

# Speech Power

## Solo ACTING





# Victoria College of Music and Drama, London

Founded 1890

71 Queen Victoria Street, LONDON EC4V 4AY

T: 020 7405 6483 E: info@vcexamams.com W: vcexamams@aol.com



## Governing Council:

### Principal

Dr. Martin Ellerby HonDLitt DMA HonVCM FVCM GLCM LMusLCM FTCL FRSA

### Chief Executive

Robin Wood HonVCM FVCM FCV FinstSMM ALAM FRSA

### Chief Examiner

Claire C. Pashley MA BA(Hons) PGCE HonVCM FVCM LTCL ALCM(TD) FRSA AdvDip(Open)

### Qualifications Manager and Head of of Music

Stewart L. Thompson BA(Hons) CT,FVCM FMCM FSCO FIGOC FCollT MNCMSoc ACIEA

### Head of Speech & Drama

Stuart Morrison MA HonVCM FVCM(TD)(Hons) PGCE ALAM ALCM(TD) LVCMed(Hons) FIFL FRSA

### Curriculum Specialist

Dr June Fileti PhD MA(Mus)(Open), MEd BA(Hons) CT,FVCM, LMusEdASMC(Hons)

### Subject Consultant

Stuart Morrison MA HonVCM FVCM(TD)(Hons) PGCE ALAM ALCM(TD) LVCMed(Hons) FIFL FRSA

# Solo Acting Syllabus

Member of



## ABOUT THE VCM

Victoria College of Music, London, is an independent body providing examinations in Music, Speech, and Drama subjects. It has held examination sessions throughout the British Isles and certain overseas countries since it was founded in 1890. It no longer operates a full-time teaching institution.

Further details about Victoria College can be found on our website:

**www.Vcmexams.com** and you can follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

## PASS MARKS

Introductory Grades	65%
Grades 1 to 8	65%
with Merit	80%; with Distinction 90% Merit is shown as %honours+in Ireland
Medal examinations	75%
Diplomas	75% (85% with Honours)

## ABOUT THIS SYLLABUS

This syllabus has been compiled using the popular strengths of its predecessors, and takes into account views and suggestions of teachers and advisers.

## CHANGES TO SYLLABUS

VCM examination requirements do not alter annually, the current syllabus is that listed on our website.

Any changes to the syllabus are announced well in advance on the College website, on Facebook and Twitter.

## COMPARISONS WITH OTHER EXAMINATION BODIES

VCM Grades 1 to 8 are intended to compare on a level for level basis with the grades 1 to 8 of other similarly recognised examination boards. In addition to Grades 1 to 8, VCM examinations are available at several introductory levels prior to Grade 1 as a means of encouraging beginners, or students with special needs. Medal and Diploma examinations are also available in all subjects. Candidates at all levels receive a written report and, if successful, a certificate or diploma.

## REGULATIONS

All entries are accepted on the conditions laid down in *General Regulations and Information*, a copy of which is available free of charge. It is also on our website: [www.vcmexams.com](http://www.vcmexams.com)

### **Own choices**

Scope has been left deliberately broad to allow for a wide range of own choice material. Teachers are encouraged to involve students as much as possible in the choice of pieces in order to give them a feeling of ownership of their work. While prescribed pieces are mainly of a traditional nature, there is no reason why own choices should not include modern material from less conventional sources.

### **Copies**

Candidates must bring copies of the works being performed for the use of the examiner. This need not necessarily be a second copy of a book, especially when cost is a factor: many teachers encourage candidates to copy out works, preferably using word-processors, as part of the learning process. Photocopying should be avoided and copyright law must not be broken.

### **Essays, projects, dissertations, folios, etc.**

These must be typed, word-processed, printed or neatly written. A statement signed by the teacher should certify that the work is wholly that of the candidate. Heavy binders should be avoided as essays are sent through the post and are photocopied for examiners' use. Marks are not awarded, essays are either Approved or Not Approved. Those whose essay is Not Approved but who receive a pass mark in the practical examination, may resubmit a revised essay within two years. The essay resubmission fee (see fee table) is payable in these circumstances.

### **Sight reading, impromptu work, etc.**

Where the syllabuses specify Unseen Sight Reading as a requirement, this will be handed to the candidate during the examination. Sufficient time will be given for the candidate to read through it before being asked to attempt it. In the case of the Fellowship examination, a copy of the unprepared scene will be handed to the candidate before the examination by the person acting as steward on the day in time for the candidate to prepare. Fellowship candidates should therefore arrive in good time.

### **Costume and make-up**

If candidates choose to use costume and or make-up the examiner will give credit for the effort involved rather than the material quality of the costume, props, make-up etc. See Equal Opportunities statement in *General Regulations and Information*.

### **Choices**

The College is always willing to look over proposed programmes submitted well in advance and give guidance where necessary.

### **EXAMINERS**

On occasions, two examiners may be present for purposes of Moderation or Training.

# SOLO ACTING

When selecting suitable pieces, it should be borne in mind that the whole exam is scheduled to take no longer than 5 minutes for Grades I & II; 10 for III & IV; 15 for V & VI, JBM, JSM & BM; 20 minutes for VIII; and 25 minutes for SM, GM & PM

There is no objection to males playing female roles or vice versa. Costumes and make-up are optional.

Pieces for performance may be dramatised in advance from candidates' favourite fiction, in which case candidates themselves should take an active role in the dramatisation under the guidance of their teacher

## Grade I

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform a short scene own choice, about 3 minutes in length.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (80 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner about the performed piece (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	I

## Grade II

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform a short scene own choice, about 4 minutes in length.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (80 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner about the performed piece (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	II

## Grade III

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform a short scene based on a Roald Dahl story, or similar about 7 minutes in length.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (80 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner about the performed piece (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	III

## Grade IV

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform two contrasting scenes based on the supernatural or fantasy, e.g. J. K. Rowling stories.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (80 marks - 40 per piece)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	IV

## Grade V

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform two contrasting scenes based on Enid Blyton or similar stories.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (80 marks - 40 per piece)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner*

*about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	V

## Grade VI

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform two contrasting scenes from the Victorian or Edwardian era (1840-1914).

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (80 marks - 40 per piece)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner*

*about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	VI

## Grade VII

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform two contrasting scenes: one from the first half of the twentieth century, and one written since 1945.

Plus, an unseen piece provided by the examiner, after a few minutes perusal.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (60 marks - 30 per piece)*

*Unseen piece (20 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner*

*about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	VII

## Grade VIII

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform two contrasting scenes: one written before 1800, and one modern play. Plus, an unseen piece provided by the examiner, after a few minutes perusal.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (60 marks - 30 per piece)*

*Unseen piece (20 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner*

*about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	VIII

# Medal Examinations

**Medal candidates who also enter for Grades examinations in Drama must not use the same pieces more than once.**

## Junior Bronze Medal

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform a short scene based on a Roald Dahl story, or a short scene by Willy Russell, and one own choice piece, each of about five minutes duration. The standard of work expected is approximately that of Grade III.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (80 marks - 40 per piece)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner*

*about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	JBM

## Junior Silver Medal

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform two contrasting scenes based on J. K. Rowling stories, or a short scene by John Godber, and one own choice piece, each of about six minutes duration.. The standard of work expected is approximately that of Grade IV.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (80 marks - 40 per piece)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner*

*about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	JSM

## Bronze Medal

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform one scene from the Victorian or Edwardian era (1840-1914), and one contrasting own choice piece, each of about eight minutes duration. A candidate may present a mime or prepared improvisation in lieu of one of the pieces. The standard of work expected is approximately that of Grade VI.

Plus, an unseen piece provided by the examiner, after a few minutes perusal.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (60 marks - 30 per piece)*

*Unseen piece (20 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner*

*about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	BM

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	SM

## Silver Medal

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform three contrasting scenes, one from the first half of the twentieth century, and one written since 1945, and one own choice piece, each of about eight minutes duration. A candidate may present a mime or prepared improvisation in lieu of one of the pieces. The standard of work expected is approximately that of Grade VII.

Plus, an unseen piece provided by the examiner, after a few minutes perusal.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (60 marks - 20 per piece)*

*Unseen piece (20 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner  
about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	GM

## Gold Medal

Candidates are required to prepare, introduce and perform three contrasting scenes: one written before 1800, and one modern play and one own choice piece, each of about ten minutes duration. A solo candidate may present a mime or prepared improvisation in lieu of one of the pieces. The standard of work expected is approximately that of Grade VIII.

Plus, an unseen piece provided by the examiner, after a few minutes perusal.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (60 marks - 20 per piece)*

*Unseen piece (20 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner  
about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

Show on entry forms as

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		AG	PM

## Platinum Medal

**Candidates for the Platinum Medal must have previously passed the Gold Medal in the same subject**

Candidates must present a balanced programme of their own choice of five pieces. The standard expected is that of an amateur performance at a live local charity show. The pieces must have been written in at least three different centuries. The pieces must be by writers of at least three different nationalities. The pieces must include a work written in the last 40 years.

*Candidates should introduce their programmes as if to a live audience. Examiners will expect to be treated as an audience and addressed accordingly. Introductions should be interesting and show some variety.*

Plus, an unseen piece provided by the examiner, after a few minutes perusal.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (60 marks - 12 per piece)*

*Unseen piece (20 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner  
about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

# Diploma Examinations

## Associate (A.V.C.M.) in Solo Acting

### PAPERWORK

Candidates for AVCM must pass or have passed VCM Grade V Theory of Speech or produce evidence of having passed GCSE English Literature or equivalent.

As an alternative to the above paperwork requirement, candidates may submit, by email to [entries@vcmexams.com](mailto:entries@vcmexams.com) at the time of entry, an essay (1000 words approx.) describing actual practical experience of live theatre. This should be based on the candidate's personal experience as a participant in live performance(s) as an actor, a production staff member, an audience member or any combination of these. Copies of programmes/cast lists, etc., may be scanned and included in the submission.

SOLO ENTRIES ONLY ARE ACCEPTED but candidates may if they wish have a non-examinee friend other than the Teacher in ONE of the three pieces presented.

To prepare, introduce and perform a 15 to 20-minute programme of an extract from three plays as follows -

- i. from a Comedy by Shakespeare;
- ii. from any play of the 18th century;
- iii. from any modern play.

Plus, an unseen piece provided by the examiner, after a few minutes perusal.

As an alternative to ii. or iii. candidates may offer a mime or a prepared improvisation. In addition, the candidate will discuss a short extract with the examiner and then be asked to perform it. The examiner will also ask questions on the pieces presented, the plays as a whole and their authors.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (60 marks - 20 per piece)*

*Unseen piece (20 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

## Licentiate (L.V.C.M.) in Solo Acting

Candidates must have passed Associate (A.V.C.M.) diploma in a spoken subject though not necessarily in Acting.

Candidates must submit with their entries a project of 1500 words on any aspect of the History of the Theatre. SOLO ENTRIES ONLY ARE ACCEPTED but candidates may if they wish have a non-examinee friend other than the teacher in ONE of the three pieces presented.

To prepare, introduce and perform a 20 to 25 minute programme of an extract from three plays as follows

- i. from any History or Tragedy by Shakespeare;
- ii. from any play of the 19th century;
- iii. from any modern play.

Plus, an unseen piece provided by the examiner, after a few minutes perusal.

As an alternative to ii. or iii., candidates may offer a mime or a prepared improvisation. In addition each candidate will perform an unseen piece provided by the examiner. The examiner will also ask questions on the pieces presented, the plays as a whole and their authors and on the project submitted.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (60 marks - 20 per piece)*

*Unseen piece (20 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner about the performed pieces (10 marks)*

## **Fellowship (F.V.C.M.) in Solo Acting**

*Candidates must have passed Licentiate (L.V.C.M.) diploma in a Drama subject.*

There is NO PAPERWORK requirement.

SOLO ENTRIES ONLY ARE ACCEPTED but candidates may if they wish have a non-examinee friend other than the teacher in ONE of the pieces presented.

To prepare, introduce and perform three pieces one from each of three of the following categories; the choice must show a balance:

- i. from a Greek play in translation;
- ii. from Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* or *Cymbeline* or *The Tempest*;
- iii. from the work of any foreign 19th or 20th century playwright in translation;
- iv. a dramatised extract from a novel, the adaptation of which may be the work of the candidate or tutor;
- v. from the work of a contemporary playwright;
- vi. a Prepared Mime.
- vii. a dramatised version of a piece of narrative verse.

Prepared Improvisation may not be offered for this Diploma.

Candidates will also be required to perform an unprepared scene studied half an hour before the examination. Those selecting vi. (Mime) will additionally be required to present an unprepared mime.

*Introduction (10 marks)*

*Performance (60 marks - 20 per piece)*

*Unseen piece (20 marks)*

*Brief discussion with the examiner about the performed pieces (10 marks)*