GCE A Level Examiners' Report

Drama & Theatre

A Level

Summer 2026

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Introduction

Our Principal examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.[1]

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)

[1] ***Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.***

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Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner | Eduqas

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Executive Summary

Overall, candidates demonstrated secure engagement with the demands of the Eduqas GCE A Level Drama and Theatre qualification. Across all three components, there was clear evidence of creativity, commitment and thoughtful engagement with dramatic texts, theatrical practitioners and live performance. The strongest responses demonstrated confident application of theatrical knowledge, well-developed artistic intentions and a clear understanding of how creative decisions communicate meaning to an audience.

Performance work continues to be a significant strength of the qualification. Across the non-examined components, candidates produced an impressive range of practical work, drawing on both naturalistic and non-naturalistic performance styles and, increasingly, making imaginative use of contemporary themes and theatrical influences. Candidates who achieved the highest standards consistently demonstrated clear links between research, artistic intention and practical realisation, while successful written work reflected careful selection of evidence and thoughtful evaluation rather than description of process.

The written examination demonstrated that centres continue to prepare candidates effectively for the demands of the assessment. Candidates showed increasingly confident knowledge of the prescribed texts and were able to apply contextual understanding creatively to design and directorial concepts. The most successful responses addressed the precise focus of each question, integrating textual reference, theatrical knowledge and live theatre evaluation to justify creative ideas. Where performance was less secure, responses often relied on pre-prepared material or overlooked specific requirements of the question, limiting opportunities to demonstrate higher-level analytical and evaluative skills.

Across the qualification, centres have become increasingly familiar with the assessment requirements, and, in the majority of cases, marking was accurate and reflected the published assessment criteria. Administrative procedures also continue to improve. However, a small number of recurring issues remain, including incomplete documentation, omission of required evidence within non-examined assessment, inaccuracies in candidate paperwork and failure to meet specific specification requirements. Careful adherence to the published guidance will ensure that candidates are able to access the full range of marks available and that moderation and examining processes continue to run efficiently.

Looking ahead, centres are encouraged to focus on strengthening the explicit connection between research, creative decision-making and practical application; ensuring that candidates respond directly to the precise demands of examination questions; and reinforcing the importance of evaluation supported by relevant evidence. Continued use of Eduqas Professional Learning materials, exemplar resources, assessment guidance and past papers will further support candidates in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding required to access the highest levels of the assessment criteria.

Overall, this series reflected the high levels of creativity, commitment and subject knowledge demonstrated by both candidates and centres. The quality of work seen across the qualification continues to showcase the breadth and vitality of drama and theatre education, with many candidates producing imaginative, informed and engaging responses that reflected both artistic ambition and secure understanding of the assessment objectives.

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COMPONENT 1: THEATRE WORKSHOP

Overview of the Component

Component One forms 20% of the qualification.

It is a non-examined assessment; internally marked, externally moderated.

In Component One, two Assessment Objectives are assessed:

AO1 - Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning as part of the theatre making process, making connections between dramatic theory and practice.

AO2 - Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance.
In this component, learners participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of theatre based on a reinterpretation of an extract from a text chosen from a list supplied by Eduqas.

The piece must be developed using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company.

Learners must produce:

- A realisation of the performance or design.
- A creative log- 1200-1500 written or 7-10 mins AV presentation

Comments on individual questions/sections

Centres are choosing a range of modern and classical texts for reinterpretation applying techniques from practitioners and theatre companies that compliment or challenge the ideas of the original text. Acting continues to be the most popular option, but a significant number of candidates are choosing a design skill. Some centres have design candidates for each technical area, and it is positive to see how these candidates are learning to work collaboratively with other designers, mirroring technical teams in professional practice.

This year many centres awarded realistic marks that accurately reflected the standard of the work produced. When marks were not accepted by the moderator it was due to insufficient evidence for the band awarded or missing content required by the descriptors. If required content is missing, this should be reflected in the teacher's initial marks. The most common omissions are not discussing the extract, individual contributions or providing evidence of blocking and proxemics. Centres are advised to encourage candidates to use the bullet points in the descriptors more explicitly to structure their work.

The IAMIS system is working efficiently, the addition of the individual folders this year made organisation more effective. Most work was clearly labelled, and sample content was working and accessible. Please can all centres ensure that the performance recordings do not exceed 600MB, whilst they will upload to IAMIS, the moderator will be unable to open and access the work. Most centres met the May 15th deadline, but some centres are still not including the correct paperwork.

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Please could all centres ensure that a correct, regularly checked email address for the exams officer is added to IAMIS. There were some instances this year when exam officers did not receive emails from a moderator and this resulted in the centre missing the deadline. IAMIS is used for examination purposes by moderators only, please do not upload Live Theatre forms, please complete the Live Theatre form on Eduqas website. There were some programme proformas that were not accurately filled out, this information is important for moderators to understand the groupings, role, chosen practitioner and text.

There is no need to upload the 10-15 min extract of the original text, but the reinterpreted script must be uploaded with 30-70% content from the original text clearly highlighted. The standard of the scripts produced by candidates have improved by applying the style of their chosen practitioner or theatre company and providing evidence of techniques and conventions used. Even if working physically or with a non-naturalistic practitioner, the examiner still needs to be able to follow the script and clearly identify the 30-70% from the original text. In examples where dialogue is limited, candidates should be encouraged to write detailed stage directions that reflect the action onstage.

There should be a ‘performance ready’ line up of actors and design candidates who must be clearly identified by name and candidate number, clearly stating their character or design role. Some centres are omitting this exam board requirement.

The text chosen for Component One should be from the prescribed text list in the specification, including stated playwright or suggested translation. Some centres are choosing an incorrect text or choosing a text that is not on the list. This mainly occurs when choosing a classical text where there are modern translations but also when working with ‘The Red Shoes’, it should be the Emma Rice text not focusing on the fairy tale or film to solely inform research.

Teacher comments are extremely useful when understanding how a centre has arrived at a mark. Centres used a variety of methods to add comments: a summative comment on the mark sheet, typed or handwritten comments on word or pdf using the wording from the mark scheme

A01 1a
Centres are awarding this more accurately but should be reminded this is an individual mark based on evidence in the creative log and practical application. Some centres are awarding a group mark with a high mark awarded for everybody, not considering the range of evidence submitted by each group member. This is not a mark based on rehearsal process in the classroom but only what is submitted in the creative log and the standard reached in the performance.

Successful creative logs whether written or AV presentations, acting or design are carefully edited accounts evidencing research, development and refinement stages of the creative process. In the strongest examples, candidates make insightful connections between their research using it to problem solve and guide their practical creativity. They articulate clear artistic objectives and have an effective balance between individual and group preparation focusing on their role as an actor and their individual contributions. Some acting candidates are including extensive discussion about technical elements such as lighting, sound, set design and costume- this is not required for an acting creative log and could be included as an appendix rather than using up the limited word count.

Designers should use their creative log to record their design ideas and provide evidence for all required content stated on pg. 12-13 in the specification.

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Evidence of research and process can be quoted, visual (a mind map, annotated script, rehearsal notes, initial design ideas, plans, sketches, collages, production images) or included as an appendix. Many candidates use photographs to evidence application of technique and use of space through proxemics/blocking, and these are most effective when used to illustrate written analysis. If candidates want to include notes or mind maps as evidence, they should be readable and an appropriate size. Few succeeded in adhering to the word count guidelines of 1,200-1500 words. This is because candidates are trying to write about everything rather than selecting key moments from their development and refinement process. it is possible for candidates to access the higher bands without exceeding the suggested word count by using appendices effectively.

A01.1b.
Accuracy when awarding this AO is improving. This assessment objective underpins the process for AO 1a and practical work in A02 and is the natural starting point for Component One. There should be a meaningful connection between research undertaken, how this informed process, built artistic intentions and finally evidenced in the practical work. Some candidates are including extensive research on the practitioner or theatre company but how or why this was used in the process and resulting practical work is not always clear. The strongest examples have a discernible connection to the practitioner or company that is evident immediately in the practical work. Although the finished performance does not have to copy the research focus exactly, candidates are free to apply their researched techniques and style to inform their own creative practice. It is important that acting candidates utilise performance techniques and do not rely on design techniques associated with the practitioner or company. The most successful creative logs include all required research outlined on pg. 11 of the specification, effectively citing a wide range of sources.

Some candidates cited multiple extracts from the whole text when meeting the 30-70% requirement of original text. Please ensure that one continuous 10-15 min extract is studied in detail. This choice should be discussed and analysed in the creative log to evidence understanding of the structure, themes, style and artistic intentions of the playwright. This is the most common omission from the creative log and affects the accuracy of the centre marks.

Some candidates are confusing theatre practitioner or theatre company with theatre style and researching this instead. This does not meet the requirements of C1 assessment.

For both AO, the moderators are looking for a clear correlation between all three elements, using AI to write the process and research will not result in high marks if application and understanding is not evident. Any use of AI should be clearly cited. In the candidate declaration AI is now included, please could centres be vigilant in ensuring that work submitted accurately reflects the candidates own work and process.

A02: Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance.

Most candidates remain confident with their practical work, and this tends to be the AO where candidates receive their highest marks. This year not all performance work received the highest marks and there was an imbalance between the standard of research in the creative log and practical application in the performance. Some candidates chose practitioners/companies but had difficulty mastering the performance techniques required. This was most noticeable with choices that require comedic acting style, choreography and physical dexterity. More access to the style and techniques in performance would support candidates in choosing a research focus that still presents challenge but allows them to showcase their strongest performance skills. There are a range of practitioners and companies represented in the exemplar collection on the Eduqas portal.

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An impressive range of non-naturalistic and naturalistic acting styles were chosen reflecting group interests and experimentation. Designers were fully integrated in the development process, and the best examples chose practitioners or companies where design is an essential component of their artistic vision.

There were some design candidates that did not include all the required work: costume candidates not discussing hair and make-up, lighting designers omitting the ground plan of the space and not identifying lantern positions, sound designers not including 8 different cues. Please make sure all candidates know exactly what is required by the specification.

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COMPONENT 2: TEXT IN ACTION

Overview of the Component

This component is the main practical component of the A Level, and it is divided into 3 sections: The candidates may choose to perform or apply one technical skill (lighting, sound, costume/make up, set design) to both performances.

A **Text** performance (an extract of an appropriate text performed in groups of 2, 3 or 4 from any published play) the themes of which are linked to a given stimulus. This scene will be performed in a recognised theatrical style e.g. naturalistic, epic, physical theatre etc.
Focus of assessment A01a (10 marks) & A02 (30 marks)

A **Devised** performance (a piece made up by the groups of 2, 3 or 4 candidates) created from a given stimulus (the same used for the text piece) and linked to a recognised practitioner or theatre company e.g. Brecht, Frantic Assembly, Berkoff.
Focus of assessment A01a (10 marks) & A02 (30 marks)

A **Process Report** – a 3000-word report in three sections outlining the ideas, development and process and the evaluation of both performances.
Focus of assessment A01b (10 marks) & A04 (30 marks)

Overview of the Component

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Focus of assessment A01b (10 marks) & A04 (30 marks)

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Comments on individual questions/sections

General Comments

There was some excellent practical work in evidence both in the text performances and devised work. It is encouraging to see candidates performing challenging work and creating a theatrical experience.

Administrative

There are still some centres who do not complete the relevant paperwork on time, particularly with regard to completing and sending the performance pro-forma in advance of the performance. Please note also to ensure downloading the latest pro-forma from the website which includes candidate numbers.

In general, work was loaded up to Surpass on time and in the main was loaded up correctly. As was mentioned in last year's principal report, please use the tabs to correspond to the group numbers. Tab 1a is for the admin forms, Tab 1b for group one, tab 2 for group 2 and so on. It is good practice to upload a copy of the Centre Approval form even if it was given to the examiner on the day. Likewise, the pro-forma should be uploaded on the first tab along with the live productions statement. GDPR forms should be uploaded alongside the process reports – many centres include them, so they form one complete PDF.

Text Pieces

There was a broad range of texts from many plays including contemporary playwrights such as Laura Wade, Dennis Kelly, Evan Placey, Mike Bartlett but it was also good to see some older works just as Wilde, Ibsen, Miller and Albee. Even though it was mentioned in the report last year, some centres still don't follow the guidelines regarding staying faithful to the text. Lines must NOT be added; genders must not be changed (though gender blind casting is acceptable). If the character is written as a man and called Timmy, it is NOT acceptable to change the character to woman and call her Tammy. The text should be a faithful delivery of the text to contrast with the devised piece.

Please bear in mind the importance of keeping to time with the performances. The examiner will often be visiting two centres in one day and will have arranged those times based on the estimated time given. Efficient centres will very often complete both performances of say three candidates in one hour but in some instances in some centres this was not the case. There is no need for extensive sets and props which aren't used in the performance but merely there for decoration. Even design candidates are only required to detail their ideas in a model and then given a suggestion in the actual performance. For acting candidates please remember no marks are given for their actual set and costume, only their ability to convey a performance in keeping with the style in which case 'appropriate costume' would apply, for example probably wearing a skirt for a period piece and say wearing a pair of shoes if the piece is set outside.

Please allow the candidate to choose a 'recognisable' theatrical style and not something merely applicable to one specific text. Common styles are naturalistic, theatre of the absurd, epic, in yer face, theatre of the oppressed, theatre of cruelty, comedy of manners. Stanislavski is not a style but a practitioner. Likewise murder mystery is also not a performance style but a written genre. If in doubt, please consult the subject office *before* beginning rehearsals.

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Some centres are still not heeding advice to provide a contrast in styles between the text piece and the devised piece and whilst the candidates were not penalised, it is felt it doesn't give them the opportunity to discuss the contrast in as depth in their report.

Devised Work

The best devised work will always show good ensemble work, will clearly reflect the influence of the chosen practitioner and will often interpret the chosen stimulus in a creative way. Brecht, Paper Birds, Berkoff, Wise Children and Kneehigh prove popular but please remember the *whole* piece should reflect the practitioner. The weaker candidates will for example use Kneehigh as their chosen influence but then perform naturalistically and perhaps use a puppet in one section and a song in another!

Centres had heeded the comments in previous reports to ensure that using Artaud as an influence should involve a performance which is more than just making sounds and screams. The best Artaudian performances focussed on challenging audience sensibilities in innovative ways. Likewise fewer centres used Punch Drunk for component 2 as they appreciated the difficulties of allowing the examiner to see all performances *equally*.

Popular choices of stimuli were the Maggie Smith quotation and the concept *Actions Speak Louder than Words*. Subjects included freedom of speech, bigotry, the environment, toxic masculinity and violence against women. Centres are to be commended for enabling their candidates to tackle current topics and there was some excellent, thought-provoking work in evidence.

Design Candidates

Centres heeded advice and instruction in last year's report noting the necessity for design candidates to show the same skill in the two performances (rather than performance in one and design in another). The strongest candidates detailed their knowledge and research in a portfolio which was used as a reference in their viva with the examiner.

It has been noted in previous reports but is worth reiterating, candidates will not be penalised if they are unable to utilise all their ideas because of the limitations of their centres. Their viva should highlight what they would ideally like to do and the performance should reflect their best attempt to achieve that. As mentioned previously, design candidates need to show a detailed model rather than build the whole set.

Keeping to the specified timings for both pieces is essential but please remember, whilst candidates will no longer be penalised for going over the time limit, they will NOT be marked after the time has been reached.

Process & Evaluation Reports

The 3000-word limit is by and large being adhered to and by and large the reports are conforming to the specified 3 sections. There are still too many centres who are not reminding candidates that they MUST link the chosen stimulus to their text piece as well as their devised piece. Live theatre references should be included in the middle section rather than the final section which is an evaluation of the performance. The references to the live theatre themselves should be more than just mentioning the play. Reference should be made to the specific production and then what the particular reference is to their own process e.g. how it has influenced their piece or how it may be similar to it in some way. It is not appropriate to consider tv programmes or films to be a substitute for live theatre productions. You may however use recordings of plays in a theatre such as NT live or Digital theatre.

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It is worth reiterating that the final evaluation should include a section relating to how the candidate has found performing in the two different styles and what has been their individual contribution to the realisation of the piece. There may also be a reference to the audience response. The final section is worth 15 marks and yet often is the section which has the shortest amount written so it is worth reiterating that that this section should relate to the performance primarily, rather than the entire process.

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COMPONENT 3: TEXT IN PERFORMANCE

Overview of the Component

Written Examination 120 Marks
Component 3 is 40% of the qualification. It consists of 2 assessment objectives:

AO3 (40%) - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed.

AO4 (10%) – Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

In this component, learners are required to study two complete texts and one extract from a third contrasting text. Centres are reminded that the five texts studied for this qualification must represent a range of social, historical and cultural contexts. The component sees learners given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills in interpreting texts for performance in a written examination, with a requirement to view a minimum of two live theatre productions to inform their understanding.

The standard for this Component continues to convey detailed and imaginative approaches to the study of the set texts. Centres are now very familiar with the texts, the layout of the paper and they have a large repository of exemplar to use to guide candidates' learning and approaches to questions.

Centres are advised that when they use extra sheets of paper or separate booklets that they are the correct examination stationery and that candidates are encouraged to number them correctly.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

Generally, the outcomes of Section A were more varied than the other sections of the paper. Where candidates had addressed the demands of the questions fully, responses made detailed reference to the extract and conveyed a creative engagement with its atmosphere and how it informed ideas for costume, hair and makeup for the characters chosen. Weaker responses did not address the focus of the question especially for Section A i. Candidates were hampered writing pre prepared contextual material that did not always relate to their ideas, rather than focusing on the action of the extract to inform and inspire ideas. Closer reading of the extract is needed.

Questions 1a-5a

This asked candidates to discuss how as a lighting designer they would use lighting to create atmosphere in the extract.

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Responses to this question were the weakest overall. Some reasons being: as last year, some candidates elected to answer this question last due to the smaller tariff of marks. There may have been time pressure doing so and these candidates were not able to use the extract to support their ideas in sufficient detail. By far the most problematic issue; was that candidates did not answer the full demands of the question. Candidates referred to their ideas for lighting without considering that the question asked them to refer to how *atmosphere* would be created. Those that focused on the question approached it with highly creative ideas and a detailed knowledge of how lighting can be used to create atmosphere. Different lighting stages followed the action of the extract and were linked to specific cues.

Successful candidates named the type of stage and how this affects LX choices. They were also clear as to the location of the extract e.g. *Racing Demon* - interior of an hotel and how this affects the choice of lighting and the atmosphere created by it. A camera flash motif was explored in *Chimerica* that lingered a little too long and was created using a high intensity light across the whole stage and directed out to the audience. The effect of this was to shock and stun the audience; creating a moment of tension where the action was suspended for just a little too long. Confident understanding of how the positioning of lights create atmosphere was seen in *Saved.* An effective response used angled lights and shadow to distort the faces of the two gang members adding to their threatening demeanour and creating a menacing atmosphere.

Less successful candidates appeared to have a pre prepared response assuming the question was asking them to consider how LX communicated meaning to the audience. Whilst these responses often showed a clear knowledge and understanding of the function of LX and how this effect might be created, they ignored the demand of the question. Some responses started with a large paragraph or more about the context of the play which was not connected to the given extract or used to justify their choices for LX. There is a tariff of 10 marks for this question. Candidates are advised to get into their response by addressing the question immediately. It was also observed by examiners that candidates chose to focus on a smaller extract within the extract given. This is self-limiting.

Question 1b- 5b

This question asked candidates to discuss their ideas for costume, hair and makeup for two named characters in the extract. They also had to consider how these ideas would communicate meaning to an audience. Candidates were mostly successful in addressing the full demands of the question here. Although one character was explored in more detail than the other. Some responses were not specific to the extract and appeared prepared. Successful candidates understood that the characters were often contrasting in some way and conveyed this creatively in their responses. They referred to the extract to inform their ideas and how costume, hair and makeup might be used in that context to communicate meaning.

Successful candidates created a visual contrast between the characters given in the question. In responses to *Accidental death of an Anarchist* understanding of how to convey character was approached creatively. The Superintendent was dressed as a Trump-like figure with orange makeup and a blond wig. This conveyed to the audience his need for superiority but also referenced the political nature and style of Fo's play. The fabric chosen was a cheap polyester conveying a lack of sophistication and the heels of his shoes were raised to give false height. This comedic look also drew up in the Commedia dell 'Arte influence on the play. Candidates' ideas for costume, hair and makeup for *Love and Information* stated their concept for the extract of Schizophrenic at the outset of their response. Some chose to have two characters: a therapist and a patient, others decided to explore the concept of mental health through a dual personality design. *Chimera* responses showed Zhang Lin in a grey simplistic style utilitarian suit and Herb in clashing colours.

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The makeup ideas explored how Zhang Lin's face is expressionless and mask like whilst Herb is tanned, blushed and sweating. This communicated the contrast of West v East and established differing characters through their design choices.

Less successful candidates- referred to "prison clothes" or described makeup as "natural looking" without further explanation of what that would look like. Again, pre-prepared context paragraphs prevented candidates from addressing the costume, hair and makeup demands in detail and linking their ideas to the specific extract given.

Section B

Questions 6-10

AO3

This question asked candidates to consider how they might convey a theme as a set and props designer in two extracts from the play to a contemporary audience.

The responses to these questions were by far the most successful. Candidates' work was well structured, overall production concept and style was clear, and contextual information was mostly linked to their ideas. The selection of extracts chosen conveyed a change in location or a transformation in the action between each extract. Some candidates chose to have a multi set which they transformed by the addition of furniture, décor and props to convey the theme and the action of each different extract. The consideration of how their interpretation of the theme might appeal to a contemporary audience was clear. Some candidates chose to update their set and props concept and link it to contemporary issues; others used their theme to link the past to contemporary issues whilst keeping the historical integrity of the play. Both approaches were creative and conveyed a clear understanding of their theme and contextual knowledge. The themes chosen by candidates were highly relevant and showed a detailed understanding of the texts. However, some candidates could not choose *a theme* and referred to many themes, and this led to less focused responses.

Successful candidates established the type of stage, production style, period, setting and theme early in their response. The positioning of the audience in responses to *Machinal* considered how this adds to the theme of entrapment. e.g. in the round stage type was chosen; with audience very close to the action on tightly angled raked seating, thus creating no escape for the characters and containment for the audience. Some candidates studying *As you like it* chose for their theme to focus on the differing culture of the Court v Forest through their set and props design. They chose one extract for each location. The Court design focused on a shadowy set with extreme opulence in the décor conveying hidden meanings and the Forest was more welcoming using the forms of nature as décor and props of fruit and abundance. Candidates also considered how a contemporary audience might respond to their design ideas. Some setting their extracts in a modern setting e.g. *The Trojan Women* in Ukraine and using drones controlled by the God's to express the theme of control.

Less successful candidates did not use social, historical and cultural knowledge to justify their design ideas. When stating a production style e.g. expressionistic; candidates did not explain how this impacts upon choices made as a set and props designer.

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AO4

There was a wide variety of live theatre referred to by candidates. They have engaged with various production styles throughout the course which have influenced their ideas. The impact of this is clear in their understanding of how theatre is made and developed. Most candidates can link what they have seen with their own ideas for set and props and can talk about creatives' style. Most successful candidates also evaluate and analyse what they have seen critically and develop upon them with their own ideas. It is always exciting for examiners to see how candidates have engaged and been inspired by others' work and are developing their own critical appreciation and criticism of live theatre. There is a tendency for candidates to refer to many productions seen rather than choose those which best serve their purpose and afford them time to analyse and evaluate them effectively. This is important as the tariff of marks for AO4 in Section B is equal to that of AO3.

Section C

Question 11

Candidates are very familiar and confident with this text and how the questions are structured. The contextual understanding of the play continues to be detailed. The metatheatrical nature of the 'play within the play' and how the play is seen from Christopher's point of view was referred to and considered creatively from the perspective of a director's choice of movement and positioning, entrances and exits and interaction between characters. Successful candidates referred to how the ensemble use grotesque, pace and rhythmic movement across the performance space to accentuate how overwhelming the experience is for Christopher. The use of the Proscenium Arch stage was justified by the way characters moved on and off stage but also in the relationship Christopher had with the audience. Candidates explored how he moves downstage close to the audience breaking the 4th wall to share the final action of the extract and show them how it is his story and he can change the characters within it. Other candidates chose to have Siobhan on stage throughout the extract positioned to make a connection between Christopher's experiences and the audience. She was chosen to act as a translator of the action. She reacts to and was used as a comforting presence to Christopher as she does more overtly in other parts of the play. The use of the ensemble was used creatively, and it was clear that candidates were familiar with Physical Theatre and how such practitioners as Frantic Assembly use movement to create energy and atmosphere in a scene. The characterisation of the various individual characters on the train was creative, and how they move differently and interact with Christopher was described. This was shown in a choice of expressionistic movement or interaction which showed a clear understanding of character and how Christopher might perceive them.

Annotations alongside the text were used effectively by some candidates to focus on movement and positioning in the space or show how entrances and exits were used and by characters. They often took the form of a numbered cue which linked to a description or small diagram of the movement sequence, positioning or entrance and exit. This was then referred to later in their essay where they were able to justify this idea.

Knowledge of the whole text and the action of the extract was clear. However, some candidates chose to begin their response with a paragraph or two describing the action of the extract and its context in the whole play. More successful candidates were able to weave their understanding of this into the justification of their ideas; this also enabled them to begin with their ideas and cover more of the extract in their response.

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Imaginative interpretations of the extract as a director included the use of a camera operator who recorded Christopher's reaction close-up that was projected onto a screen. The operator's movement and positioning were described so that the audience were guided in their response to the action from Christopher's point of view.

Less successful candidates did not consider the given stage shape of Proscenium Arch and its implications for decisions made by a director. Some responses focused just on Christopher's movement in the extract and did not develop on the variety of interactions that takes place in the extract.

AO4

A variety of different live theatre experiences were used to inform the candidate's ideas. Successful candidates referred to the use of movement and positioning, entrances and exit, and interaction in the productions seen; and evaluated and analysed the success of this as well as making a link to their own ideas. Some candidates made clear links to their own ideas as a director but lacked analysis and evaluation of the production. The tariff of marks for AO4 is 10 marks and therefore the length of reference and frequency of examples should reflect this.

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Email: drama@eduqas.co.uk
Qualification webpage: https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/drama-and-theatre-asa-level/ - tab_keydocuments

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