



# Questions & Answers

## Changes to assessment in National 5 Drama

### 1 Production

#### **Must sound effects be recorded or can they be live?**

Sound effects can be pre-recorded or live. Use of a microphone is also permitted for sound effects.

#### **Can you explain in detail what is required in a backup plan for LED lights? Can the lighting be programmed or must it be manually operated?**

In the past, analogue desks were marked on manual operation. Due to the increase in centres with LED lanterns and to keep marking in parity, lighting candidates are now permitted to programme (if they wish) the lighting desk. If the desk is analogue, candidates must be able to operate the desks manually, should the programming fail. For candidates with LED lanterns, their backup plan may consist of a second memory stick with their cues saved on it, and the ability to provide basic manual operation of the desk should both fail. Ultimately, if an LED lighting desk fails and there is no way for a candidate to operate it, they should have cues and programming recorded in detail in the lighting plot (eg the figures for mix of red, green, blue and white in RGBW lanterns), which would enable a candidate to re-programme a desk, once repaired, in the extreme case of it completely failing.

#### **Do candidates have to make/build something for set design?**

Set design candidates are required to create and/or adapt and/or select a functional set for all the scenes of their text. Many candidates choose to build a piece of set but this is not a requirement. Candidates may adapt or select appropriate pieces to create their design.

#### **If the set includes the use of projectors, do candidates have to wire and tape them down in front of the examiner?**

If set design candidates are using a projector (and screen), it would be acceptable for the set-up and safety measures for this equipment to be completed before the visiting assessor arrives. Candidates could then show the assessor and explain the installation process before setting up the remaining set.

## 2 Performance

### **What can I do to support candidates with a disability that affects their ability to perform?**

SQA can organise an assessment arrangement to enable disabled candidates and candidates with additional support needs to complete the assessment without compromising its integrity. If you are unsure whether a candidate is eligible for an assessment arrangement, or whether the assessment arrangement could compromise the assessment or competence standards, discuss this with your SQA co-ordinator first. You should then contact SQA's assessment arrangements team before the candidate undertakes the assessment. Please send full details of the situation — including the candidate's difficulty in accessing the assessment, the proposed assessment arrangement, and the specific assessment being undertaken — to [aarequests@sqa.org.uk](mailto:aarequests@sqa.org.uk)

### **Will students be penalised if they do not perform with the accent that was originally intended for the piece?**

This depends on the text candidates have chosen. Candidates may choose to set the text in a different location and change the accent used. They should justify that choice in their preparation for performance (PfP). For some texts, this would not be possible as the dialogue would not make sense if the location was changed, eg *Bold Girls* by Rona Munro.

### **Is it ok for candidates to multi-role in a play which is written for this?**

It is acceptable for candidates to multi-role in a text which is written in this style. Candidates should not play more than one character in texts which are not written in this style.

## 3 Costume

### **Should the costume candidates give costumes to the actors in front of the assessor and check it once the actors have put them on?**

Costume candidates should hand out all costumes in front of the assessor. They should then check actors once they have changed into the costume, to ensure it is worn as the design intended.

## 4 Make-up and hair

### **If an actor has an allergic reaction to theatrical make-up can cosmetic make-up be used as an alternative?**

Make-up and hair candidates are expected to use theatrical make-up. They should undertake a patch test to determine if the actors are allergic to the products. It would be acceptable to use cosmetic make-up for actors who have had an allergic reaction. For hygiene purposes, lipstick and mascara should be applied with disposable applicators or the actor's own can be used for hygiene purposes.

## 5 Question paper

### **Is the duration of the question paper still 1 hour and 30 minutes despite the increase in marks from 40 to 60?**

Yes. Candidates still have 1 hour and 30 minutes to complete the question paper.

### **Does increasing the marks for the question paper without increasing the duration mean that not enough candidates were achieving marks from the top end of the range?**

Every year candidates achieve marks from across the entire range and a number of candidates achieve the full 40 marks. SQA has also gathered evidence which indicates that a notable number of candidates completed the previous 40-mark paper in less than 1 hour and 30 minutes. Centres across the country also reported early exits by candidates. As a result, it was decided that despite the increase in marks, a question paper of 1 hour and 30 minutes duration was appropriate for candidates at National 5 level.

### **Are candidates given marks for using the terms 'high volume' or 'low volume'?**

In order to access any marks, a candidate must be able to clearly demonstrate to a marker their knowledge and understanding within the subject and a firm grasp of course-specific terminology. It is therefore not enough to simply state a voice or movement term without a clear description and understanding of how it will be used. In this particular case, volume should be described as loud or quiet. Higher volume or lower volume will not receive marks as these adjectives are used for pitch and a marker must be able to distinguish a candidate's separate understanding of these commonly confused terms.

### **What is an acceptable description for body language?**

The use of body language is unclear if the descriptive term of 'open' or 'closed' is used in isolation. In either case, the actor's movement has not been clearly defined and a marker must be able to visualise the performance concept in order to award marks. Does closed body language mean arms folded across chest or in the fetal position, for example?

Candidates must define all movement terminology to allow the marker to clearly visualise their ideas in practice. 'The actor will have an open, welcoming body language, arms slightly outstretched on either side' or 'The actor uses a closed, defensive body language, with arms folded across their chest' would clearly enable a marker to visualise the performance concept. Vague explanations will not receive marks.

### **For peer evaluation, can candidates choose the person they evaluate or does the question determine this?**

The student the candidate chooses to evaluate will be determined by the question asked. In the case of the Specimen Question Paper Question 3, the question is asking the candidate to evaluate the other student's contribution to the rehearsal process and, as a result, leads the candidate towards answering on another student they have worked with during their course. Other questions may ask a candidate to evaluate the performance of another student, however, enabling a candidate to answer using a student from another group in such a case. The evaluation questions, just like those on the evaluation of self, can be based on any performance the candidate has participated in during their course and the choice made does not need to be limited to the Course assessment performance.

### **Will the peer evaluation question always be worth 10 marks or will the 10 marks be split over several questions?**

The additional 10 marks in Section 1 of the question paper will include questions asking the candidate to evaluate the work of another student. In order to ensure the continued consistent challenge of the question paper itself, the content of these questions will vary year-on-year. Similarly, there will not always be 10 marks allocated within the paper to the evaluation of another student (there could 12 marks allocated to questions evaluating self and 8 to questions evaluating another one year, followed by 6 marks to questions evaluating self and 14 to questions evaluating another the next year, for example).

### **Do candidates need to state what type of staging they are using when answering questions on set design?**

Candidates should provide enough detail to enable assessors visualise design concepts, in order to award marks. Candidates' answers should also demonstrate their understanding of relevant theatre terminology. In the case of set design, the type of staging the candidate is using could help an assessor to visualise candidates' design concept. However, unless the question specifically asks for it, candidates do not need to state the type staging they are using.

### **For sound design questions, should candidates give specific details (eg particular song titles, instruments, minor key, tempo)?**

When answering questions on sound design, candidates should demonstrate their understanding of these concepts clearly. Candidates could use a specific song title to illustrate their understanding sound design. A relevant description of an instrument or key/tempo, etc could also help to demonstrate understanding. Overly generic descriptions such as 'happy music' or 'scary music' would not be awarded marks.

### **For the questions based on the chosen stimulus, how should candidates use the unmarked planning box?**

Candidates can use the unmarked planning box to plan their response to the stimulus. As an example of good question paper technique, SQA recommends that candidates use the unmarked box to write a brief summary/outline of their drama.

### **What arrangements can I make for disabled candidates doing the question paper?**

As with the performance assessment task, SQA can organise an assessment arrangement to enable disabled candidates and candidates with additional support needs to complete the question paper without compromising its integrity. If you are unsure whether a candidate is eligible for an assessment arrangement, or whether the assessment arrangement could compromise the assessment or competence standards, discuss this with your SQA co-ordinator first. You should then contact SQA's assessment arrangements team before the candidate undertakes the assessment. Please send full details of the situation — including the candidate's difficulty in accessing the assessment, the proposed assessment arrangement, and the specific assessment being undertaken — to [aarequests@sqa.org.uk](mailto:aarequests@sqa.org.uk)