



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**DRAMA
GCSE**

SUMMER 2018

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en>

Online Results Analysis

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

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COMPONENT 1: DEVISING THEATRE

This component is worth 40% of the total mark and requires candidates to submit three elements – portfolio of supporting evidence, a practical/technical performance, and an evaluation of the final performance. Feedback from moderators indicated that although Brecht is still the most popular practitioner used at GCSE, some centres chose a range of exciting and contemporary practitioners/theatre companies which produced some highly original and inspiring final performances. Evidence suggested that the best work came from pupils who had a real sense of ownership and interest in their work. Successful candidates displayed an in-depth knowledge and practical understanding of the skill requirements of their chosen style, which was evident in both the practical and written work. These candidates showed originality and a high level of creativity in their interpretation of the chosen stimuli. The most successful centres indicated that students had access throughout their course to a range of challenging theoretical and practical exploration. This allowed candidates from across the ability range to access the assessment criteria successfully.

Centres where moderators highlighted problems and weaknesses showed a lack of understanding of the chosen style and a tendency to ‘mix and match’ techniques from a range of practitioners. In general, centres adhered to the time specification and this ensured that the practical work had a clear shape and structure. We would remind centres that a time penalty must be applied when the regulation regarding timing has not been adhered to and be clearly indicated on the mark sheets.

The majority of centres adhered to guidance given at CPD regarding the portfolio of supporting evidence. The very best work selected key moments during the three stages and selected **relevant** information for the appendices – these included images, mind maps and extracts of script. We would remind centres that any additional contextual writing in the appendices must be included in the final word count. Moderators viewed a range of approaches which centres had adapted to aid candidates to achieve their maximum potential in this component. Some centres had interpreted the need for large portfolios / books which were almost empty, others had used large art folders which consisted of superficial illustrative material that bore little relevance to the key moments discussed in the portfolio. The best work was presented in a simple format where candidates adhered to the word count and the requirements of each section. The key moments were analysed and evaluated effectively with clear reference to the rehearsal process, avoided being descriptive and focused on their inclusion.

We remind centres that the final evaluation must **only** focus on the final performance. Candidates of all abilities tended to describe the rehearsal process and this had an impact on the marks for this section. Centres must submit the candidates' A4 notes for the evaluation with the portfolios.

Further guidance:

- Please ensure candidates identify themselves clearly at the beginning of the performance
- Ensure that the camera is set up as near as possible to the stage and is static throughout the performance
- Avoid blackouts wherever possible and complicated scene changes
- Ensure effective use of space e.g. defining stage area in large spaces
- Avoid unnecessary appendices with the portfolio of evidence
- Please ensure that you are using the correct Eduqas paperwork – as opposed to WJEC for centres in Wales.
- Please check that you are using the correct stimuli. The year refers to the year of awarding rather than the first year of teaching. Please check also that you have chosen the Eduqas stimuli, rather than the WJEC stimuli for centres in Wales.

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COMPONENT 2: PERFORMING FROM A TEXT

On the whole centres used a range of interesting pieces that challenged the students to produce inspiring and mature performances. Centres were creative in their adaptation of scripts which allowed them to fulfil the requirements of the specification. Artistic Intentions were completed effectively with the majority of candidates setting sound motivational objectives. This had a positive impact on the assessment process as it gave their work clear focus.

The majority of centres adhered to the time specification, selecting the lower limit to aid less able candidates whilst stretching the more able to the upper limit. It was encouraging to see that centres used the two chosen sections effectively allowing candidates to show character development. Examiners noted that the quality of work produced by technical candidates continues to improve with a range of skills being explored; the work was imaginative, highly creative and showed clear indication that they had worked closely with the chosen group. We would remind centres that technical candidates do not need to do a viva with the visiting examiner.

Although we understand the difficulties of choosing a range of different pieces, particularly in centres where there is a large cohort, we would encourage centres, where possible, to use a range of pieces rather than giving every group the same section. Examiners also noted that all centres had tried to enhance the final performance through a range of simple technical elements such as music to begin and end a piece / simple lighting / costume and set.

Further guidance:

- Performances have to be recorded and a copy sent to the board within 7 days
- Candidates must introduce themselves at the beginning of each performance, stating name, role, and candidate number
- If possible, Artistic Intention forms need to be sent to the visiting examiner prior to the performance (your examiner will liaise with you regarding this)
- Centres must ensure that all paperwork is ready for the examiner on the day of the final exam (check Eduqas website for guidelines)
- Inappropriate dates must be submitted by the end of October (but performance titles don't need to be chosen at this point)
- Centres are reminded that the chosen text at Component 3 will have an impact on choice of texts for performance in Component 2 (see specification for further guidance).

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COMPONENT 3: INTERPRETING THEATRE

The majority of candidates throughout the range of abilities dealt well with the unpredictable nature of this new format within the specification. Candidates displayed a high level of creativity and understanding indicating they had been taught using a range of practical strategies and explorations. We would remind centres that this approach is essential in allowing all candidates to access the range of questions which could be asked in future years. As noted on page 17 of the specification, Section A: 45 marks will be a series of questions assessing knowledge and understanding of an extract from the set text (30 marks) and one question assessing knowledge and understanding of the wider text (15 marks). The largest tariff being assigned to any particular question will be 15 marks. Any of these questions can be based on – Actor, Designer, Director. Examiners noted that candidates followed the timing guidelines and this had a positive impact on their final mark.

Section A

Question 1

Generally this question was quite well answered with candidates showing an understanding of the relationship between the characters. All candidates could name two rehearsal techniques, however most candidates failed to explain how these techniques would help the actor. Candidates explained their technique but failed to make clear links to the extract.

Question 2

Candidates were required to discuss the atmosphere of the extract. There was a tendency for answers to focus on the opening section rather than referring to the extract as a whole. The best answers discussed the atmosphere at the beginning, middle and end and were able to show how the scene developed. Candidates chose appropriate lines from the extract and explanations on the whole were quite good. At times candidates repeated their answer for part 1 rather than developing their ideas. Almost all candidates gave creative ideas for LX/SFX with clear reasons linked to the setting/atmosphere.

Question 3

Some candidates incorrectly named the Proscenium Arch stage as an End On – this stage is not mentioned in the specification. Most recognised the Theatre in the Round stage. Most candidates showed an understanding of all the specified criteria and were able to refer to the original staging. The very best responses clearly linked the extract to their chosen stage, showing an understanding of shape and audience position. They had a clear style and design concept which was well explored in their response. Candidates gave detailed and creative ideas for set and props focusing on colour and positions. A number of candidates referred to use of LX/SFX as set design as part of a minimalistic style. This was accepted when clear justification was given. Centres should note that a minimalistic approach can be as effective as naturalistic when candidates are able to justify their ideas. Some candidates focused on actors' positioning and blocking which was not required and consequently wasted valuable time.

Question 4

The best answers showed an excellent grasp of character and the subtleties of relationships in both extracts. Most candidates chose two appropriate contrasting extracts and covered each area of the specified criteria in detail. However, there were a number of weaknesses displayed by candidates who failed to score highly. These included:

- describing character motivation, without dealing with performance elements
- a general character description from the whole play, with little or no reference to the chosen extracts
- candidates not giving equal attention to all the skills stated in the question
- candidates discussing the wrong character
- candidates only choosing one extract.

Section B

Centres are reminded that candidates cannot use the same text for section A and B. Candidates viewed an interesting range of texts which enabled them to analyse and evaluate the areas of focus (costume / movement) in great detail. Popular productions were *East is East*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Everyone's Talking About Jamie* and *Things I Know To Be True*. Candidates had clearly enjoyed these productions and their discussions on costume / movement displayed a clear understanding of both the playwright and director's intentions. They were able to respond effectively as an audience member and make relevant references to key moments in their chosen scenes. Key problems with this question were:

- not referring to two scenes
- describing rather than evaluating
- not giving a personal response
- digressing into other skill areas e.g. voice / set / LX / SFX.



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