

## Drama

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This update contains information on any recent updates to documents for Drama along with further information and guidance.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Mary McDonald**  
Qualifications Manager



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## The Qualifications Team

**Mary McDonald**

Qualifications Manager

**Joanna Leslie**

Qualifications Officer

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Subject Implementation Manager

## Changes to documents in August and September

As part of our agreed schedule of planned changes to documents for session 2016–17, the following documents have been revised.

### Advanced Higher

#### Unit assessment support

##### ***Drama Skills (Advanced Higher) package 1: unit-by-unit approach***

'Outcome and assessment standards' section, page 3 and 'Appendix 1: Assessment information for candidates' section, page 18 — wording in assessment standard 1.2 has been amended to match the updated Unit Specification.

Judging evidence table, page 18 — the wording in outcome 1 has been amended to match the updated Unit Specification.

##### ***Drama: Production Skills (Advanced Higher) package 1: unit-by-unit approach***

Judging evidence table, pages 8 and 9 — wording in outcome 1 and assessment standard 1.3 has been amended to match the updated Unit Specification.

'Appendix 1: Assessment information for candidates' section, page 19 — wording in assessment standard 2.2 has been amended to match the updated Unit Specification.

##### ***Drama Skills (Advanced Higher) and Drama: Production Skills (Advanced Higher) package 3: combined approach***

'Outcome and assessment Standards' section, page 2 — the wording in *Drama Skills* assessment standard 2.1 has been amended to match the updated Unit Specification.

Judging evidence table, pages 9–12 — the wording for *Drama Skills* outcome 1 and assessment standards 1.3 and 2.1, and *Drama Production Skills* outcome 1 has been amended to match the updated Unit Specifications.

### Coursework

#### ***Advanced Higher Drama project–dissertation assessment task***

Slight amendments were made to the Detailed Marking Instructions to reflect the marking instructions that were used and implemented for Advanced Higher dissertations in diet 2016.

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### ***Advanced Higher Drama project–dissertation General Assessment Information***

Slight amendments were made to the Detailed Marking Instructions to reflect the marking instructions that were used and implemented for Advanced Higher dissertations in diet 2016.

The Notification of Changes spreadsheets have been updated to reflect the latest changes to documents. You can view these spreadsheets at [www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjectchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjectchanges)

## **Changes to mandatory documents**

The following necessary changes have been identified as a result of verification activities, the exam diet and grade boundary meetings which took place during the summer months.

### **Higher Drama Course Assessment Specification**

We have made a slight change to the description of the performance component on page seven of the document: the 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.

## **Further information and guidance**

### **Changes to National Courses**

In September 2016, the Deputy First Minister announced that unit assessments will be removed from National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses. These changes will be implemented over a three-year period and we have started to review how each course is assessed.

[Find out more about the changes to National Courses.](#)

### **What's next for Subject Review Reports?**

Following the Scottish Government decision to make changes to unit assessment in National Courses, we are reviewing current activities with regard to the Subject Review Reports and associated guidance notes.

Completed review report actions for 2016–17 will remain. Actions for 2017–18 onwards may be cancelled or rescheduled in light of the work associated with the revisions to National Courses, especially those relating to unit assessments.

Further information and subject-specific updates will continue to be communicated via Centre News and the subject web pages.

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## Removal of exemplar question papers

Exemplar question papers were created as a revision resource for learners during the implementation of the new Higher and Advanced Higher National Qualifications. As we now have two years' worth of past papers for new Higher as well as a specimen question paper for each subject with an exam, the exemplar question papers will be removed from our website in the week commencing 24 October 2016. Associated guidance documents and guidance on the use of past paper questions documents will also be removed at this time.

The Advanced Higher exemplar question papers and associated guidance will remain for session 2016–17 and will be removed from the website in July 2017.

## Higher Drama question paper, section two: performance analysis

The following information is provided to help teachers and candidates prepare for section two of the 2017 Higher Drama question paper.

Candidates may be asked to focus on the following aspects of a recently-seen production:

- the message and/or purpose of the performance
- the themes and/or issues of the performance
- the social, historical and/or cultural context of the performance such as setting/location, time period, cultural references
- the theatrical context of the performance such as plot, character relationships, character development, tension, mood/atmosphere, contrasts within the performance
- the genre and/or style of the performance

The focus will change from year to year.

Candidates will be asked to write about the following possible production areas (they will choose two from a list of four):

- the choice and use of 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 and hair, lighting, sound, special effects, media

Again, this will change from year to year.

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## 2016–17 Drama external assessment timetable and year planner

<b>February to April 2017</b>	<p>The visiting examination period (performance exams) starts on <b>13 February 2017</b> for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Drama.</p> <p>The visiting examination period ends on <b>28 April 2017</b>.</p>
<b>May 2017</b>	<p><b>12 May 2016</b> is the SQA uplift date for the Advanced Higher Drama project–dissertation. This coursework is marked by SQA.</p> <p><b>Thursday 1 June 2016 (afternoon)</b> — question paper examination for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National 5 Drama</li><li>• Higher Drama</li></ul>

### Course Reports

We strongly recommend that you read the annual Course Reports for the subject(s) and levels you are teaching. These reports are produced following the annual diet of exams and are published by the end of October. The reports provide informed and valuable commentary on the assessment for each component in the course, and include a summary of:

- candidate performance in the course assessment
- areas in which candidates performed well
- areas which candidates found demanding

The reports also contain advice on preparing future candidates, and statistical data relating to grade boundaries. Course Reports will be available from the relevant subject pages of our website at [www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects)

### Verification Key Messages

Key messages from rounds 1 and 2 of verification in session 2015–16 are available on the relevant subject pages of our website at [www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects). You can access them from the 'Verification and Course Reports' tab.

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## Looking ahead to session 2016–17

### National Qualification Support Team

Ahead of the autumn meeting of the Drama National Qualification Support Team (NQST) we would like to add to the existing membership.

NQSTs are subject-specific stakeholder consultation groups that feed back to SQA on the internal and external assessment of National Qualifications.

These groups communicate via secure online discussion forums as well as an annual face-to-face meeting.

For more information and to express an interest in joining the team, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/nqst](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqst)

### Marker recruitment opportunities for 2017

We are now accepting marker applications from teaching professionals to contribute to the 2017 exam diet. If you are interested in joining us as a marker, please visit the [appointee opportunities](#) section of our website where you will find a marker advert for all subjects and levels, with details of the role.

Please check [www.sqa.org.uk/appointees](http://www.sqa.org.uk/appointees) regularly for other appointee opportunities which may be of interest to you.

### Understanding Standards programme

Our Understanding Standards programme will continue in the coming session and will include nominee training events, subject-specific course events and the publication of further Understanding Standards materials.

### Understanding Standards course events 2016–17

We are running a programme of subject-specific Understanding Standards events from October 2016 until January 2017. The majority of these events will focus on the standards required for course assessment at Advanced Higher.

For more information and to book your place, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/nqevents](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqevents). Please note that for each subject there is a maximum of one place per centre.

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## Understanding Standards materials

Understanding Standards materials contain real examples of candidate evidence from course and unit assessments, along with a commentary that explains why the evidence has or has not met the assessment standards. These materials are a really useful resource for helping you to strengthen your understanding of the standards required for assessment.

We will continue to publish new Understanding Standards materials throughout the coming session and you can access them from the following locations:

<b>SQA Understanding Standards website</b> ( <a href="http://www.understandingstandards.org.uk">www.understandingstandards.org.uk</a> )	<b>SQA Secure website</b> ( <a href="https://secure.sqa.org.uk">https://secure.sqa.org.uk</a> )
Candidate evidence and commentaries for <b>externally assessed</b> components of course assessment (including question papers).	Candidate evidence and commentaries for unit assessment and <b>internally assessed</b> components of course assessment.

You can arrange access to our secure website through your SQA co-ordinator. Any materials downloaded from our secure website must be stored securely and treated as confidential.

## Extra support to help you deliver your courses

### Continuing professional development (CPD)

We will continue to offer subject-specific CPD support at a local authority, independent school or college level, subject to request. This involves an experienced SQA appointee providing advice and guidance on any areas of concern that are not already addressed by the Understanding Standards programme.

Please note that CPD requests should be made by the appropriate representative from the local authority, independent school or college. For each request we will agree with the representative the content to be covered and the most appropriate way to deliver the support, eg in person, by webinar or by video conference/teleconference.

CPD requests can be made at [www.sqa.org.uk/cpdfom](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cpdfom)

## Stay informed

### Subscribe to Centre News

Our weekly Centre News newsletter contains the latest news and updates for centres delivering SQA qualifications. It also includes subject-specific news and a regular reminder of key dates during the session.

To subscribe, visit <http://mailer.sqa.org.uk>

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## Visit your subject pages

Make sure you regularly visit your subject pages, where you can access documents and assessment support materials for your courses, Verification Key Messages and information on coursework. You will also find the latest news updates for your courses in the 'Updates and announcements' section.

Visit [www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects)

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YouTube: [SQAonline](https://www.youtube.com/SQAonline)

### Contact us

For centre enquiries, please contact our Customer Support Team:

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