



Advanced Higher
Course Assessment
Specification



Advanced Higher Drama Course Assessment Specification (C721 77)

Valid from August 2015

This edition: April 2015, version 2.0

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:	C721 77
Course assessment code:	X721 77

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 — performance	60 marks (50 marks for performance, 10 marks for preparation for performance)
Component 2 — project–dissertation	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 both of challenge and application.

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

- ◆ 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 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 theatre practice
- ◆ demonstrate a depth of knowledge and understanding of performance issues

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 performance, which will be supported by a 'preparation for performance'.
- 2 A project–dissertation.

Performance

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 will be interactive and one of which will be a monologue. Each candidate should be involved in an acting contribution of approximately 20 minutes in total, with approximately 15 minutes for the interactive role and two to three minutes for the monologue. 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 assessment is to allow candidates to demonstrate advanced levels of directing.

Candidates will be required to have prepared a substantial extract, for example an act, from their chosen text. On the day of the performance the visiting assessor will select approximately three pages for the candidate to direct. Each candidate must be involved in a total time of 40 minutes of directing. 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

Option C — design

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

Candidates will be required to 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 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 two other areas of design for the play.

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 will be chosen from lighting, sound, multimedia, costume, make-up and hair and props. On the day of the examination the designer will present their model of the set, ideas and concepts to an examiner. The total time for the presentation should be 20 to 25 minutes.

Marks will be awarded for:

- ◆ design concepts of chosen text
- ◆ scale model of set
- ◆ design concepts for two other areas, (a) and (b)

The concepts and set model will have 50 marks (50% of the total mark).

The preparation for performance will have 10 marks (10% of the total mark).

Project–dissertation

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

The candidate will be required to demonstrate depth of knowledge and understanding of a relevant performance issue. The candidate will select an area which should allow analysis of performance theories and practice. It will be informed by the work of a current and/or historical theatre practitioner and/or company.

The project will take the form of a dissertation of between 2,500 and 3,000 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 — project

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

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

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

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History of changes to Course Assessment Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	2.0	<p>Page 1: 'Course outline' section — terminology change: 'assignment–dissertation' amended to 'project–dissertation'.</p> <p>Page 2: 'Assessment' section — minor changes to wording to clarify the added value of the Course assessment.</p> <p>Pages 4–6: 'Structure and coverage of the Course assessment' section — changes to wording and terminology to clarify assessment requirements; timing requirements for performance options A and B changed.</p>	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2015

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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.

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