



## External Assessment Report 2012

Subject(s)	Drama
Level(s)	Standard Grade

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the examination.

# Comments on candidate performance

## General comments

The vast majority of candidates are now being presented at levels appropriate to their ability. There were very few inappropriate presentations this year. This indicates increased rigour in assessing candidates' abilities and strengths before presentation levels are decided, and is most welcome.

All three papers were generally done well or very well, and candidates are attempting virtually all questions in all papers.

Results at all three levels indicate consistent or improved attainment this year.

## Foundation

### Areas in which candidates performed well

Candidates coped well with the majority of questions in this paper.

The vocabulary Q7 was well answered, apart from g), where many candidates thought gesture was the correct answer.

### Areas which candidates found demanding

In Section B, some candidates did not fill in an answer to 5a) and in Q6, some did not note that John's age was 37 and answered b) – h) as if he was a pupil.

## General

### Areas in which candidates performed well

- ◆ Section A was generally well done. Most scenarios are well done, succinctly summarised and correctly set out in scene-by-scene format, stating changes in time and place
- ◆ In Section B, Q8, some candidates' mood and atmosphere ideas were weak or vague, and this had consequences for c).
- ◆ In Q8d) too many candidates stated a mobile phone as a prop without appropriate justification or relevance to the characters or information provided in a) or b). (Please see Advice to Centres for further advice on mobile phones as props.)

### Areas which candidates found demanding

- ◆ Some, although increasingly few, scenarios are still too long, and are penalised as a result.
- ◆ Too many scenarios still contain too many conventions eg 'Sc. 3 is a dance drama showing how they felt'; 'Sc. 5 Megan does a monologue to the audience'. This, too, is costing candidates marks as a plot cannot adequately be outlined when it unfolds through a series of conventions.
- ◆ Some candidates did not cope well with Q9 on stage make-up. Some named items of personal make-up such as mascara, bronzer etc. and some used terms which are not contained in the Body of Knowledge, eg grease paint. (See Advice to Centres.)
- ◆ Some candidates responded with contradictory ideas in 8c) eg sad and anxious mood but also peaceful. This is unhelpful and unclear to markers. It also rarely helps candidates answer subsequent related questions. The same problem of lack of clarity

occurs in personality questions such as F3 and G3b) when candidates may understand how someone can be quiet, shy but sometimes loud and outgoing.

## **Credit**

### **Areas in which candidates performed well**

- ◆ Overall, candidates performed well in this paper. Theatre Arts, movement, voice and vocabulary questions were well done.
- ◆ Q5 was well done by the majority of candidates. When marks were lost, it was more often than not because candidates did not relate the set, set dressings and set props ideas to the mood and atmosphere stated in a).
- ◆ Q6, the tableau question, was generally well done.
- ◆ Q7 was very well done. A small number of candidates did not use voice and/or movement terms in d), as instructed.

### **Areas which candidates found demanding**

- ◆ In Q1, the majority of responses were generalised and did not exemplify how the characterisation technique was used to 'investigate' and 'better understand' their character.
- ◆ In Q4, some candidates placed all 7 given items in the boxes, instead of selecting 'the correct terms' as the question asked. This incurred penalties, which cost marks.
- ◆ Responses to Q5 revealed candidate uncertainty over the difference between set, set dressings and set props.

## **Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates**

- 1 Centres are reminded that the vocabulary listed in the Body of Knowledge constitutes the only terminology accepted in exam papers, and that the Body of Knowledge will continue to be the source of questions. Centres' examination preparation should therefore be informed by this document. Centres who substitute their own terms are disadvantaging their candidates.
- 2 The dramas created by candidates from the scenarios issued are, to a large extent, a means to an end in terms of successfully tackling Section A's questions. Candidates' chances of successfully and succinctly answering questions in Section A are maximised when the scenario is short, simple and contains strong characters with varied relationships and opportunities for theatre arts. Conversely, pupils may, and do, experience difficulties with Section A questions if their scenarios contain multiple scenes, multiple shifts in time and place, non-human characters and the overuse of conventions and characterisation techniques. Centres are also reminded that a marks penalty is imposed on over-long scenarios.
- 3 Centres should be aware of the scenario requirement to state the time and place of the opening scene and then state all changes in time and/or place in ensuing scenes. It therefore follows that a scenario laid out in a Sc. 1, Time, Place, Action, Sc. 2. Time, Place, Action format is conducive to gaining full marks.
- 4 The requirements for the marking of voice and movement questions were clarified in 2010, and are repeated below. Centres should note, in particular, the reference to body language because the requirements state that, from 2011, references merely to

'open' or 'closed' body language will no longer be awarded marks without accompanying detail or exemplification. Although this has improved recently, given that these guidelines have now been in place for two years, too many candidates are still losing marks.

In all **voice** and **movement** based questions the following guidelines apply:

The adjective used with a **voice** term must be accurate, because it is the adjective that indicates knowledge and understanding of the term. For example, if a candidate says 'low tone', it is not clear if the term is understood. If a candidate says 'angry tone', understanding of the term is clear. Therefore, the adjectives associated with each word must be accurate to gain marks. Normally, the adjectives associated with each term are:

- ◆ Volume: loud/quiet, high or low
- ◆ Pace: fast/slow
- ◆ Pitch: high/low
- ◆ Tone: must refer to an emotion
- ◆ Pause: long/short
- ◆ Emphasis: on word or phrase, not usually on entire sentence
- ◆ Accent: reference to a place/area/country required
- ◆ Clarity: poor/ no/ with/ good/ poor

Of course, there will be variations, but this is a general guide. No longer, at F, G or C level, will eg 'low tone' or 'high volume' be credited with marks. Neither will marks be awarded if a candidate merely states that a voice term would be used, as in: 'I would use pace/tone/pitch' etc.

The description of movement terms will be treated in a similar way.

- ◆ Body language: cannot be described as open or closed. Detail or exemplification must be given.
- ◆ Eye contact: made/not made/made intermittently
- ◆ Use of space: no/little/extensive/full
- ◆ Facial expression: must refer to an emotion
- ◆ Posture: good/bad/poor, or descriptions such as slouched/upright
- ◆ Gesture: big/small not acceptable, must be described

Of course, there will be variations, but the above is a general guide. As with voice, marks will not be awarded if a candidate merely states that a movement term would be used, as in: 'I would use gesture/posture' etc.

- 5 Markers noted that, in lighting questions, some candidates are using fairly random colour combinations to create consequently dubious moods and atmospheres eg red, green and blue to make the scene sad. Candidates should be encouraged to make appropriate choices so that they can access the marks available for this type of question.
- 6 Use of mobile phones as props. Candidates are increasingly giving mobiles as props when there is little or no justification for them. Please advise candidates that where a mobile's use is clearly justified it will secure the marks available.

## **Appeals – some helpful advice**

- ◆ For each candidate, centres should submit both levels of Question Paper as Appeals evidence. If there is insufficient evidence for the estimated grade/level, it may be possible to award a grade at the lower level, but this can only happen if both papers are submitted.

- ◆ Centres should base their cut-off scores on those published on SQA's website for the most recent years.
- ◆ Prelim Paper totals should be given in marks (not percentages) and prelims should be based on the 50, 60, 70 mark pattern for F, G and C of the external examination.
- ◆ Evaluation items are not accepted as evidence. They are used in the grading of the Presenting element, and therefore cannot be considered to be evidence of Knowledge and Understanding.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

### STANDARD GRADE

<b>Number of resulted entries in 2011</b>	5926
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<b>Number of resulted entries in 2012</b>	5016
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## Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

### Distribution of overall awards

Grade 1	18.6%
Grade 2	22.6%
Grade 3	24.4%
Grade 4	22.9%
Grade 5	8.5%
Grade 6	1.8%
Grade 7	0.0%
No award	1.2%

**Grade boundaries for each assessable element in the subject included in the report**

Assessable Element	Credit Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		General Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		Foundation Max Mark	Grade Boundaries	
		1	2		3	4		5	6
KU	70	52	39	60	38	30	50	31	21