

## Further information on Higher Drama Course Assessment (December 2013)

### Key messages

SQA is currently developing Course and Unit assessments. This document outlines our progress in Course assessment for the Higher Course in Drama.

The Higher Drama Course builds on the National 5 Drama Course. It challenges learners to apply knowledge and understanding and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate.

At Higher, Course assessment will have two components: a Question Paper (40 marks) and a Performance (60 marks). Course assessment will total 100 marks.

### Higher Specimen Question Paper (publication by 28 February 2013)

The question paper has two sections: Section One will have 20 marks; Section Two will have 20 marks.

The question paper will assess the candidate's integration and application of knowledge and skills from across the Units. Section one will require candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in textual analysis, and section two will require them to demonstrate their performance analysis skills and knowledge.

Section one comprises a choice of six questions. There are two questions from the perspective of a director, two from the perspective of an actor, and two from the perspective of a designer. Candidates must only answer one question in this section — they may answer any question.

In section 2, there is no choice of question — all candidates must answer the same question.

### Section one

This section will require the analysis of a selected text. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge of a text they have studied in terms of its content and its social, historical and/or theatrical context, and to show an understanding of how the text could be communicated to an audience through performance. The question paper will pose questions that allow candidates to provide an extended response from the perspective of an actor or director or designer in preparation for an intended production. Candidates will be credited on their skills of textual analysis and on their ability to make use of appropriate textual references.

### Section two

This section will require analysis of a performance that the candidate has seen. This may be a live or, if necessary, a recorded theatrical performance.

Performance analysis will consider areas such as:

- ◆ the genre, theme and social, historical and/or theatrical context of the performance piece
- ◆ the company performing the play
- ◆ the performance space
- ◆ the director's intentions and effectiveness
- ◆ the acting and development of characters

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- ◆ the design concepts and their effectiveness — set, props, costume, make-up, lighting, sound/effects
- ◆ audience reaction
- ◆ overall impact

(For sample questions from the current draft of the Specimen Question paper, please see Appendix 1.)

### Higher Performance

**(publication by 30 April 2013)**

The performance has two sections. Section A: Preparation for Performance will have 10 marks. Section B: Performance (in the chosen role of acting, directing or design) will have 50 marks.

Candidates will select a text to explore in depth from the perspective of an actor or director or designer. Preparation for performance (section A) will include research on the chosen text (texts for actors) and the processes used to reach their acting or directing or design concept for the performance (section B). All candidates will be required to demonstrate skills by:

- ◆ responding to themes and issues of the chosen text
- ◆ understanding the social, historical and/or theatrical context of their chosen text
- ◆ using a complex range of acting or directing or designing skills
- ◆ communicating to an audience

### Preparation for Performance

Candidates will have selected a text to explore in depth from the perspective of an actor or director or designer. The preparation for performance will include an account of the candidate's research findings, a description of the chosen role and the processes used to reach the candidate's acting or directing or design concept for the performance.

The preparation for performance evidence will be generated in open-book conditions towards the end of the rehearsal period.

### Performance

In approaching the performance, candidates should be given the opportunity to select texts that allow them full scope to explore, create and design a creative performance concept within their given role.

#### Actors

Actors should prepare two contrasting roles from two different texts. 25 marks will be available for each role. Performances must involve interaction with at least one other actor (this need not necessarily be someone from the same class, and could be someone who is not being assessed in this role). Each performance will last approximately 7–10 minutes.

#### Directors

Directors will conduct a rehearsal with actors using a textual extract of approximately two pages. The rehearsal should last approximately 30 minutes.

#### Designers

Designers will design a set for their chosen text and choose one other relevant production role.

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They will demonstrate their design concept for the play (this may be through the production of plans, drawings, designs, plot sheets, mood boards) and practical realisation of this. 30 marks will be awarded for set design and 20 marks for the additional production role.

Additional production roles for this section will be: lighting; sound; props; costume; makeup & hair.

Designers will present their work to the Visiting Assessor. Presentations should last approximately 20 minutes.

This performance is:

- ◆ set by centres within SQA guidelines
- ◆ conducted under a high degree of supervision and control
- ◆ marked by an SQA Visiting Assessor

## Appendix 1

### Drama (Higher) example Questions and Marking Instructions from the current draft of the Specimen Question Paper

#### Example questions

The example question 1 is from section 1, and the example question 2 is from section 2.

1. As a director, describe in detail **five** different dramatic features that would help to create the climax of your selected text. (You must use textual references from the play to help you to justify your answer.)

Explain in detail, **five** directing concepts that would help you to achieve your desired dramatic impact in your final production. (These need to be related to the first part of this question.)

20 marks

2. Analyse the extent to which **two** of the following helped to create contrasts in a theatrical presentation that you have seen recently: acting, setting, costume, sound.

Your analysis must include details of the dramatic impact achieved and audience response.

You must give **equal weighting** to your **two** chosen production areas. You must give detailed analytical points to gain full marks.

20 marks

#### Draft marking instructions

##### General Marking Principles for Higher Drama

The following general marking principles must be applied when marking all candidate responses to questions in this Paper. These principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed Marking Instructions for each question. The marking schemes are written to assist in determining the 'minimal acceptable answer' rather than listing every possible correct and incorrect answer.

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the specific marking Instructions for the relevant question.
- (b) Marking should always be positive, i.e. marks should be awarded for what is correct and not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (c) The questions are designed to allow as broad range of responses as possible, while at the same time anticipating some of the preferred routes through the course taken by teachers and pupils.

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- (d) To achieve clarity and consistency across courses and levels, the following command words will be used in the Higher Drama paper, and will require candidates to do the following:
- **Describe:** provide a statement or structure of characteristics and/or features. More than an outline or than a list. May refer to for instance a concept, process, situation, experiment or facts.
  - **Explain:** relate cause and effect and/or make relationships between things clear.
  - **Analyse:** identify parts, the relationship between them, and their relationships with the whole. Draw out and relate implications.

### Draft marking instructions for section one: Textual Analysis

- (a) Candidates are required to give an extended response to this question.
- (b) Each question is divided into two parts. A maximum of 10 marks are available for each part. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge of a selected text and to demonstrate how they would use their acting concepts **or** directing concepts **or** production concepts to achieve dramatic impact. Allow for two different approaches to this task: Some candidates will prefer to answer the first part of the question (knowledge of text), point by point, with each point followed by an explanation of relevant production concept(s); other candidates will prefer to describe relevant parts of the text and then follow this with an explanation of all of their production concepts. Either approach is acceptable.
- (c) The second part of the answer needs to be related to the first. If not, then the second part of the response cannot be awarded marks.
- (d) Points must relate to the question posed for marks to be awarded.
- (e) Textual references may be either quotes or detailed comments.
- (f) Up to a maximum mark allocation of 5 marks, one mark should be awarded for each relevant description that is supported by a textual reference
- (g) A further mark is available for development of a description that is insightful.
- (h) In the second part of the answer, up to a maximum mark allocation of 5 marks, one mark should be awarded for a valid explanation of each relevant production concept. Up to a maximum of five marks.
- (i) A further mark is available for detailed development of each production concept.

### Draft marking instructions for section two: Performance Analysis

- (a) Section two will take the form of a written analysis of a performance that the learner has seen.
- (b) The play must be different from the selected text in section one.
- (c) Candidates are required to give an extended response to this question.
- (d) The production may have been performed by any professional or suitable amateur theatre company. If candidates write about an amateur production, the performance must be as much of a rigorous challenge to evaluate compared to a professional production.
- (e) Candidates may write about a theatrical production that has been video recorded. This recording should be of a live theatrical experience and not an adaptation for television. The production **must have taken place in the past two years.**

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(f) Candidates will be asked to select **two** aspects from the following list of performance analysis areas:

- The company performing the play.
- The genre of the play.
- The theme/s of the play.
- The performance space.
- The director's intentions and effectiveness.
- The acting and development of characters.
- The set.
- Lighting.
- Sound.
- Props.
- Costume.
- Make-up.

(g) Candidates must be prepared to write about the dramatic impact and audience reception for each aspect that is selected.

(h) The selection of performance aspects will ensure that candidates do not 'question spot' and help to discourage prepared answers.

(i) The selection of performance aspects will allow for the wide range of theatrical experiences that candidates may have seen.

(j) Points must relate to the question posed.

(k) One mark will be awarded for the explanation of each feature of the performance that achieves dramatic impact and an audience response.

(l) One further mark will be awarded for an explanation that is detailed.

### Extended marking instructions and additional guidance for Q1

**1** As a director, describe in detail **five** different dramatic features that help to create the climax of your selected text. (You must use textual references from the play to help you to justify your answer.)

Explain in detail, **five** directing concepts that would help you to achieve your desired dramatic impact in your final production. (These need to be related to the first part of this question.)

20 marks

The candidate is required to give an extended response.

This question is in two parts.

In the first part of this question, the candidate is required to demonstrate knowledge of their text. He/she is required to describe, in detail, five different dramatic features that help to create the climax of the play.

There are ten marks available for this part of the question. Credit should be given for the quality of the descriptions given.

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One mark should be awarded for each relevant point of understanding which is used to respond to the question. One further mark should be awarded for each point the candidate goes on to give further detailed development of understanding.

The candidate may select from the following in their answer: plot; plot twists; themes & issues; dramatic tension; conflict between characters; dramatic irony; particular events/happenings; character motivation; character behaviour; character development; revelations; character interaction; relationships between characters; any other relevant features.

In the second part of the question, the candidate must explain, in detail, five directing concepts that would help them to achieve their desired dramatic impact.

There are ten marks available for this part of the essay. Credit should be given for the quality of the explanations given. The candidate must use textual references to help to justify their answer.

One mark should be awarded for each relevant production concept. One further mark should be awarded for each production concept if the candidate has given further detailed development of each production concept.

The candidate may select from the following in their answer: stage proxemics; positioning; use of levels; characterisation; character interaction; use of production skills; acting style; voice and movement techniques; actor/audience relationship; special effects; drama media (projections, video footage, soundscapes, etc.); any other relevant features.

The candidate must make a connection between their descriptions in the first part of their answer and the explanations in the second part of their answer.

Certain candidates will prefer to answer the first part of the question (knowledge of text), point by point, immediately followed by their explanation of the of their production concepts, point by point. Other candidates will prefer to describe all of their knowledge of text in one go followed by details of all of their production concepts in one block. Either approach is acceptable.

### Extended marking instructions and additional guidance for Q2

**2 Analyse** the extent to which **two** of the following helped to create contrasts in a theatrical presentation that you have seen recently: acting, setting, costume, sound.

Your analysis must include details of the dramatic impact achieved and audience response.

You must give **equal weighting** to your **two** chosen production areas. You must give detailed analytical points to gain full marks. 20 marks

This question asks the candidate to focus on **one** production. He/she needs to choose **two** production areas to analyse. If the candidate analyses all four production areas then mark all four and give credit for the best two.

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The candidate is required to give an extended response. Analysis must cover dramatic impact achieved and audience response. Credit should be given for the quality of the analysis given.

One mark will be awarded for the identification and explanation of each feature of the performance that achieves dramatic impact and an audience response. One further mark will be awarded for each explanation that is detailed and is insightful. It should draw out and relate the implications of each feature.

### **Acting**

The candidate may select from the following in their answer: the overall production concept; acting style; pre-show; period; the quality of characterisation; the number of parts the actor plays; the different ways that the actor uses his/her voice; the different ways that the actor uses his/her movement; the relationship between spoken text and physical movement or gesture; interaction with other actors throughout the performance; working as an ensemble; the actor's use of props; the actor/audience relationship; changes in mood/atmosphere; any other relevant features.

### **Setting**

The candidate may select from the following in their answer: the overall production concept; pre-show; period; the set; colour; form; texture; a representational approach; use of abstract ideas; use of expressionistic ideas; what is shown and what is not shown; the on-stage world; the off-stage world; the use of furniture and set dressing; changes in mood/atmosphere; any other relevant features.

### **Costume**

The candidate may select from the following in their answer: the overall production concept; period; style; age; personality; status; location; occupation; occasion; immediate circumstances; fabrics/materials; colours; proportion; texture; a representational approach; use of abstract ideas; use of expressionistic ideas; the on-stage world; the off-stage world; changes in mood/atmosphere; any other relevant features.

### **Sound**

The candidate may select from the following in their answer: the overall production concept; pre-show; period; sources; naturalistic sound FX; abstract sound FX; recorded sound FX; live sound FX; use of music; use of soundscapes; the part sound plays in suggestion; the part sound plays in the creation of expectation; building tension; releasing tension; the on-stage world (related to a character); the off-stage world (related to the imagined world); changes in mood/atmosphere; changes in location; environmental sound FX; any other relevant features.