

GCE



**Chief Examiner's and  
Principal Moderator's Report  
Performing Arts**

Summer Series 2022





## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2022 series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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# GCE PERFORMING ARTS

## Principal Moderator's Report

### Subject Overview

The key features of the specification are as follows:

- It has four assessment units: AS 1 and A2 1 are internally assessed and externally moderated. AS 2 and A2 2 are externally set and externally assessed.
- Students have the opportunity to develop specialist knowledge, understanding and skills in either performance or production.
- Students choose one discipline, within either performance or production, to develop through AS and A2.
- Students investigate employment opportunities and working methods linked to industry practice, providing a sound basis for progression to further training and/or study.
- Assessment at A2 includes stretch and challenge reflected in working to a commission brief, undertaking an administrative role, synoptic assessment and extended writing.

### Internal Assessment Overview

- There are two internally assessed and externally moderated units: AS 1 and A2 1.
- Candidates have the opportunity to develop specialist knowledge, understanding and skills in either performance or production.
- Candidates choose one discipline, within either performance or production, to develop through AS and A2.
- Through AS 1 candidates develop their skills in the chosen discipline, through application in a performance context.
- Through A2 1 candidates develop their understanding of how to find work in their chosen discipline through research, preparing and participating in an audition/presentation, interview and by compiling a promotional portfolio.
- Across both units, candidates investigate working methods and employment opportunities linked to industry practice, providing a sound basis for progression to further training and/or study.

# Assessment Unit AS 1      Developing Skills and Repertoire

## Unit Overview

This unit gives candidates the opportunity to develop one discipline within Performing Arts (from either Performance or Production) and then apply this discipline in a performance context.

Adaptations to the specification for 2021- 2022 included reduced content with the candidates developing skills and repertoire through the exploration of one extract instead of two, working individually or in groups of between two and nine. They explored one extract of repertoire from a range of existing material including musical scores, set works and published extracts.

Candidates were required to produce a portfolio of work consisting of a summary of research and skills audit, a record of work, a risk assessment, a recording of a performance or presentation, and an evaluation.

Candidates researched their chosen discipline to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of professional practice. They researched the skills required in their chosen discipline and then assessed their current skill level and completed a skills audit. Candidates selected an existing extract of repertoire from a preferred period of time, a specific practitioner or a particular style or genre to present individually. They researched the social, cultural and historical context of the extract and developed an action plan, outlining strategies to improve their skill level in their first extract of repertoire. They kept a record of their skills development for the extract as they rehearsed and practised the performance or developed the production materials, setting targets for improvement.

Candidates compiled a record of work that showed evidence of their development as a performer or production worker. Their record should have demonstrated a clear understanding of the preparatory work required for the performance or production of the extract of repertoire. A risk assessment detailing health and safety issues relating to their chosen discipline was also completed.

Candidates engaged in ongoing self-evaluation and recorded their progress throughout, setting targets for improvement. Each candidate also assessed the final performance of one other candidate and recorded their evaluation. Candidates evaluated their own and others' contribution to the final performance, including analysis of aesthetic and technical quality, and audience approval.

## Administration

Performance disciplines are followed by the majority of candidates across centres, with Drama continuing to be the most popular, but there are a greater range of production disciplines being offered, which is pleasing to see. Given the impact of COVID 19, it was to be expected that there would be some administrative issues. The most common omissions from the samples were the lack of TAC 1 sheets, and sample cover sheet for each candidate. The sample cover sheet can be downloaded from the e-moderation page on CCEA's website. It should also be noted that this cover sheet should be signed by the candidate and not the teacher.



The comments on the e-candidate record sheet were mostly clear, detailed and supported the marks awarded. However, some centres did not include any comments or brief statements. There was an increase in teacher assessors using the suggested annotation code when marking the work, which was helpful to the moderation process. In some centres the comments were evidently directed at candidates during the drafting stage of their work and were not focused on the application of the assessment criteria. In most centres the teacher's annotation, both in the main body of candidates' work and in summative comments, reflected the assessment criteria and clearly justified the rationale for the marks awarded. This is best practice, and it would be helpful if all centres included a summative comment and the mark awarded on each section of work.

The presentation of recordings varied from centre to centre, with some submitting work on USB and others using DVDs. There were several instances of missing video recordings, poorly labelled videos, and faulty recordings. This made the moderation process time consuming. It is important that each centre checks that all recordings are available, and in working order when submitted.

The preferred method for submission is on a centre USB, with the candidates work uploaded into an individual sub folder with each of the three stages clearly labelled. Each candidate should state their name, candidate number and the stage of the performance/presentation at the start of each recording.

Key points to consider:

- Download the Sample Cover Sheet from the CCEA e-moderation webpage, ensure it is signed by the candidate, and attach to the candidate's portfolio prior to submission.
- Organise and submit the sample in rank order.
- Include the Tac 1 with the sample.
- Complete eCRS comments for the sample referencing the assessment criteria, and highlighting any specific areas related to the candidate's work and the application of the assessment criteria.
- All work should be annotated, with a summative comment and a mark awarded for each section.
- Recordings of all three stages should be included and clearly organised by stage and candidate, not as one continuous recording.
- All candidates need to be clearly identified to camera at the start of the final stage recording.
- All work submitted should be in Arial 12 and adhere to the page limits as detailed in the Assessment Evidence on pages 11-13 of the specification, and be collated as a portfolio of work in the order of the specification.

## **AO1 - A Summary of research and skills audit**

In line with the Specification Addendum for 2021 – 2022, Section 1 and 3 were omitted from the Summary of Research, with candidates completing Section 2: Skills required within the chosen discipline and a skills audit.

In Section 2, the majority of candidates referred to the skills relevant to their discipline, as outlined in pages 8 -10 of the specification. Production candidates need to ensure they lead with the learning outcomes listed in the specification and draw on the skills needed from these outcomes. Candidates should focus on examples from professional practice to support their knowledge and understanding of the skills required to work professionally. For Drama candidates there was an over-reliance on the use of examples from film and television. Examples should be drawn from theatre and stage, as this is the medium in which candidates will be working throughout the specification. Some candidates were disadvantaged by the fact that they referenced their own work in this section, which should only be included in the Skills Audit, whilst others simply expanded on their understanding of the skills list by providing generic definitions. The top candidates gave a brief definition of the skill required, and then gave an example from live or recorded professional work that referenced a range of skills, with clear analysis of why these skills are needed in the discipline. To meet the assessment criteria and show evidence of research, all sources must be footnoted and included in a bibliography at the end of the section.

There were a variety of approaches to the Skills Audit. Centres should be complimented for the fact, that whilst it was evident that COVID-19 had an impact on candidates' opportunity to gain experience in the performing arts, they were able to audit transferable skills gained in other areas of the curriculum and apply these to the skills required for their discipline. Some candidates did not include the skills relevant to their discipline from the skills list on pages 8-10 of the specification which should be their focus as this is what they are assessed on throughout the qualification. The Skills Audit should be viewed as an opportunity to baseline their skills at the start of the unit enabling the candidates to record, reflect on and show their progression. The highest performing candidates provided detailed examples and insights from their own work linked to the skills listed on pages 8-10 and provided a focused conclusion on the skills they wished to develop over the course of the unit.

Key points to consider:

- Skills required, in the chosen disciplines, requires research into professional practice of the discipline. Examples should come from a range of sources, performances, case studies, interviews, and insights from practitioners.
- Sources should be clearly referenced in the body of work with footnotes.
- Ensure candidates audit all the skills, listed in pages 8-10 of the specification, in the Skills Audit rather than additional skills and personal qualities.

## **AO2 - A record of work**

In line with the **Specification Addendum** for 2021 – 2022, candidates selected only one existing extract of repertoire and were not required to select a second contrasting extract of repertoire.

### **Action Plans**

Overall, Action Plans followed a professional format and showed understanding of the processes relevant to the chosen discipline to achieve the required outcome within a set timeframe. However, some action plans were quite generic and needed to take fuller account of the demands of the chosen extract. In some centres there was a similarity across candidates following the same discipline.

## Social, Cultural and Historical Research

There was evidence of considered research into the social, cultural, and historical context of the chosen extracts, although sources were not always consistently referenced and footnoted. In the higher mark range candidate's thorough research was applied directly to moments in the extract with insights into how other performances would influence the candidate's own practice. Overall, there needs to be greater research into the original performance conditions and other performances of the chosen extract to show how the performance/production of the extracts change and develop over time, and how social, cultural and historical contexts might impact on a candidate's own interpretation of the piece.

## Evidence of Practice

Candidates that utilised the format exemplified in the Agreement Trial samples were able to access assessment criteria more fully and consistently as it gave a focus and structure to their responses. Those candidates that used a rehearsal diary style approach, tended to be less focused on the application of techniques to develop skills related directly to the chosen extract, and gave a more descriptive narrative account of rehearsals. Some candidates evaluated each of the three recordings which made it difficult for them to access the assessment criteria, and also overlapped with AO4's self-evaluation. Centres need to provide opportunities to explore a greater range of rehearsal methods and techniques, especially for Drama candidates that move beyond those used at GCSE. There was an over-reliance on 'mirror' technique, hot seating and watching YouTube clips of performances. Some centres took a workshop approach, using rehearsal methods linked to practitioners, which were then individualised by the candidate's application to their own extract.

Key points to consider:

- Action Plans should make explicit reference to the demands of the extract to avoid being a generic account of a 'page to stage' process.
- Social, cultural, and historical research should consider a variety of performance and production contexts of the extract.
- All sources should be clearly footnoted.
- Structuring the Evidence of Practice with key terms from the assessment criteria can help focus the candidate's responses.
- Evidence of Practice should focus on a wider range of techniques, skills development and personal progression.

## A03 -

### (i) A Risk Assessment

Generally, the layout followed professional practice, but the content lacked detailed research and use of professional language when identifying risks and control measures.

Candidates should be encouraged to complete relevant research into Health and Safety, particularly in relation to control measures to be employed. Candidates at the top end of the assessment criteria made explicit reference to various Health and Safety Acts and documentation. Centres are reminded to adhere to the page limit of one A4 page for an extract of repertoire.

Key points to consider:

- Guide and support candidates to avail of the wealth of documentation that is available to support the completion of appropriate risk assessments, which reflect current professional practice.

## **(ii) A Performance/Presentation**

Overall, this was the strongest assessment objective, and it was clear to see how much candidates were enjoying the opportunity to perform and present their ideas to an audience again. The work submitted was engaging and showed a wide range of repertoire being explored.

It was pleasing to see the development of the quality and standard of production presentations, which showed centres now have a clearer and more detailed understanding of what is required. Overall candidates were well-prepared, with good use of PowerPoint to support their presentation of ideas with a range of materials and documentation relevant to their discipline and chosen extract. It would be helpful if centres showed any materials to the camera as part of the assessment evidence.

For performance candidates there were some high production values, clearly showing the engagement of the candidates and the commitment of their teachers to prepare their work for a final performance. However, some centres did not present the candidates' work in a formal performance context, and instead candidates performed for the camera, in uniform with other pupils casually sitting in the background. In these cases, there was a lack of consideration of the use of set, props and costume, or of creating the appropriate assessment context. This impacted the candidate's ability to access the full range of marks available for this assessment objective and their evaluation of the aesthetics for AO4.

Key points to consider:

- Establish an appropriate assessment environment for performances and presentations.
- For Performance, ensure they have applied the technical and aesthetic requirements for a final performance of their extract.
- Clearly identify candidates at the start of final stage recordings.
- Use the skills list on pages 8-10 of the specification as a checklist to ensure that the final production presentations are summative and demonstrate all skills and the associated paperwork.

## **AO4 - An Evaluation**

Overall, evaluations showed secure focus on the skills evident in the final performance/presentation and the impact on audience. There was an improvement on candidates giving appropriate weight to the evaluation of aesthetic features as well as the technical skills. 'Target Setting for the Future' is an important aspect of this Assessment Objective and was generally underdeveloped or omitted entirely in candidates' responses. Most notably, there was a tendency to refer to the process and the baseline/mid performances in the evaluation, and in some centres, candidates focused entirely on evaluating the process and not the final product, which made it difficult for them to access the assessment criteria.

Key points to consider:

- Candidates should explicitly evaluate the technical and aesthetics of the final product, and the impact on the audience and **not** the rehearsal process.
- Attention should be given to target setting for the future to enable candidates to address all aspects of the assessment criteria.
- Candidates should focus on setting targets for themselves and not for their peers.

## Chief Examiner's Report

### Assessment Unit AS 2

### Planning and Realising a Performing Arts Event

#### Component Overview

##### Supporting Document (48 marks)

This unit gives candidates the opportunity to plan and realise a Performing Arts event in response to the pre-release stimulus material. The pre-release stimulus for this year was 'Truth and Lies'. Candidates agree the venue, target audience, style, form and genre. Due to the Covid-19 context, working individually was permitted this year, however, the majority of candidates performed in groups, collaboratively working on appropriate chosen repertoire for this Unit.

To fulfil the criteria, pupils must analyse a range of live or recorded Performing Arts events that relate to the chosen style, form and genre. Each candidate must produce a **supporting document** from his or her notes under controlled conditions. A maximum of two hours is set aside to complete the supporting document under **controlled conditions**. This document can be either handwritten or word-processed.

The supporting document should include the following sections:

##### Section 1 (maximum of 600 words, 8 available marks)

###### A response to the pre-release stimulus material:

- A summary of research into the social, cultural and historical context of the chosen performance style, form and genre.
- A summary of practical and artistic constraints that includes information on the group's skills, venue, target audience, length of performance and production costs.

##### Section 2 (maximum of 1200 words, 32 available marks)

###### Developing the Performing Arts event:

- A summary review of two live or recorded Performing Arts events from the perspective of the candidate's chosen discipline.
- A summary of experimentation in rehearsal of two ideas drawn from the candidate's review of live or recorded Performing Arts events.

##### Section 3 (maximum of 600 words, 8 available marks)

###### Rationale, Evaluation and Summative Statement:

- Rationale for the candidate's choice of one idea that they have implemented in their realisation of the Performing Arts event.
- An evaluation of how the candidate's and other group members' ideas contributed to the Performing Arts event.
- A summative statement linking the candidate's experience of working on the Performing Arts event to employment/future opportunities in the Performing Arts industry.

### **General Observations**

- Candidates who highlighted skills in bold were able to clearly signpost a full range of skills. Additionally, candidates who used headings were able to structure their work, enabling them to have clearly focused responses.
- Many candidates did not provide a word count for each section, with a considerable amount going over the outlined word limit for each section.
- It was clear that most centres offered a wide range of live and recorded events to enable pupils to experiment and review skills linked to their discipline.

### **A01 - A Response to the Pre-Release Stimulus Material (8 marks)**

- Most candidates outlined the title of the chosen material and the chosen style of performance.
- Most candidates referenced the pre-release material and made sufficient links to the chosen scenes they were focusing on to fulfil the pre-release stimulus.
- Some candidates focused heavily on the historical context of their chosen style rather than researching social, cultural and historical contexts equally. Candidates who structured their responses under headings made it much clearer that all contexts were fully considered.
- Some candidates provided a historical overview of music/drama, rather than a focus on the repertoire being performed.
- Most candidates researched the style, form and genre, making direct links to key influences and characteristics of the style.
- Some pupils took a more thematic approach to research, making some links to the social, cultural and historical contexts.
- Solo candidates made good reference to their own personal skills, linked to the chosen repertoire.
- Most candidates focused on practical and artistic constraints, outlining group skills, venue, target audience, length of performance and production costs.

### **Areas for Consideration**

- Candidates did not need to describe the range of material that they considered to meet the pre-release theme.
- Candidates needed to include research on social, cultural and historical contexts, as well as style, form and genre.
- Some candidates simply outlined why they had chosen the repertoire and described planning for the performance, as opposed to researching contextual information.
- Candidates should be encouraged to expand on practical and artistic constraints in detail, providing reasoning and rationale. A list approach was more limiting for candidates.
- Many candidates made extremely vague references to venue and production costs.
- Some production candidates only focused on their own practical and artistic constraints and did not consider the practical and artistic constraints of the full group.
- Footnotes were required for this section to signpost contextual research.

## **A02 – Developing the Performing Arts Event (32 marks)**

- Reviews which focused on particular moments, evaluating the skills of the chosen discipline, offered candidates the opportunity to evaluate specific skills and demonstrate an astute appreciation.
- Candidates who gave a range of creative ideas for experimentation linked to the reviews generally did well.
- The best candidates outlined how the experimentation improved their performance in rehearsals.
- Stronger responses from candidates had their experimentation after each review. This worked well and allowed the work to flow.
- Having a discrete paragraph detailing strengths and weaknesses worked effectively.
- Strong responses came from candidates who provided reasons for how the experimentation shaped the outcome of their work

### **Areas for Consideration**

- Some candidates only provided plot summaries of the review material and described how the review material linked to the pre-release stimulus. Candidates should be encouraged to balance reviews and experimentation.
- Unfortunately, some centres took a group approach to experimentation, rather than an individual approach. This approach disadvantaged the candidates.
- Candidates should use the skills list on pages 8-10 in the specification to give a more focused response and ensure that all skills are covered.
- A minority of Drama candidates focused heavily on production elements in their reviews. Candidates should focus on their chosen discipline and the key skills linked to it.
- A minority of pupils constantly linked moments from their reviews to their own performance, repeatedly stating where these could be directly placed into their performance. This approach was more focused on application of skills, as opposed to individualised experimentation in rehearsal.
- Some candidates gave a plot synopsis rather than placing the review in context.
- Strengths and weaknesses were not always explicit; therefore, candidates could not be awarded marks in the top band.

## **A04 – A Rationale, an Evaluation and a Summative Statement (8 marks)**

- This section was answered well, with most of the main points covered in detail.
- The strongest responses took one idea from Section 2 and gave a fully justified rationale of why it was relevant to the realisation of the performance.
- Students who had made it clear that they were working on a solo piece were credited for their individualised approach to evaluation and personal contributions.
- The best candidates used reflective language and referenced feedback from peers and production candidates.
- Most candidates commented on their future or linked to how this experience prepared them to work within the Performing Arts industry.

### **Areas for Consideration**

- Some candidates outlined a range of experimental ideas which they were going to implement. Only one fully justified rationale is required.
- Some candidates gave a personal account of contributions with no mention of group contribution.
- Evaluations tended to be mostly descriptive, with elements of analysis.

### **Component Overview**

#### **Visiting Examination (32 marks)**

This unit involves responding to pre-release stimulus material. The pre-release stimulus material will be concept, theme or issue based. Students interpret this stimulus to create a performing arts event that will draw on existing material.

Students present their performing arts event to an audience and the external examiner in groups. Each group should consist of between two and nine students. Although each group prepares and presents the work, the external examiner assesses each student as an individual. There must be a minimum of one performer per group. No more than one student per group can undertake a particular production discipline (for example, one designer and/or one lighting student per group). Performances should last between 10 and 40 minutes, depending on the size of the group. Larger groups should not exceed the maximum time limit. Each production student gives a presentation, lasting between 5 and 10 minutes, to the external examiner. They also carry out their role, if appropriate, during the performance.

#### **General Observations**

This year the specification addendum stated that the pre-release stimulus material from 2019/2020 was applicable for this series, therefore centres selected existing repertoire based on the theme of "Truth and Lies." The specification addendum also permitted solo work.

The effects of the pandemic continued to impact live performance. It was clear this year that there were varying levels of consistency in the quality of performances across centres. Teachers continued to deal with higher-than-average levels of absenteeism and the resultant outcome.

Many teachers this year seemed relatively unsure of processes, for example what paperwork was required for examination purposes. This resulted in some Candidate Assessment Forms not being present upon arrival and sometimes presented as incomplete or incorrect. A completed Candidate Assessment Form must be available for every candidate on the day of examination.

Once again, the team of examiners was generally pleased with the overall quality of performance and production observed during this series. The work presented was of a good standard overall, with examples of excellent work exhibited at some centres. A range of scripts were chosen which were appropriate to the pre-release stimulus: *Girls Like That*, *The Crucible* and *Blue Remembered Hills* were popular choices. For some solo performers, there was excellent use of multi-media to help create the style, genre and mood.

Drama remained the most popular discipline. Most centres presented performances which showed an appropriate response to the pre-release stimulus, however, some did not effectively address the style and genre aspect of the marking criteria.



During the examination process, it was apparent that the core focus of this unit: ‘realising a performing arts event’, was often overlooked, which meant that some performances (particularly musical performances) were technically excellent but did not fully engage the audience in the spirit of a concert or event.

“Truth and Lies” proved to be a generative stimulus with highly apt repertoire presented to the examining team. It was observed that most candidates had been well-prepared for performances, and some material had been carefully selected to demonstrate skill. The choice of material remains critical to the success of the examination and should be given the upmost attention. Small audiences had been invited at some centres and this proved beneficial to the mood and atmosphere for the Performing Arts Event.

Centres should be reminded that they need to identify, on the examination record sheet, the specific style/genre of their Performing Arts Event. This helps direct the examiner to the chosen style during the performance. As the candidates are delivering repertoire, the source of any dance or music work must be referenced on the Examination Record Sheet by stating the choreographer or composer.

The examiners were warmly welcomed at all centres again this year, which was very much appreciated. The majority of centres created a conducive environment for the examiner. Examiners must be offered the time and space to identify candidates prior to performance. Greater consideration must be given as to how the examiner will identify the candidates, especially in ensemble work, where candidates all present in black. It is extremely helpful if centres have costume photographs to help with identification of candidates and a coloured sticker or accessory to distinguish the candidates if they perform in blacks.

A private space should be provided for examiners for the purpose of marking. Examiners will use this space at the beginning and end of the session, and to mark candidates between each group performance.

Centres are required to post a recording of the examination to CCEA within five days.

### **A03 – Working independently and with others to deliver performance skills/production ideas**

- The majority of performances showed the candidates had worked independently and/or as a group to present very interesting and entertaining work.
- Music candidates should be reminded of the need to work cohesively in performance; it was observed that some musicians did not fully engage with each other on stage or with the audience, making it difficult for candidates to access higher marks for bullet point 2.
- Production candidates must also be encouraged to work collaboratively; some seemed to work in isolation from the performers making little to no reference, in their presentation, to working with the others.

### Areas for Consideration

- The specification states performances should last between 10-40 minutes. If candidates do not have equitable stage time to demonstrate their skills, this can prevent them accessing the higher mark bands. Centres should adhere to the timeframe prescribed by CCEA.
- Drama candidates playing several different roles tended to be disadvantaged, as they were often unable to show full character development.
- Production candidates should take note of Section 3.1 of the specification, where it outlines the evidence required for the examiner. Where evidence of key aspects of the role was not available, it hindered the candidate from accessing the top bands, even if the role is realised in performance, the processes must be outlined to the examiner during the presentation.
- It is advised that presentations take place in a separate space prior to the performance, allowing for the perusal of the evidence by the examiner.

### A03 - A performance/presentation that conveys the chosen style, form and genre of the event

- The majority of centres outlined a specific style and genre and recorded this on the examination record sheet. This is essential to enable the examiner to look for aspects of the identified style and genre in the performance and award marks accordingly.
- Performance candidates produced good quality work, using a range of influential practitioners to shape their work. The alienation techniques of Bertolt Brecht were a popular influence in performances across centres.
- The vast majority of centres chose to present their work with set, costume, lighting and sound, which contributed to creating the atmosphere of a Performing Arts Event. Good practice was observed in one centre where the event, 'A Night at The Movies' was supported by a slideshow of photographs in the background as the two vocalists performed theme tunes from films which explicitly focused on the theme of Truth and Lies.

### Areas for Consideration

- More emphasis needs placed on the chosen form, style and genre that are detailed on the examination record form. This provides great opportunity for candidates to familiarise themselves with different theatrical styles, in readiness for their devised theatre the following academic year.
- Some moments in performance did not match the chosen style detailed by the centre and some centres had not given style any consideration.
- Production candidates must also be aware of the chosen style and reference this style in their presentation, as well as ensuring that it is clearly conveyed in their performance or presentation.

### **A03 - Communication of ideas to the audience through application of personal technique**

- In the absence of director candidates, teacher directed performances advantaged the candidates and created impact for the audience. It also ensured that all candidates had an opportunity to showcase their skill and all performers had parity during the performance.
- The vast majority of performers were committed, prepared and showed understanding of their chosen discipline.
- Some production candidates presented succinct, detailed, and interesting presentations, however, others had a more superficial presentation that did not fully explore all aspects of their role.

#### **Areas for Consideration**

- Musicians must be positioned where they can be seen; some examiners had to ask for obstacles to be moved, so that the musicians could be more visible. Pianists should not be blocked by a page turner, as musicians must ensure they have the opportunity to connect with the audience.
- Drama candidates lost marks where vocal skills; in particular: accent, clarity and projection, were not consistent in performance and also where there was little evidence of meaningful movement. Candidates should endeavour to use as many of the skills listed on pages 8-10 of the specification, in order to fully demonstrate personal technique.
- Production candidates must rehearse their presentation and receive guidance on this process. Production presentations were generally of a good standard, with most of the components shown. More focus was needed on health and safety components for production candidates.

#### **Summary**

Centres are to be congratulated on their examination outcomes during such difficult times. The work of the candidates showed commitment and dedication and the wide range of repertoire presented was commendable. Well done and thanks again to all the students and teachers who contributed to these successful outcomes.

## Principal Moderator's Report

### Assessment Unit A2 1      Planning for Employment

#### Unit Overview

This unit gives candidates the opportunity to develop their understanding of how to find work in their chosen discipline. Candidates work individually to explore the range and scope of employment opportunities in the performing arts industry. They develop materials that will assist them in gaining employment in their chosen discipline.

The adaptations to the specification for 2021- 2022 were a reduction to the content. In the written report candidates focused their research on skills and training, and the role of outside agencies. Performance candidates were required to prepare only one performance piece (not already explored in AS) for audition. Production students were required to prepare a presentation that reflects the application of their discipline in only one production (not already explored in AS), with a reduction in the time allowed to 7-10 minutes.

Through this unit candidates acquire knowledge and understanding of how to gain work in the performing arts industry by investigating and compiling a written research report into:

- the training required; and
- the role of unions, agents and recruitment agencies in securing work locally and nationally.

Candidates apply their understanding of industry practice by producing a CV and a promotional portfolio to market themselves. The portfolio should reflect their experience in their chosen discipline and emphasise their employability. Candidates should be given opportunities to build and develop their CV by participating in a range of activities appropriate to their discipline, for example short performances, workshops or coaching.

Performance candidates apply their skills through preparing for and participating in an audition and interview. Production candidates apply their skills through preparing for and participating in a presentation and interview. The audition and interview, or presentation and interview, should be recorded, following industry practice and last between 7 -10 minutes per candidate. Performance candidates must prepare one performance piece (not already explored in AS) for audition.

Production candidates must prepare a presentation that reflects the application of their discipline in one production (not already explored in AS). Each candidate participates in a teacher-led interview that focuses, for example, on their choice of material, interpretation, production ideas and style of delivery. Feedback is an intrinsic part of the process and helps inform candidates of the areas they need to develop in order to gain employment in their chosen discipline. Candidates then evaluate the process, reflecting on feedback given on their promotional portfolio, and the strengths of their audition or presentation and interview. They set targets to enhance their employability in the performing arts industry.

#### Administration

Drama was the most popular discipline followed by Music, with a minority of candidates choosing to follow a wide range of production disciplines.

Most samples were well-organised, and were submitted in rank order, and included the Tac 1. There was some inconsistency across centres in the completion of the sample cover sheet for each portfolio, and centres are reminded to download this from the CCEA e-moderation page.

The comments on the e-candidate record sheet were mostly clear, detailed and supported the marks awarded. However, some centres did not include any comments or made brief statements, which was also reflected in a lack of marking and annotation on the samples of work. In most centres the teacher's annotation, both in the main body of candidates' work and in summative comments clearly justified the rationale for the marks awarded. This is best practice, and it would be helpful if all centres included a summative comment and the mark awarded on each section of work.

The submission of the recordings for Promotional Portfolio varied across centres. The showreels were presented in a variety of formats, and some were not accessible. Centres must ensure all recordings are in working order prior to submission.

In some cases, video submission for AO3 was also problematic with missing videos, corrupt files and poorly labelled USB/DVDs which made the moderation process challenging. The majority of candidates were clearly identified at the start of the recordings of their audition/presentation and interview, and the work was generally well-organised and clearly labelled. However, some centres need to take greater care in checking the sound quality of the recordings and ensure they are in good working order and accessible for the moderation team. Centres are reminded to follow closely the time limits for the audition/presentation and interview as a lot of centres ran over time even with the adaptations in place.

In the written elements most candidates kept to the page limits, used the correct font and then used a separate page for their footnotes to allow for more space within the limits. However, references were often listed without clear links to the body of the work e.g. reference numbers.

Points to consider:

- Download the Sample Cover Sheet from the CCEA e-moderation webpage, ensure it is signed by the candidates, and attach to the candidates' portfolios prior to submission.
- Organise and submit the sample in rank order.
- Include the Tac 1 with the sample.
- Complete eCRS comments for the sample referencing the assessment criteria, and highlighting any specific areas related to the candidate's work and the application of the assessment criteria.
- All work should be annotated, with a summative comment and a mark awarded for each section.
- Label and check all recordings are in working order prior to submission.
- All work submitted should be in Arial 12 and adhere to the page limits as detailed in the Assessment Evidence on pages 23 -24 of the specification, and be collated as a portfolio of work in the order of the specification.

## A01 - A Written Report

In line with the **Specification Addendum** for 2021 - 2022 candidates' assessment of Section 3 of the Written Report was removed, with candidates submitting a written report consisting of Section 1: Skills and Training; and Section 2: How to Gain Employment.

There were a number of candidates that took a very descriptive approach to Section 1, making it difficult to access marks in the top bands. There was a tendency to focus on describing the course as opposed to the skills that candidates would develop through attending the training route. The strongest candidates showed understanding of the different routes available to them, not just different courses and how it would develop their professional skills and progression in the industry. Candidates who focussed on the practicalities of training routes e.g. the cost, its location and the entry requirements, struggled to secure marks in the top bands as their work did not show comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the skills required to work professionally in connection to the routes presented. Production and design candidates often chose courses that were not relevant to their discipline and pathway. The experience route continued to be underdeveloped and centres are encouraged to focus more attention on developing this area with their candidates.

Section 2 was often the strongest section, showing in depth research into a wide range of organisations and activities relevant to the chosen discipline and career pathway, supported with specific examples. Candidates in the top bands were able to research agents, unions, casting services and means of self-promotion in detail. In-depth knowledge and understanding were shown well when candidates linked their research to their own requirements and employment opportunities. This gave their work focus, linked closely to the chosen discipline, and thus demonstrated in-depth knowledge and understanding. However, in some instances candidates had included research into agencies in USA, or examples of agents and agencies that were not relevant to the Performing Arts Industry, which was overlooked by the teacher assessing the work. Some candidates made links between sections such as connecting their chosen training route to the organisations and agents explored. This was highly effective as it showed a holistic approach and demonstrated excellent engagement with the unit of work.

Points to Consider:

- There are no marks in this assessment objective for a description of the entry requirements, location, and cost for training courses.
- Encourage candidates to focus on the skills that each training route would enhance and how this would increase their employability.
- Use the skills list on pages 8-10 from the specification as a guide to focus their research into how the courses would develop their professional skills and employability.
- All pathways should be suitable to post-18 study.
- Cross-referencing research between sections provides a more meaningful response from the candidates.
- Ensure all research is footnoted.

## A02 - A Promotional Portfolio

The impact of COVID-19 was most noticeable in the execution of this assessment objective. Centres and candidates should be commended for their efforts to create showreels and CVs when the opportunity to create and showcase work over the last two years was limited. There were some creative materials created for inclusion in the showreels, with candidates creating short to camera pieces, performing outdoors and in films. Top candidates work was effectively and professionally laid out, compiled, and presented with clear promotional intent. However, the majority of showreels did not follow industry practice in length, style and content, making it difficult to justify marks awarded in the top band.

In the main, headshots were effective and reflected industry practice in composition, size, and print quality. There were some candidates whose headshots were selfies or taken in school uniform which did not reflect industry standard. CVs varied in style of presentation. The most successful candidates had researched real CVs from professionals in their discipline and used this as a model for their own work.

Overall, a lot of centres presented the work simply as assessment evidence for the whole cohort, rather than taking an individual approach and ensuring that all three pieces required; headshot, showreel/demo and CV were presented as discrete items collated by the candidate in a promotional portfolio. Centres are also reminded that for Design candidates, design/sketchbook portfolios are also accepted as evidence and can be digitised.

Centres need to support their candidates with their research into professional practice across all the elements of the Promotional Portfolio to further develop the execution of appropriate materials that meet the demands of this assessment objective.

Key points to consider:

- Professional practice and industry standards should be fully explored to inform the candidate's creation of their Promotional Portfolio.
- Presentation should 'market' and promote the candidate's skill level in their discipline as an individual.
- All three items should be presented as separate entities and collated in a 'promotional pack' for each candidate.
- Candidates need to reflect on the overall aesthetics of their promotional portfolio to access the top mark band.
- If including a web link please ensure it works, has clear instructions of how to access it, and is readily available for moderation.
- Ensure all showreels/demo reels are fully functioning prior to submission.

## A03 - A Performance/Presentation and Interview

In line with the **Specification Addendum** for 2021 – 2022, candidates were required to prepare one extract of repertoire.

Overall, most auditions and presentations were confidently delivered with a sense of purpose and were enjoyable to watch. Candidates had clearly been well-prepared for the assessment. A range of performance repertoire was explored featuring classic, contemporary and musical theatre extracts. Most work was of an appropriate level of challenge and enabled pupils to display skills relevant to their discipline.

Production presentations have improved with most candidates hitting all the required skills on pages 8 -10, and largely showing the required supporting materials. There was effective use of PowerPoint and most centres ensured that the candidate's supporting documentation was embedded into the PowerPoint or was held to camera. In some cases, there was no physical evidence of the final outcome e.g. design mock-up/model, director's note book; and centres are reminded to ensure these are presented as part of the recorded assessment. There was a tendency for production and design candidates to overly-rely on their notes during the presentation/interview which sometimes hindered communication and their ability to fully reflect professional practice.

Questions for the interview were appropriate and allowed for candidates to display their understanding, with most centres using the suggested list on the CCEA website. Candidates were encouraged to explain how their research impacted their performance in the audition, and candidates who grasped this achieved highly. The work that was presented was professional overall. In some instances, centres allowed candidates to refer to answer sheets/notes during the interview, which does not reflect professional practice and is to be discouraged.

Some centres invited other practitioners to form part of an auditioning panel. Whilst this can be helpful and reflect a professional context, centres must ensure that the invited guest is fully briefed on their role, behaves appropriately, and asks effective questions that enable the candidates to access the assessment criteria. It is important that the teacher maintains their role as the principal assessor.

Key points to consider:

- Consider the balance between questions and answers during interview, ensuring teacher – assessor has the opportunity to ask a full range of questions to address all the bullet points in the assessment criteria.
- Ensure all candidates are asked directly about application of research and rehearsal processes to access marks in the top bands.
- Choice of repertoire should suit the ability level of the candidate and provide stretch and challenge where appropriate.

## **A04 - An Evaluation**

The evaluation is a significant aspect of this unit of work and carries the same marks as AO1 and AO2. The key focus is the evaluation and analysis of the candidate's final outcomes in their promotional portfolio and their audition/presentation and interview.

The general approach was an overly descriptive account of the creation of their promotional portfolios with some reference to feedback, but limited analysis or connection to how their final outcome would help them gain future employment. The evaluation of the audition and interview process tended to focus on feedback from their teacher, rather than analysis of the strengths of the audition/presentation and interview. Candidates should be encouraged to focus on giving specific examples of the skills they showcased during their audition/presentation and analyse their intended impact.

Some candidates evaluated their rehearsal process, which made accessing the assessment criteria very difficult. Candidates in the top bands gave areas for improvement throughout the evaluation, including post A-Level future targets. As 'feedback' is a key aspect of the marking criteria, best practice was evident in those centres where candidates were given plenty of ongoing feedback opportunities which enabled them to include this in their evaluations.



Key points to consider:

- Relate feedback to the portfolio rather than the audition/presentation.
- Focus on evaluating the strengths of the audition/presentation from candidate's own perspective, with supporting examples.

Overall, teachers and candidates should be commended for their resilience, the work they have produced and their creative responses in challenging times.

## Chief Examiner's Report

### Assessment Unit A2 2

### Performing to a Commission Brief

#### Unit Overview

#### Record of Work (48 marks)

This unit gives students the opportunity to form a production company to realise a performing arts event from an externally set Commission Brief. Students research, promote, plan and perform the event.

Students demonstrate their skills in their chosen discipline by realising the Commission Brief practically for an audience and the external examiner. Although students prepare the work and present it as a group, the external examiner assesses them as individuals. There must be a minimum of one performer per group. No more than one student can undertake a particular production discipline or administrative role per group. Groups should be between two and six. Performances should last between 15 and 40 minutes, depending on the size of the group. Larger groups should not exceed the maximum time limit. Students focus on performing or producing original material in response to the brief. While planning the event students also consider the factors that influence their choices and how feasible their ideas are, as they realise the event.

The Commission Brief, which we set and release each September, offers students a choice from:

- a cultural theme, historical topic or social issue;
- the performance style of a playwright/practitioner, composer/musician or dancer/choreographer; or
- a published poem or song, a theme, a quotation or an image.

Students work in groups to make planning decisions and agree the type of event and the performance concept for the event. They work to an agreed production schedule to meet deadlines. Students decide on a suitable venue for the performance and take account of production costs and budgetary constraints. Students also consider their target audience and how to market the event.

Also, as production company members, students research the financing and marketing practices at two professional venues/contexts. They use their findings to carry out one of the following administrative roles:

- front of house;
- health and safety officer;
- budget and finance;
- education officer;
- press officer; or
- publicity officer.

No more than one student per group can undertake a particular administrative role.

**Performance** students learn how to perform their chosen discipline in the Commission Brief to the external examiner.

**Production** students learn how to present production ideas to the external examiner.

As production company members, all students also investigate professional practice and learn how to carry out an administrative role in their group performance. They learn how to use existing professional practice to inform their personal practice by:

- analysing the financing and marketing practices of two professional venues;
- summarising their research findings; and
- using their summary of findings to inform their approach to carrying out their chosen administrative role.

They present their findings in a **Record of Work** which is examined.

### **Pre-Release Stimulus Material (carried over from 2020)**

**Commission 1:** An event aimed at a target audience of young adults which explores an issue of “Human Rights.”

**Commission 2:** An event which explores one of the following:

- The style of “Verbatim Theatre”;
- Music of the 21st century; or
- “Contemporary Dance” style.

**Commission 3:** An event which takes, as its starting point, the painting by Salvador Dali entitled “The Persistence of Memory.”

## General Observations

- Generally, the presentation and administration of the work was clear and presented to a high standard.
- A full range of administrative tasks were provided, with many candidates enjoying the opportunity to work collaboratively again.
- Most centres included a cover page detailing the candidate's chosen discipline and administrative role.
- For a significant number of candidates, the Summary of Findings tended to be the least successful section. Further attention needs to be given to linking the findings to carrying out the admin role.
- There was more variety in the choice of administrative roles this year, with many taking on the role of Education Officer and Budget and Finance.
- Most of the sections included appropriate word counts and references for research.

## Section A - Research Report (8 marks)

### (i) A summary of individual research on the social, cultural and historical context of their chosen Commission Brief.

- The Commissions based on 'Human Rights' and 'The Persistence of Memory' were the most popular, with many groups using their own experiences of Covid-19, visiting family in nursing homes, dealing with a changed society and gender rights, to inform the content of their work.
- Most candidates outlined how this research generated ideas for their performance of the chosen Commission Brief.
- The research reports were generally well-linked to the commission statements.
- Only a minority of candidates focused their research on specific social, cultural and historical contexts.
- Most candidates made direct links from the research to how this informed their planning for the commission.

### Areas for Consideration

- Candidates should state which Commission Brief they are focusing on explicitly at the start of the document and should consider the whole brief including statements about the target audience.
- Some candidates stated that they had chosen to work on 'Human Rights' whilst using 'Verbatim' theatre. Focusing on two commission briefs made the research unclear.
- More direct links were needed between the contextual research and how this research informed and influenced practical ideas for intended outcomes.
- A balance between focus on thematic contextual research and research into the form and genre worked better than a one-sided approach.
- Much of the research was not referenced with footnotes or with an attached Bibliography; this is good practice and clearly exemplifies that thorough research has been completed.
- Too much of the word count was used on budget, group skills and working together which is not assessed in this section.

**(ii) An analysis of the financing and marketing practices of two professional venues.**

- Candidates who clearly divided their work into income and expenditure within the finance section were able to address the detail required for this section.
- Most centres used screen shots effectively to exemplify marketing practices.
- The best marketing research covered a full range of marketing strategies not just websites and social media.

**Areas for Consideration**

- A range of centres generally discussed income and expenditure, but no specific figures were used to support detailed research.
- Many candidates focused on funding applications and grants but did not mention detail on income or expenditure.
- A range of centres used background information on the two venues by means of introduction. This is not necessary.
- Responses were mostly focused on finance, with less detail provided on marketing.

**Section B - Summary of Findings (16 marks)**

- Most candidates focused on their chosen administrative role and outlined it clearly at the outset.
- The strongest candidates provided a short overview of the chosen administrative role and then focused on how this information influenced them in carrying out the roles/tasks.
- Precise quotations about the key characteristics of each administrative task underpinned high quality research.
- Centres who structured their response using the outlined tasks as headings were able to focus their research on industry practice and make links to how they would practically carry out the administrative role whilst linking to research.

**Areas for Consideration**

- Some candidates did not consider all three tasks and instead focused on one task in detail. This limited their overall achievement in this section.
- Some centres spoke generally about the role and then briefly finished by describing what they were going to do in their tasks. Detailed links must be made throughout as to how the task is carried out within the industry and how this will inform their practical approach.
- Many candidates were over the word count for this section.

## Section C - Evidence of Tasks (16 marks)

- Most candidates completed all three tasks to a good standard which reflected consideration of professional practice.
- Some excellent links to professional practice were demonstrated through the use of personalised logos for the company and reference to support groups if linked to a serious topic.
- Some candidate's created live 'paddles' of the work using QR codes. This was very commendable.
- Candidates who used the full six pages for their tasks were generally able to provide greater depth of exploration.

### Areas for Consideration

- Some candidates handed in a range of drafts but did not clearly outline which was the final product.
- Many candidates went over the six-page limit for this section.
- Some candidates did not provide three discrete tasks and in some cases fused all three together. Examples of this approach included elements of the balance sheet and additional revenue proposals within the funding application or an 'Educational Research Pack' which did not include the three outlined tasks.
- Programmes which were fully realised for the Publicity Office role provided a better insight into the style of the production.

## Section D - Evaluation (8 marks)

- Most candidates used the bullet points within the mark scheme to structure their response which ensured that they covered all parts of the evaluation/ analysis process.
- Candidates who used reflective language which focused on strengths, weaknesses and feedback were the strongest.
- The majority of candidates explored problems and solutions in good detail.

### Areas for Consideration

- Many candidates did not fully consider deadlines and production costs.
- Some candidates did not fully evaluate the outcome of their administrative role.
- Some candidates were over the word count in this section.

## Performing to a Commission Brief - Visiting Examination (32 marks)

### Unit Overview

Students demonstrate their skills in their chosen discipline by realising the Commission Brief practically for an audience and the external examiner. Although students prepare the work and present it as a group, the external examiner assesses them as individuals. There must be a minimum of one performer per group. No more than one student can undertake a particular production discipline or administrative role per group. Groups should be between two and six. Performances should last between 15 and 40 minutes, depending on the size of the group. Larger groups should not exceed the maximum time limit. Students focus on performing or producing original material in response to the brief. While planning the event students also consider the factors that influence their choices and how feasible their ideas are, as they realise the event.

Students also apply the skills of their chosen discipline in rehearsal and performance, building on those developed during the AS course.

Through their work as a production company, students respond in performance or production to the Commission Brief and learn how to:

- select a suitable option from the externally set Commission Brief;
- research and explore the social, cultural and historical aspects of the chosen option from the brief;
- decide on a target audience;
- devise an agreed concept for the performance;
- create and select material appropriate to the chosen brief;
- agree a production schedule;
- work within the financial constraints of their particular circumstances to ensure the feasibility of their ideas;
- market the performance;
- apply health and safety practices;
- agree a contingency plan;
- rehearse the event; and perform the event for examination.

### Pre-Release Stimulus Material (carried over from 2020)

**Commission 1:** An event aimed at a target audience of young adults which explores an issue of “Human Rights.”

**Commission 2:** An event which explores one of the following:

- The style of “Verbatim Theatre”;
- Music of the 21st century;
- “Contemporary Dance” style.

**Commission 3:** An event which takes, as its starting point, the painting by Salvador Dali entitled “The Persistence of Memory.”

## General Observations

**The 2022 specification addendum for Performing Arts allowed the presentation of solo work.**

Centres are to be congratulated for their ability to deal with the difficult circumstances which were evident before and during this visiting examination period. All centres managed to have a live Visiting Examination which surely benefitted the candidates after a period when live performances were not possible. Students and teachers rose to the occasion and the outcomes at centres was a testimony to their hard work and determination. Well done!

Examiners reported that the candidates embraced the challenges of each brief but stated there were some issues with interpretation and connection to the brief as well as conveying overall intended meaning.

CB1 was generally interpreted effectively with a wide range of Human Rights explored; the most predominant issue expressed was that of 'Women's Rights.' The target audience of young adults was accounted for in some of the more complex approaches. The outcomes were generally successful but, on a few occasions, examiner's felt the explorations were somewhat superficial. There were, however, some very powerful presentations within this brief which were expressed with creativity, sensitivity and professionalism.

The dominant choice for CB2 was the style of 'Verbatim Theatre.' This proved to be quite challenging with some groups succeeding in the exploration whilst others veered off the style and into unrelated areas. The 21st Century Music option presented a wide range of ideas from which to choose and sometimes the choice of music led to less focused outcomes.

Once again CB3 proved marginally to be the most popular with performers. Within the brief there was a wide range of related ideas used as starting points. The candidates with a more concrete connection fared better overall as the work was more fully connected to the brief throughout. Ideas on dementia dominated the responses and were delivered with sensitivity and poignancy. Images of the painting were used well at a number of centres; this visual impact helped the audience to connect with the brief.

Overall, the choice of a distinct style of performance was generally in evidence this year and there were a range of approaches including influences from practitioners including Bruiser, Stanislavski and Brecht. There was also evidence of physical theatre and Theatre of the Absurd which worked well for the attending audiences.

Candidates were mostly well-prepared with the correct paperwork and camera in place. Venues varied a lot but were all appropriate and candidates made the best use of the available facilities. Centres should ensure that the examiner has the best seat in the house and that there are no interruptions during performances.

The work presented was predominantly in the Mark Band 3 range with evidence of original work from some impressive candidates whose attainment represented the very top end of Mark Band 4.

There were some issues with performances which were under or over the time limit. Work which is under the required amount of time was not able to access Mark Band 4 and performances which were overlong were often self-penalising. Some solo work lacked development; however, quite a few individual candidates managed to create original dynamic work and are to be commended for their efforts.

## A03 - 32 marks

### Engagement with the Commission Brief

- The options within the Pre-Release Stimulus Material allowed candidates to devise a variety of interpretations which gave them the opportunity to perform or produce to their strengths.
- There was some strong evidence of detailed research of the chosen brief.
- Strong candidates had worked collaboratively to devise thought provoking and engaging theatre that connected fully with their chosen brief.
- Some very strong production candidates delivered engaging connections in their presentations to the Commission Brief.
- There were some strong music candidates this year who helped to convey mood and atmosphere related to the brief.
- Some of the 'Verbatim' dialogue was informed by well-chosen relevant articles and supported by excellent use of video footage and soundscapes which conveyed clear and poignant meaning.

### Areas for Consideration

- Pieces should be refined and edited to make clear links to the brief which in turn will result in more effective communication of meaning.
- Centres should be reminded that performances do not need to be overly complicated and that quite often the most effective outcome is where the idea is simple and fully realised.
- With CB1, some candidates missed the opportunity to relate to an audience of young adults.
- There were several observations made by examiners regarding performances where meaning was unclear and outcomes were superficial.
- In a few centres some music candidates were not fully integrated into the final piece.

### Level of Skills Development

- Candidates generally rose to the challenge and demonstrated their skills and personal style to good effect.
- The production candidates showed a competent ability, for the most part, indicating engagement with their chosen production field. Use of a stylised, symbolic approach to design worked very well for some strong candidates.
- Some production candidates were very well prepared in their presentations, however, the evidence of their work in performance proved less successful.
- There were some very strong drama performances with a clear sense of characterisation evident and moments of great impact for the audience.
- There were some strong performances this year from singers, musicians and dancers who developed work with an original outcome. Some music candidates wrote original songs or instrumentals which proved very effective.



### Areas for Consideration

- At times the performers demonstrated a good level of skill development but did not have the level of content in the material to access the highest mark range.
- Some performance skills did not always seem natural and at times required more originality to access higher mark bands.
- The skills required of the production candidate carrying out direction should not be confused with the role of stage manager.
- The group director did not always produce a director's book or elaborate on specific work with the performers during rehearsal.
- Some candidates did their presentations using a laptop which was very hard to read; for examination purposes this must be projected onto a screen.

### Quality of Final Performance

- Appropriate performance spaces at nearly all centres helped set the tone and mood of the event giving a very professional overall impression.
- It was great, where possible, to see an audience at the performances which helped give a real sense of occasion.
- For the most part, the themes and plots that candidates developed for performances were original, engaging and entertaining.
- Production candidates, in the main, enhanced the work of performers.
- Once again, there were clear influences from professional practitioners which resulted in performances that displayed depth of meaning.
- Performances were often topical, contemporary and relevant for the attending audiences with quite a few successfully incorporating 'Covid' and 'Lockdown.'
- Contemporary dance was effectively used to great effect in several performances.
- Multimedia was used to enhance performances in a highly creative way.
- Set, lighting and costume were used successfully to augment meaning and vary the mood.
- Effective transitions between ensemble episodes were often slick and seamless.
- Live singing or instrumentals often added flair and originality, enhancing mood and providing resonance to the themes explored.

### Areas for Consideration

- Again, examiners reported some very episodic work which lacked the required impact through a loss of momentum.
- A clearer focus on intent and communication of meaning would sharpen the work at some centres. At times the intended meaning did not correlate with the brief and outcomes lacked focus.
- Production candidates, especially directors and stage managers, should make sure that their visions are realised through performance.
- Some performances lacked originality with dialogue which was sometimes fragmented, leaving characterisation underdeveloped.

## **Summary**

Centres are to be congratulated on their examination outcomes during challenging times. The work of the candidates was in some cases 'exceptional' and the wide range of original ideas was commendable. Well done and thank you again to all the students and teachers who contributed to these successful outcomes.

## Contact details

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