

Our ref: MM/Drama

08 November 2004

To: SQA Co-ordinators (Secondary Schools and FE Colleges)
Directors of Education
SCIS
LEA Contacts
Customer Account Managers

| Action by Recipient | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Response required |
| ✓ | Note and pass on |
| | None — update/information only |

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications – Drama Update 2004

This newsletter updates centres on issues which have arisen during period 2003/2004 and highlights important information for this current session 2004/2005 for National Qualifications in Drama. The contents of this letter are listed below, and should be passed on to the member of staff responsible for Drama:

- 1. Higher Drama – Changes to Examination 2005**
- 2. Response to Proposals for Changes to Course Assessments**
- 3. Standard Grade Drama Question Papers from 2006**
- 4. Intermediate Drama Question Papers from 2006**
- 5. Higher Drama Revision of Prescribed Texts**
- 6. Principal Assessor Reports**
- 7. NQ Moderation**
- 8. Publication of Marking Instructions**
- 9. Distribution of Stimulus Material**
- 10. Past Papers and Support Materials**

Muriel Walker has recently joined the team as Qualifications Officer and will work with Mary McDonald to provide centres with support in Drama. Muriel can be contacted at muriel.walker@sqa.org.uk, and on direct line 0141 242 2026.

For the 2005 examination, we would welcome any new applications from experienced teachers and lecturers for Visiting Examining duties. If you are interested in applying, please contact Christine Pryde in SQA Appointments section on 0131 271 6707, or e-mail christine.pryde@sqa.org.uk.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary McDonald', written in a cursive style.

Mary McDonald
Qualifications Manager

1. Higher Drama - Changes to Examination 2005

A reminder that from the 2005 examination onwards, the written examination for Higher Drama will consist of only **one question paper of 2 hours and 30 minutes** duration. This will reduce the overall volume of assessment and complexity for candidates and centres.

In the **Question Paper**, candidates will be required to produce three responses as follows:

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1 essay question on Prescribed Text | (notional timing 45 minutes) |
| 1 essay question on Contemporary Scottish Theatre | (notional timing 45 minutes) |
| 1 Dramatic Commentary | (notional timing 1 hour) |

The mark allocations will now be simplified, removing the requirement for weighting and scaling calculations:

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Prescribed Text essay question | 20 marks |
| Contemporary Scottish Theatre essay question | 20 marks |
| Dramatic Commentary | 20 marks |
| Acting Examination | <u>40 marks</u> |
| | 100 marks |

The **20 marks for the Dramatic Commentary** are allocated as follows:

- a set plan; including opening positions, entrances, audiences, and a key 4 marks
- moves and interpretative notes for actors 7 marks
- justification 7 marks
- technical effects 2 marks

The **40 marks for the Acting examination** are allocated as follows (each of the 2 acting pieces will be marked out of 20):

- characterisation skills 5 marks
- voice 5 marks
- movement 5 marks
- impact on audience 5 marks

Please note that the script extracts for the Dramatic Commentary will, for the first time, include one CST text which may change from year to year. Each year, around November, you will be notified of the CST text which will feature in the next academic session. Candidates who have studied that play will either work on that or on their prescribed text for the Dramatic Commentary. However, please note that the CST Unit does not prepare candidates to work with their text from the perspective of a director. If you are considering this option for your candidates, some extra exam preparation will be necessary.

Reminder: The Contemporary Scottish Theatre text for the 2005 Examination is *Men Should Weep* by Ena Lamont Stewart.

A Specimen Paper with Marking Instructions for the new format Higher Drama Question Paper is available on SQA's Website www.sqa.org.uk. To access the Specimen Question Paper, please do the following : open SQA's Website - Select *Who are you ?* (Teacher) - Select *Subject* (Drama) - Select *Arrangements Documents*- scroll down to 'Higher' to find the Specimen Question Paper for Higher Drama.

2. Responses to Proposals for Changes to Course Assessment

In April 2004 we sent a proposal letter to all centres, inviting responses to potential changes and developments in assessment within existing Courses in Drama.

As a result of the response to the proposals, changes to assessment will be made in the following Drama Courses starting in the **2006** Examination:

Standard Grade Drama (see Section 3)

Intermediate 1 Drama (see Section 4)

Intermediate 2 Drama (see Section 4)

NB There will be no changes to current Unit or Course Arrangements or assessment requirements for Higher Drama Contemporary Scottish Theatre.

NB There will be no changes to current Unit or Course Arrangements or assessment requirements for Advanced Higher Drama.

3. Standard Grade Drama Question Papers from 2006

- In the **2006 Examination** and thereafter, the current combined Standard Grade Drama Question Paper will be split into three discrete papers: Foundation, General and Credit.
- Duration of each Question Paper:
 - 45 minutes for Foundation
 - 45 minutes for General
 - 60 minutes for Credit
- Each paper will contain two sections: Section A will continue to ask candidates about their stimulus work, and Section B will continue to test a range of Drama knowledge and understanding.
- The seen stimulus paper for Section A will remain common to all levels and will continue to be distributed to centres in November of each year.
- The Creating and Presenting elements of the Standard Grade Drama Course are unchanged.

Rationale for Change

Standard Grade Drama is one of the few remaining subjects which has a single Question Paper which combines Foundation, General and Credit levels, and there is strong evidence to indicate that this paper may not be meeting the needs of the majority of Standard Grade Drama candidates.

During recent years, there have been many requests from teaching staff, examining teams and SQA's Assessment Panel for the format of this Question Paper to change. Widespread consultation was carried out in 2002/2003, and in 2004 all centres received a proposal letter which outlined a possible new Question Paper structure. The responses received to the proposals for change were largely positive.

The new Question Paper structure will provide differentiated assessment pathways for candidates of all ability levels, and aims to provide clearer and more effective articulation with the Intermediate and Higher Drama Question Papers.

Support for Change

1. In early January 2005 – at all three levels of Foundation, General and Credit - a **Specimen Question Paper with Marking Instructions** will be published on SQA's Website.
2. In early January 2005 all centres will receive a special Standard Grade Drama Update Letter with the following appended:

Revised Body of Knowledge and Standardised Vocabulary List.

NB This Vocabulary List is not a new syllabus or prescribed/exclusive teaching list, but is a list of standardised, differentiated vocabulary and terms which will appear in SQA Standard Grade Drama Question Papers from 2006 onwards.

4. **Intermediate Drama Question Papers from 2006**

Changes to Intermediate Drama Question Papers from 2006 Examination

- Marks allocated to the Question Paper change from 30 to **50**
- Practical Examination marks allocation remains at **50**
- Total marks allocation for external course award is **100**
- No change to the duration of each paper at 1 hour 30 minutes

At both Intermediate 1 and 2 levels, a **Specimen Question Paper** with Marking Instructions will be available on SQA's Website in the Spring of 2005.

To reflect the wider sampling from the Intermediate 1 and 2 Courses, the Course Arrangements will be amended at both levels.

Rationale for Change

As a result of the NQ Review recommendations for Drama at Intermediate 1 and 2, the Question Papers for these levels moved into the examination diet for the first time in 2003. The format of the papers is the same as when the assessments were centre-invigilated as written assignments.

Feedback from centres, the Drama, Dance and Theatre Assessment Panel and the Intermediate Drama Examining team has indicated that there is insufficient scope available within the existing Course Arrangements relating to Question Papers, to adequately sample the knowledge and skills which are taught in the component Units of the Course.

The revised Question Paper will provide more appropriate links and articulation with Standard Grade and Higher levels.

5. Higher Drama Revision of Prescribed Texts

This letter confirms that **3** of the current Higher Prescribed Texts are being replaced in session **2006/2007 (Please note change from 2003 Subject Update letter)**

| <u>Current</u> | | <u>2006/2007 and after</u> |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Merchant of Venice</i> | > | <i>Twelfth Night</i> |
| <i>Juno and the Paycock</i> | > | <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> |
| <i>Look Back in Anger</i> | > | <i>A Taste of Honey</i> |

Lovers remains in the Prescribed Text list. There are no further changes planned at this time.

6. Principal Assessor Reports

Reports covering the 2004 examinations at all levels are available on the SQA website: www.sqa.org.uk. - National Qualifications, Drama, Principal Assessors Reports. These reports discuss overall performance of candidates and provide detailed feedback on how submissions can be improved.

7. NQ Moderation

Quality Assurance of NQ Units

NQ Units will continue to be moderated as centres are sampled for Moderation. If your centre is selected for Moderation, and you are using a NAB for a particular assessment which has an attached marking scheme, it is important to note that the marking scheme must be clearly applied. It is not sufficient to state that the candidate has either passed or failed the unit assessment. When applying the marking scheme, centres should show on each candidate's responses where marks have been awarded or deducted.

NB Completed checklists for practical aspects of the unit (e.g. Acting) selected for Moderation should also be submitted.

8. Publication of Marking Instructions

Marking Instructions for Drama Question Papers have been published for the first time in 2004. Again, see the SQA website for Marking Instructions for the following 2004 Question Papers:

- Intermediate 1 Drama
- Intermediate 2 Drama
- Higher Drama

9. Distribution of Stimulus Materials

As last year, we plan to distribute the following stimulus materials by the end of November 2004:

- Standard Grade Stimulus Paper **Code SGDR05**
- Intermediate 1 Themes **Code BBC037 10**
- Intermediate 2 Dramatic Extracts **Code BBC037 11**

All centres which entered candidates last year for any of these levels will receive the appropriate stimuli. If you are entering candidates for any levels this year that you had no entries for last year, or you need more copies of the materials, please request these from SQA's Customer Contact Centre on 0845 279 1000 or by e mailing customer@sqa.org.uk. Please quote the publication codes shown in **bold** above when ordering these materials.

10. Past Papers and Support Materials

Copies of past papers (past 2 years) can be ordered from SQA's Customer Contact Centre: customer@sqa.org.uk direct line 0845 279 1000.

Copies of existing support materials may be obtained through Learning and Teaching Scotland (phone 01382 443600).