal externally examined and recognised standards in all three disciplines along with documented and verified practical performance experience on stage, providing a qualification which will not only be recognised by the industry, but will also be a meaningful demonstration of the graduates competence.

Uniquely Act Too will not restrict our students to courses and qualifications with or through us, choosing instead to additionally recognise grading achievements gained elsewhere and counting them towards our graduate scheme. So for example a dance grading in contemporary dance or ballet, modern and tap prepared for and achieved within a student's separate specialist dance classes will count equally towards the graduate scheme as fulfilling one element of the requirements to achieve any given standard.

This open and unique approach will allow students to use existing qualifications rather than repeating or having to do them through Act Too.

## **2. The Qualification Levels:**

The ATGS will have three levels, each requiring attainment of specific standards. The levels of certified qualification will be:

- Foundation Certificate
- Intermediate Certificate
- Advanced Graduate Certificate

## **3. The Requisite Standards:**

In order to achieve each of the three levels of the ATGS a student will have to pass the bar in all three disciplines plus have evidence of a suitable level of practical live stage experience with us.

The standards that we will promote and use as guidelines are the generally recognised industry standards:

- Drama – The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts [LAMDA]
- Singing – Trinity Guildhall
- Dance - Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing [ISTD]\*

[\* for dance we appreciate that there are a number of awarding bodies and accept clear equivalents such as IDTA and AAD.]

Each of these bodies awards a foundation, intermediate and advance level qualifications and these form the basis of our requirements for achieving the three standards of the ATGS.

In order to meet our standard, however, a student must first achieve a comparable level in all three disciplines. So for example if a student achieves their advanced LAMDA speech and drama exams and advanced level ISTD grading in modern dance, but only holds a grade one or two in music theory then the music grading must be improved and attainment of at least grade 5 theory and practical in music will be required in order to qualify for the advanced graduate certificate.

Further the ATGS additionally requires proven practical experience with us in performing in front of live audiences. The various requirements for each level of practical experience are laid out in full later.

Firstly on the following pages let us define the external bodies standards and the requisite for each level of the Act Too Graduate Scheme.

#### 4. The Specific Discipline Standards:

##### 4.1 Drama Standards:

The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) is one of the oldest drama schools in the United Kingdom. Founded in 1861, it quickly established itself as a centre of excellence in performance training. LAMDA has provided theatre and the world of film and television with generation upon generation of first-class actors and expertly-trained stage managers across the world.

LAMDA began offering speech examinations to the public in the 1880s. Since then, these examinations have been refined and developed into a comprehensive system of performance evaluation by experts in education, acting and communication. In addition to being the UK's largest statutory speech and drama awarding body, LAMDA Examinations has a reputation for excellence across the globe.

The LAMDA mission is to:

- improve standards in communication through the spoken word
- foster an appreciation of literature, poems and drama
- acknowledge levels of achievement
- support the creative, intellectual and social development of the individual as a whole.
- LAMDA examinations are designed to equip candidates, whatever their age or aspirations, with a range of skills that will serve them throughout life.

Preparation for an examination can:

- unlock the imagination and creative-thinking
- develop communication skills
- refine technical skills and artistry
- promote team-working.

The examinations themselves provide candidates with an opportunity to:

- measure progress against an international standard
- make contact with expert practitioner examiners outside the immediate teaching environment
- build self-confidence and self-esteem
- acquire skill certification for career development
- receive critical appraisal and guidance for future development.

The range of exam options supports progression and allows the candidate to extend personal and vocational skills whilst realising their potential.

##### Examinations

##### The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) is a credit-based qualifications framework, allowing a unit-based approach to building qualifications. All vocational qualifications will be placed on the framework by 2013. The QCF will replace the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) by December 2010 for all 14+ vocational qualifications.

The QCF is a new way of recognising learners' skills and qualifications. It does this by awarding credit for units or small steps of learning. It enables people to gain qualifications at their own pace along flexible routes. The QCF has four main aims:

- To establish a simpler qualifications framework that is easier for all users to understand
- To reduce the burden of bureaucracy in the accreditation and assessment of qualifications
- To ensure a wider range of achievements can be recognised within a more inclusive qualifications framework
- To establish a qualifications system that is more responsive to individual and employer needs

One credit represents 10 hours of learning time. Learning time is the amount of time a learner at the level of the unit is expected to take, on average, to complete the learning outcomes of the unit to the standard defined by the assessment criteria. Learning time includes all the time needed to achieve a unit, including directed study, homework, assessment time and preparation time.

LAMDA's new Graded Examinations in Communication and Performance are now accredited by the regulator, Ofqual, within the QCF and come into effect from 1 September 2009.

**The following will be accepted by the Act Too Graduate Scheme:–**

Graded Examinations in Communication: Speaking Verse and Prose

Level 1 & 2 – ATGS Foundation Certificate

Level 3 & 4 – ATGS Intermediate Certificate

Level 5 – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

Graded Examinations in Communication: Reading for Performance

Level 1 & 2 – ATGS Foundation Certificate

Level 3 & 4 – ATGS Intermediate Certificate

Level 5 – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

Graded Examinations in Communication: Using Spoken English

Level 1 & 2 – ATGS Foundation Certificate

Level 3 & 4 – ATGS Intermediate Certificate

Level 5 – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

Graded Examinations in Performance: Acting (Solo/Duo/Combined)

Level 1 & 2 – ATGS Foundation Certificate

Level 3 & 4 – ATGS Intermediate Certificate

Level 5 – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

Graded Examinations in Performance: Devising Drama (Solo/Duo)

Level 1 & 2 – ATGS Foundation Certificate

Level 3 & 4 – ATGS Intermediate Certificate

Level 5 – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

Graded Examinations in Performance: Miming (Solo/Duologue)

Level 1 & 2 – ATGS Foundation Certificate

Level 3 & 4 – ATGS Intermediate Certificate

Level 5 – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

**We will also accept GCSE grades in Drama as follows:**

GCSE grade D – ATGS Foundation Certificate

GCSE grade B – ATGS Intermediate Certificate

GCSE grade A or A\* – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

## 4.2 Singing & Music Theory Standards:

Trinity Guildhall [TG] offers a range of grade examinations for all instruments and voice across nine levels from Initial to Grade 8. These examinations assess performance and technical skills from beginner to accomplished performer.

Musicians all over the world will find that the repertoire lists, supporting lists and Trinity Guildhall publications will guide, assist and enrich every pupil and teacher.

Some of the key features of Trinity Guildhall examinations:

- A wide range of repertoire - developed through consultation with teachers worldwide
- Supporting a range of learning and teaching styles - with a new approach to Technical Work, Aural and other tests to benefit both students and teachers.
- Putting performance at the heart of the exam - with a mark scheme that awards a higher proportion of the marks to the performance of the pieces, and with Technical Work focused on developing performance skills.
- Publications - including new books and CD recordings of repertoire, all available from their online store.

### Recognition

Trinity Guildhall examinations are accredited in England, Wales and Northern Ireland by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, DELLS and CEA. They also attract UCAS points for students applying to UK colleges and universities. Various arrangements are in place with education authorities worldwide.

### Syllabuses

New Strings, Guitar, Brass and Singing Syllabuses are now available to download from the Trinity Guildhall site [<http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk>], valid from January 2010.

Trinity Guildhall Grade examination syllabuses are available for all instruments and voice and cover a variety of styles from classical to contemporary music. Please visit each of the discipline areas listed on their website for detailed information on each syllabus.

### Information and Regulations

The Information and Regulations that accompany each syllabus are now printed separately. Please make sure when downloading or ordering a syllabus that you also download/order the Information and Regulations 2009 book.

### Supporting Tests

In addition to playing/singing their pieces and performing technical work, candidates take two supporting tests.

Up to and including Grade 5 candidates can choose any 2 of:-

- AURAL
- SIGHT READING
- IMPROVISATION
- MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE

In Grades 6, 7 and 8:

- Test 1 must be SIGHTREADING.
- For Test 2 there is a choice between AURAL and IMPROVISATION

You can download the resources direct from the TG website for details of these tests.

New aural books (Book 1: Initial-Grade 5, Book 2: Grades 6-8) are now available to purchase from your local music shop or the TG website. Guidance leaflets on Improvisation and Musical Knowledge, and examples of alternative cadences for the aural tests in Grades 5, 6 and 7, can also be downloaded from the TG website.

### Exam Structure

Trinity Guildhall's practical examination grades are numbered from 1 to 8 in increasing order of difficulty. In many subjects, an Initial examination acts as an introduction to the examination system.

The structure of Graded Examinations is as follows:

### Pieces

Candidates play 3 pieces (Singers in upper grades sing 4 songs and percussionists play 2 pieces and a study)

There is flexibility in the way that candidates may select their pieces, allowing them to play to their own strengths, pursue their own interests and show their enjoyment of music-making and learning. Pre-recorded accompaniments may be used for exams up to and including Grade 3 (Grade 8 for Drum Kit, Percussion and Jazz Woodwind).

### Technical Work

Pianists must play 3 short exercises and a small number of scales and arpeggios (4 of each in early grades). Singers choose a set of vocal exercises. Most other instruments have a choice between playing scales and arpeggios and playing studies/exercises that explore similar technical areas.

### The rest of the exam

There are 2 further tests:

Up to and including Grade 5 there is a free choice – any 2 of AURAL -SIGHTREADING - IMPROVISATION - MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE.

In Grades 6, 7 and 8, Test 1 must be SIGHTREADING. For Test 2 there is a choice between AURAL and IMPROVISATION.

**The following will be accepted by the Act Too Graduate Scheme:–**

**Examined theory with practical in voice or instrument of your choice:**

- Grade 1 - ATGS Foundation Certificate
- Grade 2 - ATGS Foundation Certificate
- Grade 3 - ATGS Intermediate Certificate
- Grade 4 - ATGS Intermediate Certificate
- Grade 5 + - ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate



### 4.3 Dance Standards:

Dance examinations are offered by a wide range of awarding bodies, the ISTD just being one of several. Below is detailed information about the examinations it offers. The CDET website is a good place to find out further information about examinations in general.

[<http://www.cdet.org.uk/>]

#### About ISTD Examinations

The examination structure of the ISTD is designed to cater equally for the 'once a week' child and the child who will go on to make dance his/her profession, either as a performer or as a teacher. The work progresses through each level, building on the lessons previously learned as well as adding new skills. Musicality and artistry are valued as highly as technical execution and all syllabi are regularly reviewed to keep them up to date.

The Professional examinations are structured to give the new teacher the best possible foundation from which to work. Care of the growing child is emphasised as is a knowledge of anatomy as it relates specifically to the dancer and the possible effects of dance on the growing body.

#### Grade/Class Examinations

Grade examinations and Class examinations may be taken in Classical Ballet (Cecchetti and Imperial Methods), Modern Theatre and Tap Dance, National Dance, Classical Greek Dance and South Asian Dance. There are eight levels of examination from Pre-Primary to Grade 6.

#### Medal Tests

These tests may be taken in Modern Ballroom, Latin American, Sequence, Disco, Rock 'n' Roll, Country Western, Classical Greek, Jazz, Tap, National and Scottish Country and Highland Dance. The levels ascend from Bronze to Silver, Gold, Gold Star and Supreme Awards in up to four divisions.

#### Vocational Examinations (Imperial Dance & Theatre Faculties)

In the Theatre Faculties the Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 examinations form a cohesive bridge between the work covered in the Grades and the work of the Professional examinations.

#### Professional Examinations

These may be taken in all Faculties and are linked with membership of the ISTD.

#### Certificate in Applied Anatomy and Physiology/History and Development of Western Dance

These examinations are divided into two parts each and both of the parts consist of one written paper and a special subject chosen by the applicant.

**Any one of the following will be accepted by the Act Too Graduate Scheme:—**

#### **Modern Theatre:**

General Grades:

- Primary
- Grade 1 – ATGS Foundation Certificate
- Grade 2
- Grade 3 – ATGS Intermediate Certificate
- Grade 4 – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

Medals/Badges:

- Bronze – ATGS Foundation Certificate
- Silver – ATGS Intermediate Certificate
- Gold – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate
- Gold Star – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

Vocational Grades:

- Intermediate Foundation – ATGS Foundation Certificate
- Intermediate – ATGS Intermediate Certificate
- Advanced 1 – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate
- Advanced 2 – ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

#### 4.4 Practical Performance Experience Standards:

In addition to the formal accredited qualifications required for the ATGS, at Act Too we place special emphasis on the performance experience element of our new certificate scheme and as such any student wishing to achieve an ATGS qualification will have to achieve a certain amount of experience on stage as well as in the class room.

We present and provide upwards of four opportunities annually within the Act Too Group to take part in a live stage performance to paying public audiences and prospective Act Too Graduates will be expected to show a keenness and interest in at least one of these annually in order to fully progress on the scheme.

#### **The following will be accepted by the Act Too Graduate Scheme:-**

##### ATGS Foundation Certificate

Achievement of this standard is subject to appearance in a minimum of 3 Act Too productions of any kind [full theatre, showcase, summer school or concert productions] in any given period, while maintaining attendance the academy.

##### ATGS Intermediate Certificate

Achievement of this standard is subject to appearance in at least 3 major theatre productions or book musicals with Act Too at professional theatres such as the Hawth Theatre, Crawley or Capitol Theatre, Horsham, within a three year period, while maintaining attendance the academy.

Alternatively by achieving a principal or significant supporting casting in any one given major production while attending the academy.

##### ATGS Advanced Graduate Certificate

Achievement of this standard is subject to appearance in at least 4 major theatre productions within a three year period while maintaining attendance the academy, at least two of which must have made a significant contribution to the production either as a principal performer or supporting cast member.

## 5. The Support Network

All students enrolling on the graduate scheme will be mentored and supported by their tutors to provide advice and help in progressing and preparing for their examinations and for taking part in live performances.

Where a student enrolled on the ATGS wishes to prepare externally for exams with their own private tutor, our tutors will monitor progress and help where and when required. This will happen on a constant ongoing basis within standard Saturday class structure. The skills developed will be observed by the tutors and useful feedback given to ensure that the student is on track and making the right progress towards successful achievement of the standards. It will however be up to the student to make their specific arrangements with their specialist external tutor for the syllabus work and for entering examinations.

Where a student would like Act Too to provide all coaching towards any of the given disciplines or exams, then while much of our syllabus will develop the requisite skills within normal classes, private one to one sessions will be required to ensure individual attention to each students progress and needs. These sessions can be booked and organised direct with the academy or the tutor, who will have responsibility for recording monitoring and feeding back to the academy on all private taught sessions.

Where a tutor at any given academy is not able to accommodate the one to one teaching sessions for whatever reason, the academy will attempt to arrange private tutoring with one of the other academy tutors or a select group of academy approved private tutors.

The cost involved with private tutor sessions will need to be covered by the student/guardian and these rates may vary from tutor to tutor dependent upon their agreed private rates. Act Too will have negotiated the best possible value rates on behalf of students and these fees advised prior to any commitment to the scheme.

All Academy tutors are specialists with training and experience in the performing arts. Additionally they are required to hold a current CRB check at all times to ensure that they are entirely suitable for one to one teaching and care of minors.

Guidance will be given on the syllabus and any materials required by the student. It will then be the student/guardians responsibility for acquiring any materials and course literature needed for the external examinations.

The tutors and/or academy principal will provide written verification and feedback on the achievements in live performance aspect of the scheme. Details of the parts played and an appraisal of the performance skilled displayed will be provided and will be graded according to the ATGS.

## **6. Future Scheme Development**

Act Too are presently investigating and will be making representations to further education establishments for the arts offering undergraduate and post graduate courses and theatrical training with the express intention of getting our standard recognised as meeting their entrance requirements.

As the scheme progresses and we are able to provide practical examples of the level of competence required for attainment of each level of the ATGS we believe that it will be evident to any external college, from the standards we have set, that our graduates will automatically qualify for entry audition.

Our aim is to equip our students who wish to pursue a career in theatre arts with a certificated standard which represents a solid and reliable foundation across all disciplines as well as verification of the practical experience and skills to effectively demonstrate their ability.

# The Act Too Graduate Scheme - Application Form

Please complete this form in full and post to:

Act Too Arts Academy – Graduate Scheme  
 12 Winkhurst Way  
 Burgess Hill  
 West Sussex  
 RH15 0RU

<b>STUDENT DETAILS</b>	
Surname: .....	Forenames: ..... Sex: M/F (delete as appropriate)
Address: ..... .....Post Code: .....	
Home Telephone Number:	
Date of Birth:	Age:

<b>PARENT OR GUARDIAN</b>	
Surname: .....	Forenames: ..... Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/(Other.....)* *(delete as appropriate)
Address: ..... .....Post Code: .....	
Daytime (Work) Telephone Number:	
Evening (Home) Telephone Number:	
Emergency/Mobile Telephone Number:	
Email [vital as this is our primary form of communication]:	

<p><b>Experience</b></p> <p>Please give details of any previous experience, for example examinations in dance, drama, singing that count towards any element of the ATGS under the criteria set out in the scheme document:-</p> <p>DRAMA: .....</p> <p>SINGING: .....</p> <p>DANCE: .....</p> <p><b>Please feel free to continue on additional sheets or provide separately if required.</b></p> <p><b>Please enclose copies of the certificates to verify the examinations you already hold.</b></p>
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