

PAA Acting Frequently Asked Questions

March 2021 (Note that these FAQs are subject to regular updates)

1. What are PAA Acting Exams?

These are exams which are designed to assess learners' ability to perform as an individual, in pairs or as a group of three.

2. How are learners assessed?

Learners prepare between 1 and 3 monologues, duologues or scenes for three people and present these to an examiner. The number of scenes depends on the grade being taken and not the number of people involved. From Debut – Grade 8, learners also need to prepare answers to set questions which assess their Knowledge and Understanding of the scene they have performed. This makes up 10% of the final marks.

3. Can I enter three candidates at different grades?

No. For an exam with two or three candidates, all candidates must be entered for the same grade.

4. Do learners follow set texts?

No. Teachers and learners are allowed to select their own texts, including their own devised pieces for the exam and adapted scenes from within a novel. At Grade 6, one of these needs to be from before 1990 and one from after 1990. At Grades 7 and 8, one scene needs to be from a play published before 1900 and one from after 1900. Please refer to the [syllabus](#) for more information. We have also produced some suggested texts which are available to view and download [here](#).

5. Are you allowed to add your own dialogue to a scene from a play?

No, adding your own dialogue to scenes from plays is not permitted. However, you may if you are adapting a scene from an excerpt within a novel (or, of course, if you are writing an original scene!)

6. Can I perform a scene from a sit-com?

No. Scenes from film or TV screenplays are acceptable, but not scenes from TV shows/serials/sit-coms etc.

7. Does the exam have to be in English?

Yes, currently the whole exam, including the Knowledge & Understanding component, must be performed in English.

8. Is a translation of a non-English script acceptable?

Yes, but only a published translation is acceptable.

9. Can I perform a monologue with an unseen character present?

Yes. When performing solo, you may choose to perform a soliloquy, a monologue directed to another imagined character or characters, or a monologue directed to the audience.

10. I have three students entering for a Grade 1 exam. Can they do a duologue as well as a scene for three people?

No. Their first scene must be a scene for three. Their second scene may be another scene for three, or they could perform a monologue each (so three monologues). Please refer to the [syllabus](#) for more information.

11. I have three students who want to take their Grade 4 exam together, but they'd like to do a monologue each as well. Is this allowed?

This is absolutely fine. For grades 1-6 each candidate must perform in two scenes. For three candidates, this could be either:

- *Both scenes include all three candidates*
- *Scene 1 is a scene for three, and Scene 2 comprises of a monologue each (so three monologues).*

Please refer to the [syllabus](#) for more information

12. I have two students taking Grade 8. Can they still do monologue as well as a duologue?

Yes, that's fine. At Grade 8 all candidates must perform in three scenes. For exams with two candidates, two of the scenes must be duologues, the other scene (either Scene 1, Scene 2 or Scene 3) may be another duologue or may consist of one monologue each. Please refer to the [syllabus](#) for more information

13. In one of the scenes, the learner's character is speaking directly to the audience. Should their focus be directly to the examiner?

If performing a scene which is a direct address to the audience, they may direct the focus either to the examiner/camera, or to a wider imagined audience.

14. Can I use props and costume for my scene?

Small hand-held props can be used. Costume is not required, although long practice skirts are permitted for period scenes if useful for the candidate. Long skirts must be worn over clothing as a change of clothes is not permitted.

15. If a learner forgets their lines in the exam, what happens?

The grade descriptors include an assessment of a candidate's fluency so a learner forgetting their lines may affect their overall grade. The examiner may prompt the candidate. For Premiere candidates, one prompt and/or minor hesitancy is accepted and will not impact the candidate's final mark. Multiple prompts or excessive hesitancies will result in the mark being impacted. At Debut – Grade 8, if prompting is required, then the amount the individual learners mark is impacted will depend on the number of prompts and/or lapses in fluency. Please refer to the full grade descriptors which are available on our [website](#) and in the [syllabus](#).

16. What types of PAA Acting Exam are available?

- 17. Schools, Colleges and Other Organisations can enter candidates for exams through a [Private Exam Day](#); a [Live Streamed Exam](#) or a [Recorded Video Exam](#).**
Independent Candidates, Teachers and Parents can enter for exam via Recorded Video only.
- 18. How do I enter for a PAA Acting Exam**
To register please use the relevant online forms, found [here](#).
Please note: there are two different forms. The form in the first tab is exclusively for schools, organisations, venues or exam centres. The form in the second tab is for independent candidates. For more information, please contact paa@rslawards.com
- 19. As a parent, can I register my child for a Recorded Video Exam?**
*Yes. Independent teachers, parents, or the candidates themselves if over the age of majority, can register for a **Recorded Video Exam** using the online booking form [here](#)*
- 20. I'm an independent drama tutor and want to enter my students for Recorded Video Exams to be filmed in their own homes. Is this ok?**
Yes, this is fine, as long as the Terms & Conditions are adhered to. The Terms & Conditions for Video Exams, along with filming and technical guidelines, can be downloaded from [here](#):
- 21. When entering for a Recorded Video Exam, can I record each scene and the Knowledge and Understanding sections separately?**
The Recorded Video Exams must be recorded in one continuous, unedited take. Recordings that are edited or submitted in a series of separate files will not be accepted for assessment. For more information on PAA Recorded Video Exams, please see [here](#).
- 22. What do PAA Acting Exams Cost?**
Please see our dates and fees page [here](#)
- 23. When can I enter candidates for their PAA Acting Exam?**
You can enter students for PAA Acting Exams at any time. Once you have entered for a private exam day, the team will be in contact with you to schedule your exam. For Recorded Video exams, these are submitted via our online portal which can be done at any time.
- 24. I have further questions which have not been answered here. What do I do?**
Please refer to our general PAA FAQs, which can be found [here](#)
You can also contact us via the [Help Desk](#)