



Advanced Higher Drama

Draft National Course Assessment Specification



Valid from August 2015

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Assessment Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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Course outline

Course title:	Advanced Higher Drama
SCQF level:	7 (32 SCQF credit points)
Course code:	to be advised
Course assessment code:	to be advised

The purpose of the Course Assessment Specification is to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the Course assessment and the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed.

Course assessment structure

Component 1 — practical assessment	60 marks (50 marks for practical assessment event, 10 marks for report)
Component 2 — research project	40 marks
Total marks	100 marks

This Course includes six SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course.

Equality and inclusion

This Course Assessment Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment of this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

Assessment

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Course assessment

SQA will produce and give instructions for the production and conduct of Course assessments based on the information provided in this document.

Added value

The purpose of the Course assessment is to assess added value of the Course as well as confirming attainment in the Course and providing a grade. The added value for the Course will address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge, or application.

In this Course assessment, added value will focus on the following:

- ◆ breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the Course
- ◆ challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- ◆ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This added value will enable the learner to:

- ◆ apply and demonstrate advanced knowledge, understanding and skills to explore, create and develop a range of concepts for a text-based performance as an actor or director or designer
- ◆ apply a range of complex skills in problem solving to work collaboratively with others to create and present a text-based drama performance
- ◆ apply depth of knowledge and understanding of a text to their chosen production area in a performance
- ◆ demonstrate a depth of knowledge and understanding of key practitioners and their influence on current practice

Grading

Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

The Course assessment is graded A–D. The grade is determined on the basis of the total mark for all Course assessments together.

A learner's overall grade will be determined by their performance across the Course assessment.

Grade description for C

For the award of Grade C, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

Grade description for A

For the award of Grade A, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

Credit

To take account of the extended range of learning and teaching approaches, remediation, consolidation of learning and integration needed for preparation for external assessment, six SCQF credit points are available in Courses at National 5 and Higher, and eight SCQF credit points in Courses at Advanced Higher. These points will be awarded when a Grade D or better is achieved.

Structure and coverage of the Course assessment

The Course assessment will consist either of acting, directing or design.

1. A practical assessment, which will be supported by a report.
2. A research project.

A copy of the report will need to be sent to the Visiting Examiner before the Drama practical assessment.

Practical assessment

Option A — acting

The purpose of this performance is to allow candidates to demonstrate advanced levels of practical performance skills.

Candidates will be required to perform two contrasting acting roles, one of which may be a monologue. Candidates are required to perform their acting roles from the prescribed list and the report should be generated from their main interactive acting role. Each candidate should be involved in an acting contribution of approximately 15 minutes. An audience is essential for the acting option. All lines must be learnt. Scripts will not be allowed and a prompter may be present.

Marks will be awarded for:

- ◆ demonstrating an understanding and interpretation of the text
- ◆ the ability to use appropriate movement
- ◆ the ability to use appropriate voice
- ◆ the ability to interact with other characters/portray depth of character effectively
- ◆ the ability to communicate acting concepts/impact on audience

Elaborate theatrical effects are not necessary but the use of stage lighting and minimal costume, items of set and props may enhance the performance of candidates.

Option B — directing

The purpose of the component is to allow candidates to demonstrate advanced levels of directing.

Candidates will be required to have prepared a key scene of their chosen prescribed text (minimum of three pages). On the day of the examination, the examiner will interview the candidate through a viva voce before the delivery of the directing assessment. Each candidate must be involved in a total time of 30 minutes of directing and approximately 10 minutes for the viva voce. It is the responsibility of the teacher/lecturer to provide suitable actors for the candidate.

Marks will be awarded for:

- ◆ demonstrating an understanding and interpretation of text
- ◆ demonstrating communication of directorial concepts
- ◆ effective interaction with actors
- ◆ direction of scenes in terms of effective blocking and characterisation

- ◆ communication of understanding and interpretation of text and directing concepts through a viva voce

Option C — design

The purpose of the presentation is to allow candidates to demonstrate advanced levels of creativity in theatre design.

Candidates will select a text from the prescribed list, for which they will produce a set design for a play, which must allow for one significant set change. The design interpretation should be for an audience of today. They will be required to research the background of their play in terms of its social, historical and theatrical context. Within the investigation of the theatrical context, they will take note of any predominant style of design, either of the period in which the play was written or associated with the first performance of the play (if appropriate). The results of this investigation, together with acquired knowledge and understanding of the themes, issues and characters in the play, should be used to inform performance concepts related to the design of the set and at least two other areas of design for the play. A full description of and justification for the design concepts will be recorded.

Candidates will prepare for and produce a scale model set for the play. The set will be related to an identified acting space. The two other areas of design may be chosen from lighting, sound, costume, make-up and props. On the day of the examination the designer will present their model of set, ideas and concepts to an examiner. The total time for the presentation should be 20 to 25 minutes plus 10 minutes for a viva voce.

Marks will be awarded for:

- ◆ design concept of chosen text
- ◆ scale model of set
- ◆ design concepts for two other areas, (a) and (b)
- ◆ communication of understanding and interpretation of text and design concepts through a viva voce

The presentation will have 50 marks (50% of the total mark).

The report will have 10 marks (10% of the total mark).

Research project

The research project will have 40 marks (40% of the total mark).

The candidate will select a topic from relevant and current performance theories and practice. The project will consist of a written report and may contain visual evidence. The topic may come from the work of a current theatre director, company, playwright, designer, or dramaturg.

The total word count of the research project should not exceed 4,000 words.

Setting, conducting and marking of assessment

Controlled assessment — practical assessment

Acting, directing and design components are set by centres within SQA guidelines and externally assessed.

The report is set by centres within SQA guidelines and conducted under some supervision and control.

Controlled assessment — research project

This research project will be marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

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Further mandatory information on Course coverage

The following gives details of mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Advanced Higher Drama Course. Course assessment will involve sampling the skills, knowledge and understanding. This list of skills, knowledge and understanding also provides the basis for the assessment of Units of the Course.

The Course assessments are designed to combine skills from across the Units and allow learners to apply their skills in a challenging way.

Candidates will explore a text from the perspective of one of the following production roles:

- ◆ actor
- ◆ director
- ◆ designer

Candidates will prepare for the practical demonstration of their concept for their chosen text.

Candidates will select a research topic from relevant and current performance theories and practice.

Administrative information

Published: December 2012 (draft version 1.0)

Superclass: to be advised

History of changes to Course Assessment Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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Note: You are advised to check SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the Course Specification.