



Higher
Course Assessment
Specification



Higher Drama Course Assessment Specification (C721 76)

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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:	Higher Drama
SCQF level:	6 (24 SCQF credit points)
Course code:	C721 76
Course assessment code:	X721 76

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 — question paper	40 marks
Component 2 — performance	60 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:

- ◆ 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 their knowledge, understanding and skills to explore, create and develop a creative concept for a text-based performance as either an actor or director or designer
- ◆ apply their knowledge and understanding of a text to their chosen production role in a performance
- ◆ apply skills in problem solving to work collaboratively with others to create and present a text-based drama performance
- ◆ demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a text either as an actor or director or designer in terms of content, the social, historical and/or theatrical context, audience and performance/production
- ◆ analyse a theatrical performance of others

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 of two Components, a question paper and a performance. The question paper will have two Sections. The performance will have two Sections.

Question paper

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

This question paper has two Sections.

Section 1 will have 20 marks.

This section will deal with the analysis of a selected text. Learners will be required to demonstrate knowledge of a text they have studied in terms of content and the 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 learners to provide an extended response from the perspective of either an actor or director or designer in preparation for an intended production. Learners will be credited on their ability to make use of appropriate quotations.

Section 2 will have 20 marks.

This section will take the form of a written analysis of a performance that the learner 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
- ◆ the design concepts and their effectiveness — set, props, costume, make-up lighting, sound/effects
- ◆ audience reaction
- ◆ overall impact

Section 2 allows for responses based on:

- ◆ live or recorded material
- ◆ appropriate amateur performances

Learners must answer each section using a different text.

The question paper adds value by requiring integration and application of knowledge and skills from across the Units. It allows learners to demonstrate their ability to interpret questions and respond in an informed way.

Performance (60 marks)

The performance will have 60 marks (60% of the total mark).

The performance has two sections: a performance and a preparation for performance.

The weighting of marks across the two Sections is 50 marks for the performance in the chosen role of acting, directing or design, and 10 marks for the preparation for performance.

All learners will be required to demonstrate skills by:

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

Section 1: Preparation for Performance will have 10 marks.

Learners will have selected a text to explore in depth from the perspective of either an actor or director or designer. The preparation for performance 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 2).

Marks will be awarded for:

- ◆ research into the chosen text(s)
- ◆ interpretation of their role
- ◆ process (development and progression) of acting or directing or design concept

This section will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ responding to text(s)
- ◆ communicating thoughts and ideas
- ◆ developing ideas for performance through either acting or directing or design skills

Section 2: Performance will have 50 marks.

The performance for the actors must take place in front of an appropriate 'live' audience. It is the responsibility of each centre to provide the appropriate audience, ie appropriate in age, textual content and numbers.

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 within the same class and could be someone who is not being assessed in this area). Each performance will last approximately 7–10 minutes.

or:

Directors —Directors will conduct a rehearsal with actors from a textual extract of approximately two pages.

The rehearsal should last approximately 30 minutes.

or:

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

Thirty marks will be awarded for set design and 20 marks for the additional relevant production area.

For example, learners may design:

- ◆ a production concept for set, and designs for the costumes for the chosen text
- ◆ a production concept for set, and sound plot for the chosen text

Production areas for this section will be set design with one of the following:

- ◆ lighting
- ◆ sound
- ◆ props
- ◆ costume
- ◆ make-up and hair

Designers will design a set and give a presentation. For their other production skill they will include one of the following:

- ◆ plans for lighting the whole play and demonstration of lighting
- ◆ plans for sound, including digital formats of music/effects for whole play and demonstration of sound
- ◆ designs for costume, including one made or adapted costume
- ◆ designs for make-up and demonstration of a make-up application
- ◆ lists and designs for props and one made prop

Presentations should last approximately 20 minutes.

Setting, conducting and marking of assessment

Controlled assessment — question paper

This question paper will be set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. Learners will complete this in 2 hours.

Controlled assessment — performance

The preparation for performance is:

- ◆ set by centres within SQA guidelines
- ◆ conducted under some supervision and control

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

The performance is:

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

The performance will be marked by an SQA Visiting Assessor under conditions set by SQA.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

Setting the assessment

Set by centres within SQA guidelines.

Conducting the assessment

Conducted under a high degree of supervision and control.

Further mandatory information on Course coverage

The following gives details of mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the 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.

Learners will explore a text (or texts for actors) from the perspective of one of the following production roles:

- ◆ actor
- ◆ director
- ◆ designer

Learners will prepare for the performance of their concept for their chosen text.

Published texts should form the performance material.

Learners will perform to an audience.

Designers will also be assessed on their preparation in the form of a design log, which may contain the following information:

- ◆ designs for costume, including one sourced, made or adapted costume
- ◆ designs for make-up and demonstration of a make-up application
- ◆ lists and designs for props and one made prop
- ◆ plans for lighting the whole play and demonstration of lighting (this could be for one acting piece)
- ◆ plans for sound, including digital formats of music/effects for whole play and demonstration of sound (this could be for one acting piece)

Administrative information

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History of changes to Course Assessment Specification

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	<p>Page 3 — Clarification of the added value of the Course assessment.</p> <p>Page 5–6 — Changes to terminology used: 'Section A' and 'Section B' replaced with 'Section 1' and 'Section 2' to match specimen question paper and Coursework.</p> <p>Page 5 — Changes to description of question paper: Section 1, 'prescribed text' has been amended to read 'selected text'. Section 2 now allows for responses to be based on 'live' material'.</p> <p>Pages 6–7 — Changes to description of Performance Component to include the requirement for the Performance to take place in front of an appropriate audience and to remove the sentence: 'It may be possible for the directors to direct learners from within their class, but it is also acceptable for the director to use learners from out with the class.' Set design bullet points reordered and 'set dressing' removed from list.</p> <p>Page 8 — Clarification throughout setting, conducting and marking of assessment section.</p>	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014
1.2	'The assessment task will be marked collaboratively by an SQA Visiting Assessor and the centre, under conditions set by SQA.' changed to 'The performance will be marked by an SQA Visiting Assessor under conditions set by SQA.'	Qualifications Manager	December 2014
1.3	Page 7 — Change to description of Performance Component: bullet point 'props and costumes' has been changed to two separate bullet points, 'props' and 'costumes', to emphasise that these are two distinct production areas.	Qualifications Manager	August 2016

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