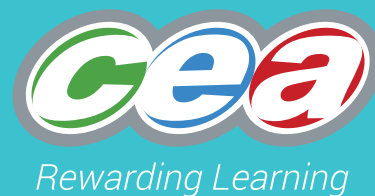


GCSE



Chief Examiner's and
Principal Moderator's Report
Drama

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.

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GCSE Drama

Principal Moderator's Report

Internal Assessment Overview

There are two controlled assessment components within GCSE Drama:

- Component 1 - Devised Performance with student log worth 25%; and
- Component 2 - Scripted Performance worth 35%.

Both components are internally assessed and externally moderated and can be undertaken through a performance or design pathway.

Component 1 Devised Performance

For the 2022 series this component was optional; 14 of the 90 centres entered for GCSE Drama chose to undertake the component. Devised monologue work was accepted for this series only.

Component Overview

Students choose either a performance or design pathway. There is no requirement to choose the same pathway in both components. In response to pre-release stimulus material, students either devise and present a group performance or devise and give a design presentation. Those choosing the performance pathway are assessed on acting. Those choosing the design pathway are assessed on a presentation on their chosen design discipline. Design students must choose one of the following design disciplines (see Appendix 4 for exact requirements):

- costume;
- lighting;
- multimedia (use of image, sound, text and/or video);
- set; or
- sound.

All students complete a student log at the end of the devising process.

Candidates record a summary analysis and evaluation of their own and others' work in their student log, which should be in written form and may contain images.

It must include:

- Section 1: an analysis and evaluation of the process of devising a performance by investigating the pre-release stimulus material (maximum 500 words);
- Section 2: an analysis and evaluation of the research influences that contributed to the overall concept for the devised performance (maximum 500 words); and
- Section 3: an analysis and evaluation of self-management and working with others (maximum 1000 words).

2022 Pre-release Stimulus Material

Candidates were asked to create a devised performance that engages a chosen target audience using one of the following stimuli as a starting point. The stimulus was carried over from 2020.

The theme of “Ambition.”

Or

A book written in the form of a diary.

Or

The Belfast sculpture “Beacon of Hope.”

Principal Moderator’s Comments

A04 20 available marks; Student Log

There was evidence of excellent practice in terms of preparing pupils for the student log. Centres generally adhered to the word count and candidates wrote in a personal and meaningful manner, which reflected their engagement with the pre-release stimulus. The pre-release stimulus created a range of diverse concepts, with the more impactful performances steeped in research influences.

Centres are reminded that candidates should use the student log pro-forma available on the Drama page of the website.

Section 1 An analysis and evaluation of the process of devising a performance by investigating the pre-release stimulus material (maximum 500 words – 5 marks)

This section was generally delivered well with the majority of candidates investigating all three stimuli in a meaningful way. Where a candidate only discussed one stimulus, it prohibited them from accessing the higher mark bands. Candidates who were placed in the higher mark bands demonstrated an ability to discuss the pre-release stimulus in terms of performance ideas and were able to consider the possibilities and drawbacks each stimulus provided.

Good Practice:

- Work was generally well presented with word counts often identified.
- Effective use was made of relevant illustrations around investigative ideas.
- Annotation was used well to explain the allocation of marks.
- Stronger candidates presented an individual approach to the investigation of the stimulus.
- Stronger candidates considered all three stimuli in this section and provided footnotes as necessary.

Points for Consideration:

- Candidates should consider the full range of stimuli in this section.
- The discussion of the stimulus should present a cohesive reasoned argument for the choice of one idea.
- Work should include a definite word count.

Section 2 An analysis and evaluation of the research influences that contributed to the overall concept for the devised performance (maximum 500 words – 5 marks)

Section 2 was generally addressed well with meaningful analysis of the research influences that contributed to the final concept. Candidates who presented a range of evaluated research influences and included how these influences were realised in performance, were able to access the top Mark Band. Centres are advised to guide the candidates to page 5 of the GCSE Drama Component 1 Fact File, where additional ideas are listed that can assist with research influences.

Good Practice:

- The strongest responses included a range of research.
- Research which was fully linked to the final choice of stimuli allowed access to the full range of marks.
- The use of live performances and the work of theatre practitioners strengthened the quality of research.
- Clear links to the final concept for the devised piece aided attainment.

Points for Consideration:

- Candidates, at times, presented research in descriptive terms.
- Not all research was linked to the final concept, and some presented only a limited range of research ideas.
- Research, at times, contained only tenuous links to the final outcome; research ideas need to be directly linked to the devised piece.

Section 3 An analysis and evaluation of self-management and working with others (maximum 1000 words – 10 marks)

In Section 3, consideration was given to the fact that some candidates had been working independently and therefore could not analyse or evaluate the process of working with others. Many candidates successfully analysed their rehearsal process, detailing how they overcame performance obstacles by accessing support from the teacher, the use of practitioners or internet resources. Centres are also advised to guide the candidates to the thinking skills listed on page 30 of the specification, these help the candidates to analyse their self-management and ability to work with others in the context of this section.

Good Practice:

- The strongest candidates had considered the examples of self-management and where appropriate, working with others identified on page 30 of the specification.
- Those whose work was divided into two discreet sections tended to explore self-management and working with others in more defined terms.
- The use of action planning and target setting worked well.
- Acting on feedback also aided the quality of the response.

Points for Consideration:

- For a considerable number of candidates, more work was required on understanding the skills of self-management and, as appropriate, working with others.
- A considerable amount of this section tended to be descriptive of rehearsal and the devising process rather than evaluative or analytical of the relevant skills.
- Some candidates concentrated on their own performance and the performances of others rather than analysing what was required.

Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance (30 available marks)

The small number of centres who undertook the component are to be congratulated on the engagement of their candidates and the polished outcome of the performances. It was gratifying to see how centres had created some very high-quality performances and used production values to help communicate ideas to an audience. Group work, however, tended to be stronger than most of the monologues, which were sometimes underdeveloped and lacking in evidence of research ideas linked to the choice of pre-release stimulus.

It is very important that candidates clearly identify themselves at the start of the recording with their name, candidate number and centre number. If candidates are all dressed in black, it is recommended that there is some aspect of costume that will help the moderator to identify them. It is also very helpful if candidate numbers are listed in the title of each group recording, as often the sample candidates do not all come from the same performance group and the moderator is often searching for candidates across several recordings.

Concept and Content (15 marks)

It was pleasing to see some very creative concepts that had stemmed from rigorous research and analysis of the pre-release stimulus. Centres are advised to continually guide the candidates to embed explicit links to the pre-release stimulus and research influences.

Again, for the majority of centres, this aspect was assessed accurately although there was a tendency towards leniency overall.

There was some very effective work from really strong centres which displayed clear understanding and purpose throughout the performances.

Good Practice:

- The best performances evidenced outcomes which represented the chosen stimulus.
- Presentations where the research was embedded in the performance enabled candidates to access Mark Band 4.
- Groups who chose a more non-naturalistic approach often created more impact.
- A number of centres performed to an audience which seemed to help create the mood and atmosphere for the performance.

Points for Consideration:

- Performances needed to be of the correct duration to allow access to the full mark range.
- Some of the monologue work was underdeveloped and lacked impact and was often assessed leniently.
- Sometimes there was overreliance on narrative-based realism which did not always suit the strength or nature of the candidates.

Application in Performance (15 marks)

There was a tendency towards leniency in the assessment of candidates, with centres placing performers in Mark Band 4 when their contribution was not demonstrated as perceptive or imaginative. Candidates who truly achieved Mark Band 4 demonstrated effectiveness and meaning.

Good Practice:

- Candidates, for the most part, made a meaningful contribution to the devised performance.
- All candidates presented a finished product which allowed meaning to be conveyed.
- Strong candidates contributed significantly to the overall outcomes.
- The best pieces allowed all candidates an opportunity to communicate meaning.
- Performances which created effective transitions were able to access the full range of marks.
- Designers made an effective contribution for the most part and contributed well to creating mood and atmosphere.

Points for Consideration:

- For some candidates, the intended meaning was not fully conveyed.
- Pieces which were under time were self-penalising as ideas were not developed.
- Some performances had an over-reliance on short scenes with long blackouts and unnecessary small set changes.

Summary

Centres are to be congratulated on their efforts to produce meaningful devised drama during such difficult times. It was gratifying to see GCSE Drama pupils creating and developing ideas which had an impact on the audience. It was evident to see that candidates, in the main, are being expertly guided through the process of devising theatre, allowing them to work imaginatively and creatively in a collaborative context.

Component 2 Scripted Performance

Component Overview

Students choose either a performance or a design pathway. There is no requirement to choose the same pathway in both internally assessed components. Students research and prepare a performance of their chosen published play script. Those choosing the performance pathway are assessed on acting. Those choosing the design pathway are assessed on a presentation on their chosen design discipline. Design students must choose one of the following design disciplines:

- costume;
- lighting;
- multimedia (use of image, sound, text and/or video);
- set; or
- sound.

General Comments

The team of Moderators was generally very impressed with the moderation process for this series and would like to pay particular tribute to all students and teachers who, in the face of difficult circumstances, dealt with the situation in such a positive way. All moderations were able to proceed, sometimes with absent pupils and last-minute replacements. Centres went to great lengths to ensure visiting moderation was possible and that was very much appreciated. It was clear to see that candidates had had a challenging few years, and also that the chance to perform again was something that raised spirits and provided a positive atmosphere. Well done and thanks to all, including the team of moderators who provided flexibility and support.

Overall standards at moderation were generally good with evidence of thorough preparation at some very strong centres, some of which were new to CCEA GCSE Drama. Performances were generally well-prepared for the most part and candidates were thoroughly engaged in the process at nearly all centres.

The reports of moderators indicated that there were a number of centres who were unable to present nine candidates on the day of moderation. This was generally dealt with through others standing/reading in and the moderators were very grateful to the pupils who assisted the process in this way. A few candidates were unable to finish their performances or design presentations due to anxiety and this was accounted for in the moderation outcome.

Assessment criteria was applied appropriately, however, 19 of the 90 centres were adjusted downward, with only one centre adjusted upward.

Play choices suited the candidates for the most part and generally enabled access to a wide range of marks. The specification addendum was utilised in some centres to present monologue performances. Some of these were more successful than others and some candidates lacked the confidence to deliver effective solo work which was often under the specified time.

The variety of texts explored was extensive with a broad range of style and genre represented in the choices. The range included texts from the classics to more contemporary choices with a considerable number presented for the first time this year. Centres are to be reminded that texts must be of a published nature, which means that unsourced internet material and screenplays are not acceptable. It is also not appropriate to write additional scenes or rewrite existing ones.

The most popular choices for group pieces this year were Living with Lady Macbeth followed by Be My Baby, Shakers and Five Kinds of Silence. Some very strong candidates rose to the challenge presented by some great text choices.

There were a number of administrative issues identified by moderators which were generally to do with the eCandidate Record Sheets which had not been completed fully prior to moderation. Centres are to be reminded that the artistic intentions for each candidate must be identified on their eRecord along with the style and genre of the play. Centres should also supply completed copies of the EXA39 assessment sheets for the attending moderator/s.

Moderators require time before the moderation begins in order to read the eCandidate Record Sheets, and a private space should be provided for this activity. There is also a requirement for access to a similar space for the assessment of groups between and after performances.

There is a requirement for all work to be recorded and centres should ensure that this is done in line with instructions. The recording of the work should be on an accessible format and sent to CCEA as soon as possible after moderation. Candidates should be clearly identified at the start of the recording.

Principal Moderator's Comments

AO1 Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance – 10 marks

In general, the performances of the candidates were meaningful and engaging and it was clear that candidates had worked hard to present pieces which were generally polished and well-rehearsed.

Good Practice:

- Candidates fared well with this marking criteria and work was marked accurately for the most part.
- Play choices generally assisted the candidates in conveying meaning to an audience.
- Most candidates were able to make an impact on their audience.
- Levels of creativity were evident for the most part.

Points for Consideration:

- Some play choices did not enable candidates to communicate full meaning.
- Monologue performances did not always favour the candidate with difficulties experienced in conveying meaning.
- Performances which were under the time limit were underdeveloped.
- Some work was lacking in creativity and development for marks awarded.

AO2 Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performances - 60 marks

For the most part, candidates realised their artistic intentions and performed their roles using a range of generally well-developed skills. This assessment objective is split between skills, characterisation, artistic intention and style and genre and there was a tendency to over-mark the work. The marking criteria for voice, movement and facial expression stipulates a range of skills in each performance area and material which did not allow candidates to access that range restricted them from achieving the full mark range. Marks awarded for artistic intention were mostly accurate but there was leniency around style and genre as this had not always been clearly defined in the eCandidate Record Sheets.

Design work in the main had merit and contributed positively to the overall outcomes for the most part. At times, however, design ideas were not fully integrated, and the work seemed to be rushed or ill-considered and sometimes over-marked with outcomes not as effective as indicated in the presentations.

Acting

Vocal skills: 15 marks, Movement and Facial Expression: 15 marks

Good Practice:

- The best performances showcased a variety of skills enabling candidates to access the full range of marks.
- Plays which suited the ability range of candidates supported the presentation of skills.
- Candidates who integrated their skills of voice, movement and facial expression were successful in gaining the top range of marks.

Points for Consideration:

- Candidates who were not always secure with dialogue did not display a confident range of vocal skills.
- Material which made little demand for movement/gesture did not always allow candidates to access the full range of marks.
- The skills of facial expression were often underutilised and sometimes over marked.

Acting

Characterisation and Realisation of Artistic Intentions: 15 marks, Style and Genre: 15 marks

Good Practice:

- The best performers presented characterisations which demonstrated full understanding of their role.
- The clarity of the artistic intentions was conveyed in the strongest performances.
- Style and genre were understood and demonstrated in performance through the best work of candidates.

Points for Consideration:

- Not all play choices enabled candidates to present well-developed characterisations.
- Unclear or missing artistic intentions restricted candidates from achieving Mark Band 4.
- Style and genre, which was not clearly defined, resulted in the candidate's lack of understanding in performance.
- Characterisation was not always fully conveyed in some of the monologues presented.

Design

Presentation and Documentation: 15 marks, Use of materials and Equipment: 15 marks

Good Practice:

- Moderators commented on how some of the design work had effectively enhanced overall outcomes.
- The best documentation had taken full account of the requirements in Appendix 4.

- A clear rationale for the use of final ideas enabled design candidates to do well.
- Design skills of the strongest candidates were clear in the presentation and documentation.
- The stronger candidates chose their materials well and were able to use these effectively to enhance performances.

Points for Consideration:

- A number of design candidates were missing key aspects from the requirements in Appendix 4 of the specification. This should be regarded as a checklist for inclusion.
- The concept for some design candidates was not defined and final ideas were not justified.
- Choice of materials did not always enhance the performance.
- Ideas, at times, were not fully considered and work seemed rushed.

Realisation of the Design: 15 marks, Style and Genre: 15 marks

Good Practice:

- The best designers presented concepts which demonstrated full understanding of the chosen play.
- The clarity of the artistic intentions was conveyed in the strongest designs.
- Style and genre were understood and demonstrated in design through the best work of candidates.

Points for Consideration:

- Not all play choices enabled candidates to present well developed concepts.
- The unclear nature of the artistic intention for the designer disabled candidates from achieving Mark Band 4.
- Style and genre which was not clearly defined resulted in the candidates lack of understanding in their design for performance.

Summary

Centres are to be congratulated on their moderation outcomes during such difficult times. The work of the candidates was in some cases “exceptional” and the wide range of plays offered, including some very engaging new texts and monologue choices, was commendable. Well done and thank you again to all the pupil/teacher stand-ins who made moderation possible this year.

Chief Examiner's Report

Component 3 Knowledge and Understanding of Drama

The Examination team would like to thank this year's pupils and teachers for engaging effectively with the 2022 examination paper given all the significant challenges they have faced throughout the pandemic. It was evident that the use of the CCEA support material added to the high-quality learning and teaching taking place in schools and gave candidates of all abilities a good foundation of knowledge and understanding to access the paper.

The paper provided a range of differentiated questions to enable all candidates to have a fair opportunity of answering at their level. Many candidates answered the paper in the order of the questions which was a clear advantage for timing and content coverage. It was apparent that some candidates were pushed for time in the final question which resulted in a shorter, less detailed response. The printing of the text extract proved to be a valuable addition and support for candidates.

'Blood Brothers' remains the most popular text, however, 'Sparkleshark' has become a close second choice. Candidates also provided responses for 'Juno and the Paycock', 'The Crucible', 'Philadelphia Here I Come', 'Tea in a China Cup' and 'Across the Barricades'.

Q1 (a) The question requires candidates to 'briefly outline' their ideas for two aspects of the play. There are six marks available, three marks for each aspect and these are awarded for any three relevant and appropriate points in line with the mark scheme. Bullet points are good practice and help to keep the response 'brief'.

Some candidates wrote extended responses often including information that was not relevant to the SOCIAL CONTEXT or FORM and STYLE as required for the 2022 paper. Many candidates answered this question well using the CCEA fact file to direct precise, clear and relevant responses.

(b) The question asked candidates to refer to 'one SOUND idea' in a live or recorded theatre event. The opportunity to enjoy live theatre has been very challenging in recent years, however, there were a vast array of professional and amateur pre-recorded events explored. It is good practice to use a theatre production that is not the same as the set text.

The question asked for ONE sound idea that should be applied to their choice of set text, explaining the impact the idea would have on the audience. Some candidates referred to a completely different idea to their set text. Other design ideas are not awarded marks. Candidates were effective in their use of subject specific vocabulary such as 'diegetic, non-diegetic sound', reverb effects and crescendo. It was also still evident that some sound effects stated already existed in the sounds written in the play, most notably 'gunshots' in 'Blood Brothers'.

The question requested one sound idea and suggested four aspects to be included in the response – the title of the theatre event, a description of the idea, how you could use the idea in your play and an evaluation of what you achieved. Each section carries marks so that most candidates were rewarded, and top band answers referred appropriately to each section.

Q2 (a) Candidates generally answered this question well. It is good practice to use the whole page to draw and label the character's costume. The drawing itself is not rewarded as candidates achieve marks for clear, precise and imaginative annotation of the six listed elements of costume detailed in the question.

The costume must relate to the extract stated which the majority of candidates did with creative flair. Some candidates referred to the correct character but referred to the wrong costume for the extract and therefore answers achieved low marks.

- (b)** This question was answered well with candidates using their annotations from Question 2 Part (a) to help structure their response. It is important that the costume choices are justified and relevant to the extract.

The six aspects of costume should be identified and justified to achieve well in this question. The Period and Status of the character in the extract are required and were often referred to, however, some candidates did not include these details. A relevant reference to text from any part of the play should also be identified, while many candidates included the text reference in their response, some candidates did not link the text reference back to their justification of the costume.

- Q3 (a)** This question provided a range of set drawings which varied in understanding and knowledge. Candidates and teachers would benefit from exploring online resources to build their vocabulary of staging such as stage positions, upstage/downstage, cyclorama, backdrop, wings, flats, trucks, apron, entrances, exits and audience.

A bird's eye view of the stage, drawn on a landscape A4 page proved to be the most effective method for candidates. Many candidates included a key which is best placed on the same page as the set drawing. The annotation should be brief, precise and clear and no additional justification is required.

It is good practice that entrances and exits, such as working doors, windows, may require 'backing' as part of the staging, if sightlines allow audiences to see directly into the wings. A backdrop, skyline, cityscape or a ground row and lighting on a cyclorama would also be recommended. Curtaining or 'blacks' may also be used as backing but need to be clearly identified in the annotation.

Many of the texts have a 'composite' set which may change very little, but candidates are advised to follow the staging directions suggested by the playwright and not devise their own interpretation. With a composite set such as Blood Brothers, the simple placing of a lamppost would suggest a street and a fence would be enough to suggest a field. Candidates are advised not to over-complicate the staging detail as a suggestion of location is often most effective and can be easily removed for the next scene.

Sightlines continue to be problematic for some candidates. Some candidates had placed part of the set, such as a fireplace or sofa at the front of the stage and therefore restricted the audience's view of the stage. The positions of all the characters in the opening lines of the extract should also be clearly labelled.

It is advised that staging should be prepared and set for a typical school proscenium-arched stage.

- (b)** The focus of this question is 'rehearsal' work and it is 'as a director' that the candidate is approaching the answer. Candidates are required to explore ONE rehearsal idea within the extract provided in the paper. The candidate is being asked 'As a director, give the actors some advice on how they can perform the extract'. The mood and context of the extract should be identified which will support their choice of an appropriate rehearsal idea to improve the performance. The candidate should develop the rehearsal idea, explaining how it has been used to inform how they should add the application to their performance and also the intended impact on the audience.

The candidate should be able to briefly summarise the mood and context of the extract, develop the rehearsal idea and then look at some text detail. Some candidates looked at a number of rehearsal ideas but only the best one will be rewarded. The most popular rehearsal ideas were thought tracking, freeze frame, hot seating, conscience alley and some candidates used improvisation.

- (c) This question requires the candidate to provide a response to a performance aspect in relation to the printed extract in the paper. It is from the perspective of the actor and may be answered in the first person 'I'. The candidate focused on the use of 'voice' in performance for one actor, referring to the text when explaining, and the focus will change every year.

As the focus this year was on voice, the candidate was expected to use a full range of vocal ability by referring to changes of pitch, pace, projection, tone, volume, use of pause, emphasis and inflexion. Top Band answers had chosen perhaps four or five quotations and demonstrated perceptive knowledge and understanding of how the character uses voice in performance for an audience. Vocal detail should be quite specific and phrases such as 'loud voice' or 'raise my tone', do not give the level of detail which is required as it is vague and general. Candidates should try and use a range of text to avoid repetition of the same vocal direction for every line.

Candidates should avoid too much description and refer to specific words and phrases from the text.

Time Allowance

Most candidates completed all seven questions in the 1 hour 30 minutes time allocation. There was some evidence that candidates had to 'rush' to complete Question 3 Part (c) as seen in shorter responses that lacked detail.

Candidates are to be congratulated for their knowledge and understanding of their set text and completing the first exam series after extremely difficult and challenging times.

Contact details

The following information provides contact details for key staff members:

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