

## Principal Assessor Report 2002

**Assessment Panel:**

**Drama, Dance and Theatre**

**Qualification area**

**Subject(s) and Level(s)  
included in this report**

**Drama Standard Grade**

---

## Statistical information: update

<b>Number of entries in 2001</b>	
<b>Pre appeal</b>	4,933
<b>Post appeal</b>	4,933

<b>Number of entries in 2002</b>	
<b>Pre appeal</b>	5,452
<b>Post appeal</b>	

## General comments re entry numbers

It is good to see entry numbers continuing to rise.

**Grade boundaries at 1 - 6 for each subject area included in the report**

1:	82%
2:	70%
3:	59%
4:	48%
5:	37%
6:	25%

**Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area**

The grade boundaries are broadly similar to those of previous years, ensuring that the standard remains the same.

## Comments on candidate performance

### General comments

The general impression of markers was that candidates performed well in both sections, with poorer candidates coping well with all but the final question, 15a) and b).

Markers reported a higher average standard of marks, with fewer candidates scoring under 40 marks and most achieving over 50.

They also reported that more candidates than usual had attempted all questions therefore the paper can be described as highly accessible to all.

Markers commented that there was a wider and fuller awareness of the Body of Knowledge.

No marker felt that foundation pupils were disadvantaged by the paper or that Credit candidates were not challenged by it.

### Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Questions 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10 in section A were particularly well answered, demonstrating that centres are preparing candidates for these familiar questions more thoroughly.

Questions 3 and 14, which were based directly on the content of the Body of Knowledge, were well done by those centres which use the document but revealed a small minority of centres who still need to be aware of its existence and assimilate its content into their coursework.

In section B, most markers welcomed the new format of the groundplan question and candidates coped well with it, despite the potential confusion of a Correction Notice.

Candidates who understood and had experience of using conventions did question 15a) very well. There were some outstandingly creative, imaginative responses.

### Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Many candidates continue to fail to read questions properly and this caused them extra work in question 9 when they answered on both make-up and costume instead of on one or the other. However, this year, no candidates lost marks as a result of doing this.

Concern was expressed by several markers that candidates cannot spell drama terms correctly.

The question which undoubtedly caused most difficulty, and in which most candidates lost marks, was 15a) and b). This was caused by candidates not knowing the difference between theatre arts and conventions. Many confused the two.

There was evidence too that some candidates did not know what conventions / devices were. This is surprising when a conventions question had been in the previous year's paper and this year's question was an extension of that one. This confusion also emphasises the need for candidates to avoid repetition by reading all parts of an a), b) question. Before attempting an answer.

## Recommendations

### Feedback to centres

In general, candidates are being well prepared for the examination.

There is an increasing awareness and use of the Body of Knowledge. The introduction to the document says:

**“The stated course content is a required minimum. Centres will inevitably go beyond the contents of this document to stimulate and further educate candidates. However, examinations will be based on this body of knowledge.”**

Later,

**“Vocabulary used in this document will be the standardised vocabulary used in examinations from the year 2000”.**

Candidates are now better able to summarise their scenarios, although some are still writing several pages in response to this question. Centres should encourage brevity and point out the potential loss of valuable time.

Voice and movement questions are generally well answered, but most candidates are less competent when describing the application of theatre arts.

Candidates’ ability to spell drama terminology was noted as a concern, as was the use of text language such as “RU” for “are you”. This should be strongly discouraged.

The most common reasons for candidates losing marks continue to be:

- *not reading the question carefully*

e.g. failing to notice “either/or”, “at least two”, “give reasons for your answer”.

- *not reading all parts of an a), b), c) question before answering*

This leads to needless repetition or, more commonly, no further responses because candidates feel they have already answered the ensuing question(s).

- *confusing “how” and “why”*

This often leads to candidates saying in response to e.g. “How would you use lighting to...” “I would use lighting so that the audience can see the acting area”.

- *not fully explaining their idea*

e.g. “I would use make to up look older”. “I would use costume to look like a tramp”. The detail needed to gain marks is often missing. Candidates should be encouraged to elaborate and / or give examples.

In general, drama teachers continue to carry out very well the highly demanding task of preparing candidates in mixed ability groupings for a ‘one paper for all’ examination. The numbers of candidates being presented continues to rise (from 4552 in 1999 to 5469 in 2002), testament in itself to the popularity of the subject and the quality of results.