

SPEECH AND DRAMA EXAMS

2026-2027



BOOTHAM
SCHOOL

We teach

LAMDA

— Exams & Qualifications

LONDON ACADEMY OF MUSIC & DRAMATIC ART

WHAT IS LAMDA?

London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art have been offering practical examinations in communication and performance subjects for over 130 years. LAMDA exams are about achievement – recognising and rewarding the endeavours of each individual – but they are also about empowerment. The ultimate aim is to provide everyone with the opportunity to develop the life skills they need to be a success, including attributes such as self-confidence and the ability to communicate clearly and present ideas.

Across the globe, LAMDA examinations unite learners of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and cultures in enthusiasm for the English language and a desire to develop skills for life.

LAMDA is recognised as an awarding organisation by Ofqual, the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulations in England, and the corresponding regulatory authorities in Wales (DfES) and Northern Ireland (CCEA).

HOW IS LAMDA TAUGHT?

LAMDA is taught in weekly, half-hour sessions during the school day to individual students.

WHICH LAMDA EXAMS ARE TAUGHT AT BOOTHAM?

There are six different pathways available to students:

- 1. COMMUNICATION: *Speaking Verse & Prose***
- 2. COMMUNICATION: *Speaking in Public***
- 3. COMMUNICATION: *Reading for Performance***
- 4. PERFORMANCE: *Acting***
- 5. PERFORMANCE: *Devising***
- 6. SHAKESPEARE**

Pathways 1 to 5 follow a graded exam structure. There are eight LAMDA grades in total. Having successfully passed their exam in one grade students can then proceed to work towards their next grade. It is also possible for some students to take two pathways at the same time.

Rather than offering 8 grades, Pathway 6: *Shakespeare* offers three levels of entry – Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3.

All LAMDA exams are practical (there is no written element). However, the higher up students go, the more they are expected to know about the material they are performing: the contexts in which the pieces were written, and about theatre, performance and/or public speaking. Students gain this knowledge in their weekly LAMDA lessons and through their own practice and research.

WHAT DOES A LAMDA EXAM CONSIST OF?

To begin with, students discuss with the LAMDA teacher the different pathways and between them they decide on the best pathway for the student to follow. Students can change pathways: they could, for example, complete their Grade 4 in Acting and then decide to do their Grade 5 in *Speaking Verse & Prose*, or *Speaking in Public* – it depends on the individual student's strengths and abilities, and on the advice of their LAMDA teacher. Some students choose to follow more than one pathway at the same time – *Acting* and *Shakespeare* is a popular combination.

Students are examined by a visiting LAMDA examiner, who assesses the students on their ability to perform a range of texts from memory – whilst clearly demonstrating, through their vocal and physical skills, an understanding of the material being performed. Depending on the pathway chosen, higher grade students also perform a previously unseen text from sight, or prepare and perform an impromptu speech or an improvisation on a subject chosen by the examiner.

At all levels, students are questioned by the examiner on their understanding and knowledge of the material they are performing or presenting.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS?

Individual lessons

- £23 (solo) per student per half-hour lesson
- £18 (duologue) per student per half-hour lesson

Students receive the equivalent of 33+ half-hour lessons a year.

Parents/guardians are also billed for the cost of the exam itself. These costs vary but range from approximately £40 to £111. Most texts that the students need are supplied by the drama department; however, some may need to be sourced and paid for by the students.

As students approach their exams and rehearse for public performances, some lessons are extended to an hour. Students also perform their work in an annual public showcase, to which parents, friends and the Bootham community are invited.

PLEASE NOTE: A full term's notice of withdrawal is required.

WHO TO CONTACT

If you have any questions and/or would like your child to receive LAMDA lessons at Bootham Senior School, please contact Simon Benson:

simon.benson@boothamschool.com

LAMDA Pathways Explained

SPEAKING VERSE AND PROSE

GRADE 3

- Students perform from memory **TWO** pieces – one verse, the other prose.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner on their choice of pieces – their form, content, mood, the differences between verse & prose, etc.

GRADES 4 & 5

- Students perform from memory **TWO** pieces – one verse, the other prose.
- **Sight Reading:** students read at sight a piece provided by the examiner.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner on their choice of verse & prose pieces and on their understanding of a range of figures of speech.

GRADE 6 [BRONZE MEDAL]

- Students perform from memory **TWO** pieces – one verse, the other prose.
- **Sight Reading:** students read at sight a piece provided by the examiner.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner on their choice of verse & prose pieces, and about the techniques involved in breathing, voice and basic speech production.

GRADE 7 [SILVER MEDAL]

- Students perform from memory **TWO** pieces – one verse, the other prose.
- Students perform **ONE** sonnet of their own choice.
- **Sight Reading:** students read at sight a piece provided by the examiner.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner on their choice of verse & prose pieces and their chosen sonnet, and about vocal technique.

GRADE 8 [GOLD MEDAL]

- Students perform from memory **TWO** pieces – one verse, the other prose.
- Students perform **ONE** sonnet of their own choice.
- **Sight Reading:** students read at sight a piece provided by the examiner.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner on their choice of verse & prose pieces and their chosen sonnet, and about the life and work of William Shakespeare and the authors of their chosen pieces.

SPEAKING IN PUBLIC

GRADE 3

- Students deliver a prepared speech on a subject of their choice.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner about the speech.
- Students will present the examiner with a choice of three topics. The examiner will pick one and use it as the basis of a conversation with the student.

GRADES 4 & 5

- **Prepared Speech 1:** students deliver a prepared speech on a subject of their own choice from memory.
- **Prepared Speech 2:** students deliver a prepared speech from memory based on a subject set by the exam board.
- Students will be questioned about their choice of topics and their research.
- Students choose a topic from three offered by the examiner and use it as the basis of a conversation with the examiner.

GRADES 6, 7 & 8

- **Prepared Speech 1:** students deliver a prepared speech from memory examining a contemporary issue of their own choice.
- **Prepared Speech 2:** students deliver a prepared speech from memory on a subject of their own choice.
- **Impromptu Speech:** students deliver an impromptu speech. A choice of three topics will be provided by the examiner – the student selects one of the topics, they have 15 minutes in the examination room to prepare the speech.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner about techniques required for voice production and projection, vocal and delivery styles, rhetorical devices, for organising and presenting material for speeches, and for matching topics, presentation and vocabulary to audience.

READING FOR PERFORMANCE

GRADE 3

Students perform a recital, based around a theme, including: an introduction, a verse reading, a short reflective, a prose reading and a conclusion.

Students will be questioned by the examiner on their choice of readings, on themes & ideas etc., and on the contrast between the verse and prose readings presented.

GRADE 4

Students perform a recital, based around a theme, including: an introduction, a verse reading, a short reflective statement, a prose reading, a second short reflective statement, a verse reading or a prose reading, a conclusion.

Students will be questioned by the examiner on their choice of readings, on themes & ideas etc., on staging and on the contrast between the verse and prose readings presented.

GRADE 5

Students perform a recital, based around a theme, including: an introduction, a verse reading, a short reflective statement, a prose reading, a second short reflective statement, a verse reading or a prose reading, a conclusion.

Students will be questioned by the examiner on their choice of readings, and on themes & ideas etc., staging, and the mood and contrast between the verse and prose readings presented.

GRADES 6, 7 & 8

Students perform a recital, based around a theme, including: an introduction, a verse reading, a reflective statement, a prose reading, a second reflective statement, a verse reading or a prose reading or the reading of a dramatic monologue, a conclusion.

Sight reading: Students read a text at sight provided by the examiner.

Students will be questioned by the examiner on their choice of readings and on content, contexts, themes, staging, their research and preparation, performance and sight-reading techniques.

ACTING

For Grades 3, 4 & 5 it possible for students to be entered in pairs (performing a mix of duologues and solo pieces). For Grades 6, 7 & 8, students can be entered in pairs to perform duologues.

GRADES 3, 4 & 5

- **Scene 1 (Set Scene):** students perform from memory one set scene from the list provided.
- **Scene 2 (Own Choice):** students perform from memory one scene of their own choice.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner on aspects of the scenes performed. In addition, for the higher grades, students will be questioned on their knowledge of acting and staging techniques.

GRADE 6 [BRONZE MEDAL]

- **Scene 1 (Own Choice):** students perform from memory a scene of their own choice selected from a play, television or film screenplay written before 1980.
- **Scene 2 (Own Choice):** students perform from memory a scene of their own choice selected from a play, television or film screenplay published since 1980.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner on the breathing techniques used to support the voice in each scene performed, the character's objective in each scene and the character's role within the context of each play as a whole.

GRADE 7 [SILVER MEDAL]

- **Scene 1 (Own Choice):** students perform from memory a scene of their own choice selected from a play written during a specified historical period.
- **Scene 2 (Own Choice):** students perform from memory a scene of their own choice selected from a play, television or film screenplay published during the period 1800 to 1979.
- **Scene 3 (Own Choice):** students perform from memory a scene of their own choice selected from a play, television or film screenplay published after 1980.
- Students will be questioned by the examiner on the characters in the scenes performed, the plays chosen and the writing style and period in which the author of one of the performed scenes was writing.

GRADE 8 [GOLD MEDAL]

- **Scenes 1, 2 & 3 (as above for Grade 7)**
- Students will be questioned by the examiner on the processes involved in developing the three characters for performance, on each character's role within the context of the play as a whole, and the key principles and influences in the process of acting for one of the following practitioners: Constantin Stanislavski, Bertolt Brecht, Jerzy Grotowski, Katie Mitchell, Kneehigh, Antonin Artaud or Joan Littlewood.

DEVISING

GRADES 3, 4 & 5

- **Devised Scene 1:** students perform a prepared scene of their own devising based on a choice of given stimuli.
- **Devised Scene 2:** students perform a prepared scene of their own devising using a given stimulus.
- Students are questioned on the characters played, on locations, moods and dramatic structures [GRADE 3]; choices of stimuli, their planning, preparation and understanding of theatrical staging [GRADE 4]; choice of stimuli, the planning and preparation of each devised scene, the reason for each character's movements and for the choice of staging in each devised scene using knowledge of the working stage areas [GRADE 5].

GRADES 6, 7 & 8

- **Devised Scene 1:** students perform a prepared scene of their own devising based around a given theme.
- **Devised Scene 2:** students perform a prepared scene of their own devising based on a contemporary issue.
- **Improvisation:** students perform an improvised scene based on a stimulus provided by the Examiner.
- Students are questioned about their characters (including character objectives, mood and reactions to other characters and/or events), their preparation of each scene and the challenges they faced, their understanding of improvisation and devising.

SHAKESPEARE

LEVEL ONE

- Students perform from memory **ONE** set speech from a Shakespeare play.
- Students answer questions about what the speech is about, who the character is talking to, Shakespeare's use of imagery and rhythm.

LEVEL TWO

- Students perform from memory **ONE** set speech from a Shakespeare play.
- Students perform from memory **ONE** Shakespeare sonnet.
- For both pieces, the student will answer questions about their meaning and Shakespeare's use of language, form and structure.

LEVEL THREE

- Students perform from memory **ONE** speech from a Shakespeare play – setting it in a context of their choosing.
- Students will then have a conversation **in character** with the examiner – responding to questions about their situation, motivation, objective and relationships with other characters
- Students answer questions on how their chosen context for their speech highlights the themes of the play from which the speech is taken.
- Students will **SIGHT-READ** a short unseen extract from a Shakespeare play.



Get a Grade 8 Public Speaking Qualification - in a Year!

- Gain an internationally recognised Public Speaking qualification
- Find your voice, develop your confidence and communication skills
- ... **AND** get UCAS points!

The opportunity exists for College 1 students to work towards getting this qualification in just one year (taking the exam in June 2027 – before the end of the summer term).

The course is delivered through weekly, face-to-face, half-hour lessons through the year – with additional lessons scheduled as needed, and as the exam date approaches.

Lessons are charged at £23 each (approx. 40+ in total). The cost of these (plus exam fees & the accompanying LAMDA booklet *Speaking Matters*) will be added to parent/guardian's termly bills.

Questions, expressions of interest and requests for students to be enrolled on this programme should be emailed to Simon Benson:

simon.benson@boothamschool.com