



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GCE (LEGACY)
DRAMA A THEATRE
AS/Advanced**

SUMMER 2022

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

Online Results Analysis

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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.

Unit	Page
Unit 1: Theatre Workshop	1
Unit 2: Text in Theatre	4
Unit 3: Text in Action	6
Unit 4: Text in Performances	8

DRAMA AND THEATRE
General Certificate of Education (Legacy)
Summer 2022
Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced
UNIT 1: THEATRE WORKSHOP

General Comments

Firstly, we would like to thank teachers for preparing candidates so thoroughly. We appreciate your commitment in such a challenging and difficult time.

The practical work this year was generally of a high and consistent standard. Many centres produced challenging and varied work reflecting excellent and stimulating reinterpretations. A range of practitioners and theatre companies were explored including Artaud, Brecht, Emma Rice, Marianne Elliott, Stanislavski, Berkoff, Frantic Assembly, Paper Birds and Splendid. A wide variety of the set texts were also explored.

Most centres chose suitable performance spaces for their performances, and often used simple design elements to enhance the work. A small number of centres chose to perform their work in outdoor or site-specific locations which was an interesting addition. While appreciating that the situation in centres was difficult this year, we also note that candidates should be given every opportunity to perform in a suitable environment; noise from other classrooms did affect a small number of performances this year.

It is pleasing to note that the number of design candidates continues to increase. Many of these candidates created imaginative and colourful designs of an excellent standard. Centres are reminded that designers can choose a different practitioner/theatre company to the actors within the group if preferred.

Administration

Most centres submitted their documentation correctly with their candidates' work. However, within some centres there were some difficulties. Several of the moderators had to contact centres on more than work occasion to receive the correct documentation to moderate the work.

Centres are reminded that the following must be sent to the moderators alongside the candidates' work:

- (i)** The centre's approval form - moderation cannot begin without this being signed and submitted.
- (ii)** A program proforma with the names of the candidates and the order and/or time of the group on the DVD or memory stick.
- (iii)** The final script which shows the original script and the re-interpreted sections.
- (iv)** Candidates' individual mark sheets.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Creative Log

The most effective examples presented their work clearly. They had separate paragraphs/sections for the research elements and for the creation, development and refinement of their work during the rehearsal process. Key decisions within the rehearsal process were highlighted and carefully explained.

Research must be relevant. Centres must ensure that candidates do not print pages of irrelevant research from the web. In some instances, this year, candidates submitted photocopies of pages and pages of research which bore no relevance to the chosen practitioner or text. Candidates must select the relevant information which best relates to their chosen extract and practitioner/theatre company.

Higher achieving responses included a coherent and effective discussion of the relevant research, techniques and conventions used and succeeded in making a concrete connection between dramatic theory and practice. Supporting information was presented as appendices e.g. photographs or 'screen shots' of sketches, mind maps etc. There were also obvious references to them to justify their inclusion.

As noted, the discussion of the rehearsal process should relate to key decisions regarding the creation, development and refinement of the work. There is not a definitive list that candidates must discuss, however relevant discussion could include reinterpretation ideas, character development and application of performance skills (actors), use of colour, texture and intensity (designers), problematic moments within performance/design.

Candidates should not reflect on the final performance/design itself within the creative log.

Realisation of Performance/Design

Several centres should be congratulated for some truly inspirational work this year. The most effective examples showed a detailed understanding of the chosen practitioner/theatre company and excellent application of performance and/or design skills. Their reinterpretation ideas were original, creative and ambitious.

Once again, this year, the main weakness seen in less successful performances/designs was the implementation of the chosen practitioner/theatre company's theatrical aims. Specific techniques or conventions were not clear or were inconsistently applied within the final realisation.

Evaluation

Centres are reminded that the evaluation is separate from the creative log. The evaluation should only discuss the final performance/design. Overall, the analysis and evaluation of the work was effective with most candidates managing to refer to suitable key moments/examples of the final performance/design and their personal contribution to the success of the work. Many also offered constructive references to possible improvements within the final realisation.

Summary of key points

- Ensure that the correct documentation is sent to the moderator.
- Ensure that the research within the creative log is relevant.
- Ensure that the chosen practitioner/theatre company's artistic aims are evident within the final realisation.

Note:

Although not a requirement it is extremely helpful to the moderator if the teacher has annotated the written work explaining where marks were awarded.

DRAMA AND THEATRE
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Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced

UNIT 2: TEXT IN THEATRE

General Comments

There were some excellent responses within this examination paper this year. *A View from the Bridge* proved to be the most popular text with many centres also choosing *Medea*. A few centres studied Ibsen and Shakespeare with some studying Saunders Lewis' *The Woman Made of Flowers* and Jarry's *Ubu Roi*.

Comments on individual questions/sections

- (a) There were some excellent responses to this design question with many hitting the top band as they related their chosen costume, hair and make-up to their chosen period and style. The best responses could detail the colour, fabric, hairstyle and contouring to link with the character's motivations, status and location within the chosen extract.

Some were superficial and lacked detail, but overall, responses were well-structured, imaginative and detailed.

- (b) (i) There were many well-structured responses with candidates tracking the specified character's motivations and relationships throughout the whole extract while also offering relevant and creative ideas regarding voice, movement and interaction.

Some weaker responses lacked understanding of the character's motivations and relationships within the extract and offered only some limited ideas regarding voice, movement and interaction. Others concentrated on certain moments within the extract rather than attempting to discuss the whole extract.

- (ii) Again, there were some excellent responses to how live theatre or recorded/streamed productions had influenced their chosen performance skills for the character analysed in question (b) (i). The best responses could analyse an actor's vocal, physical and interaction skills, evaluate the audience response and relate these as relevant influences on their own performance ideas.

Some less effective responses tended to bullet point similar characters that they had seen without analysing their performance skills or evaluating their response to why the performance had influenced their chosen performance skills. Others tended to offer narrative descriptions of the live production(s) rather than discussing the actors' performances.

- (c) Many centres had prepared this answer effectively with well-structured responses to designing two chosen extracts from the whole play. These responses often displayed excellent subject terminology coupled with creative and imaginative design choices. Their choice of stage and production style were well suited and their ideas regarding set and lighting also complimented these choices.

Some responses had stronger analysis of the first chosen extract in comparison to their second, which could have been a timing issue. These responses often chose large extracts to discuss, and consequently struggled to complete and communicate their design ideas in full.

Within some less effective responses the choice of stage and production style clashed and therefore the overall concept was not clear. The use of design related subject terminology was also lacking within some of these responses. Others discussed aspects such as costume, which was not noted within the question and therefore could not be rewarded accordingly.

Summary of key points

- Candidates should read the questions carefully and note the requirements within the additional bullet points.
- Discussion of live theatre (b) (ii) must link to and influence the ideas discussed within (b) (i).
- When asked to note their production style, candidates should ensure that their design choices within the response compliment and reflect this style.

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UNIT 3: TEXT IN ACTION

General Comments

Centres are to be congratulated this year for succeeding to produce work of quality in very difficult circumstances. Most centres submitted their work promptly. Moderation was generally a straightforward task, due to centres' organisation and care in completing and submitting the relevant documentation. There were some issues with centres that opted for the Surpass upload, but it is hoped that centre visits will return for the 2023 series which is expected to alleviate some of these difficulties.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Once again, there was a notable effort from the centres to create sophisticated practical work under extremely difficult circumstances. Most centres succeeded in creating inspiring and ambitious work. Many centres managed to use the stimulus creatively and produced extremely powerful and effective work which demonstrated clear understanding of their chosen practitioner or theatre company's artistic aims within the devised work, and of their chosen performance style within the text-based performances.

Some centres chose the option of performing monologues for this examination series. The majority showed a good understanding of practitioners' techniques and succeeded in interpreting and reflecting the candidates' artistic intentions.

It is pleasing to see that more candidates are choosing the design options this year and the work is improving each year. Several design candidates produced exceptional work and it was clear that the candidate had played a core role in the creation process from the very beginning.

The process and evaluation reports have developed and improved this year as most of the candidates followed a definite structure and wrote in three sections. This made the assessment much more straightforward. Many candidates succeeded in producing relevant research and analysed the rehearsal process in detail, linking their ideas to a range of inspiring and interesting live productions. The most successful candidates managed to not only evaluate both performances in detail, but also reflected on the challenges involved in performing different performance styles.

Weaker reports tended to include research that was not relevant e.g. historical information regarding their chosen practitioner. These reports also tended to be descriptive, rather than discussing how the work was developed and refined during the rehearsal process. Evaluation again tended to be superficial with some limited comments regarding their performances/designs. Centres are reminded that candidates only need to evaluate their chosen skill within the final section e.g. performance candidates are not required to reflect on the effectiveness of the lighting within their performances.

Summary of key points

- Candidates are required to introduce themselves to camera prior to commencing the performances. Design candidates should also be included.
- The practitioner/theatre company chosen for the devised performance must be different to the performance style chosen for the text-based performance. Many centres choose contrasting styles to best showcase their candidates' performance/design skills.
- Live theatre discussion within the process and evaluation reports can be based on productions seen live, or live recorded/streamed productions.

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UNIT 4: TEXT IN PERFORMANCE

General Comments

It was a pleasure to see so many well answered papers on *The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning*, *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* and *Sweeney Todd* again this year. Few centres approached *Mametz*, *One Moonlit Night* and *The Absence of War*; those who did managed to approach the questions sensitively and with relevant terminology. Many centres struggled with timing this year. With many, Section A was very detailed leaving little time for the 40 marks in Section B. We were mostly pleased with the standard and thank centres for endeavouring to complete the specification under such difficult circumstances in the last academic year.

Comments on individual questions/sections

SECTION A

- (a) (i) This was the best answered question. Candidates detailed both characters' costume, hair and make-up design with the most successful responses linking their design choices to the character's motivation and their relationship within the chosen extract. These responses were able to tailor their design to suit the extract's context rather than discussing generic designs.

Weaker candidates tended to have a more prescriptive style response rather than analysing in detail. Some discussed costume only without detailing hair and make-up choices.

- (ii) These were mostly very good responses detailing live theatre design choices that had influenced their decisions within question (i). The most successful responses tended to concentrate on two or three productions and detailed how the designs were used in performance, as well as how they had influenced their own ideas.

Weaker responses simply listed the productions they had seen without evaluating the costume, hair and make-up that had influenced their choices. Some also referred to five or more productions, and therefore their points became very superficial with no in-depth analysis of the costume, hair and make-up in performance.

- (b) There were some outstanding responses to this question that made the extract come to life. These responses included detailed analysis of the characters' positioning on the chosen stage and creative and imaginative ideas regarding vocal and physical interaction. The best answers managed to explain how the relationship of the characters within the specified extract related to the play as a whole by offering relevant references to other key extracts within the text.

SECTION B

- (i) Those who had timed Section A effectively, responded excellently to this acting question, choosing two differing moments within extracts of the play to perform their ideas. The best candidates managed to weave the relevance of their performance choices to a contemporary audience with ease and chose sensitive moments within scenes to analyse their style of performance. Many adhered to the playwright's original performance style whilst others effectively adapted their response to make their performance relevant to a contemporary audience. Some could effectively combine the historical, social and cultural context into their performance and used apt performance terminology throughout. The examiners could visualise the character's performance effectively. Timing proved to be an issue for this question this year; with some candidates choosing extracts that were too long. Some discussed whole scenes and therefore struggled to discuss both choices in detail. When candidates are given the option of choosing their own extracts, it is suggested that candidates choose shorter moments which they can discuss in detail.
- (ii) This live theatre evaluation of productions that influenced their performing decisions in (i) proved to be the weakest response within the paper this year. This was mostly down to timing as most candidates were able to identify and attempt to evaluate specific performance moments that had influenced their performance decisions, either online or in live theatre venues. However, some responses within the AO4 question in Section A were more detailed, despite only being worth 10 marks. Centres should note that the AO4 response within Section B carries a tariff of 20 marks, and therefore requires more detail and analysis of live theatre. Some links to live theatre were very superficial e.g. This actor was similar to the character in question (i) which influenced my decisions.

Summary of key points

- When referring to live theatre influences, candidates should reference where and when they saw the performance whilst answering how they influenced their choices for the relevant aspect(s) of the previous question.
- The AO4 questions on live theatre state 'productions', therefore candidates should refer to at least two productions when evaluating their influences.
- Candidates should be encouraged to note the tariff for each question, especially the two AO4 questions within this examination paper, as some wrote several pages for the first 10 mark question with Section A resulting in little time for the 20 mark question within Section B.



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