



National
Qualifications
2026

2026 Drama

National 5

Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

These marking instructions have been prepared by examination teams for use by Qualifications Scotland appointed markers when marking external course assessments.

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General marking principles for National 5 Drama

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to questions in this paper. These principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking instructions for this assessment.
- (b) Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.
- (c) Candidates may have performed a piece of text that is unknown to the marker, or based their answer on a devised performance. Markers should use their professional judgement.
- (d) Candidates who do not respond to all aspects of a question cannot be awarded full marks.
- (e) Candidates can answer Section 1 from the viewpoint of an actor, lighting designer, costume designer, make-up and hair designer, sound designer, set designer or props designer.
- (f) Candidates are expected to use drama terminology throughout.
- (g) In Section 2, candidates must base their drama on one of the stimuli.
- (h) At this level, candidates are expected to justify and substantiate their responses, demonstrating a knowledge of drama. Marks should not be awarded for descriptive comment.
- (i) Award marks for a valid response to the question asked.
 - For **identify**, **name** or **state** questions, candidates must provide a brief response.
 - For **describe** questions, candidates must provide a statement or structure of characteristics and/or features. Responses must be more than an outline or a list and may refer to a concept, process, experiment, situation or facts.
 - For **evaluate** questions, candidates must make a judgement based on criteria and determine the value of something.
 - For **explain** questions, candidates must relate cause and effect and/or make relationships clear the relationships between things. Offer reason behind the response.

Overview

National 5 level candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of both process and performance.

Section 1 is designed to test candidates' ability to evaluate their own work and the work of others.

Section 2 tests the candidates' ability to respond to stimuli and create their own piece of drama.

Marking instructions for each question

SECTION 1

These questions require candidates to give a personal evaluative response (not from a group perspective) of self and of others on a piece of work that they have been involved in or seen during the course, either as an actor or in a production role. This may be from the course assessment performance or another performance they have taken part in during the course.

The questions require candidates to demonstrate their reflection and evaluation skills.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
1.	(a)		Candidates are asked to state the main theme or issue of their drama, with a reason. 1+1 The candidate: - has stated the main theme or issue 1 mark - has given a reason for their answer 1 mark	2	If the candidate merely retells the story/plot, no marks can be awarded. The candidate must demonstrate an understanding of themes or issues. A variety of themes or issues could be identified, accept theme or issue in the widest sense. If more than one theme or issue is stated, mark the best response. The theme or issue could be specific to one scene within the drama or communicated throughout the drama. Either is acceptable.
	(b)		Candidates are asked to describe one way they helped to communicate the main theme or issue, identified in (a). The candidate: - has fully described one way they helped to communicate the main theme or issue 2 marks - has given a basic description of one way they helped to communicate the main theme or issue 1 mark	2	If the candidate merely retells the story/plot, no marks can be awarded. The candidate must describe one way they helped to communicate the main theme or issue, identified in (a) though this can be implicit. Marks should be awarded for the detail in the description of the performance/design concept. If a candidate only offers general comments from a group's perspective, no marks can be awarded. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response [NR] for (a), but a theme or issue is clear in the answer to (b), the full range of marks (2) are available.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
2.			Candidates are asked to describe one activity they carried out to prepare for their drama The candidate: - has fully described an activity they carried out to prepare for their drama 2 marks - has given a basic description of an activity they carried out to prepare for their drama 1 mark	2	A candidate may choose to fully describe an activity or describe an activity and the way(s) in which the activity helped them prepare for their drama. Either is acceptable. However, if the candidate only describes the way(s) in which the activity helped them to prepare for the performance, a maximum of 1 mark can be awarded for each activity. If more than one activity is described mark the best one. Candidates should describe the activity from an individual, not a group perspective. For example: Candidates may refer to: - read through of the script - notes during rehearsals - research - design/performance tasks - diagrams and sketches etc - rigging/focusing lanterns - applying practice make-up - sewing costumes - characterisation techniques - sourcing sound effects - researching and making a prop - the rehearsal process Or any other appropriate activity undertaken during the rehearsal process.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
3.			Candidates are asked to evaluate the effectiveness of their final performance. The candidate: - has given a full and detailed evaluation of their final performance 4 marks - has given a good evaluation of their final performance 3 marks - has given an adequate evaluation of their final performance 2 marks - has given a limited evaluation of their final performance 1 mark	4	Candidate responses should be evaluative. Marks should not be awarded if the candidate makes a general evaluation of the group's performance. Marks should not be awarded for story-telling or general descriptive comments. If an evaluative comment is clearly implied, without being explicitly stated, a maximum of 3 marks can be awarded. For example: 'This contributed to the tension because . . . ' etc. Correct terminology must be used, otherwise no marks can be awarded.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
4.	(a)		Candidates are asked to identify the mood and/or atmosphere of the other student's drama, with justification. 1+1 The candidate: - has identified the mood and/or atmosphere of the other student's drama 1 mark - has justified the mood and/or atmosphere of the other student's drama 1 mark	2	If the candidate merely retells the story/plot, no marks can be awarded. A variety of moods and/or atmospheres could be identified. If more than one mood and/or atmosphere is stated, mark the best response. The mood and atmosphere could be specific to one scene within the drama or created throughout the drama. Either is acceptable.
	(b)		Candidates are asked to describe one way this drama student helped to create the mood and/or atmosphere through their acting or production role. The candidate: - has fully described one way they helped to create the mood and/or atmosphere 2 marks - has given a basic description of one way they helped to create the mood and/or atmosphere 1 mark	2	Candidates may refer to: Acting – performance concept(s), voice, movement, blocking etc. Production Role – design concept(s), use of resources etc. The candidate must describe one way the drama student helped to create the mood and/or atmosphere identified in (a), though this can be implicit. Candidates may refer to: Acting – performance concept(s), voice, movement, blocking etc. Production Role – design concept(s), use of resources etc. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response [NR] for (a), but a mood and/or atmosphere is clear in the answer to (b), the full range of marks (2) are available.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
5.			Candidates are asked to identify one reaction an audience could have to this drama, with a reason. 1+1 The candidate: • has identified a reaction an audience could have to this drama 1 mark • has given a reason for the reaction 1 mark	2	Candidates should demonstrate their understanding of audience reactions. They may refer to: • emotional • cerebral • empathetic • changing perception Or any other relevant reaction. If no reactions are identified, no marks can be awarded.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
6.			Candidates are asked to evaluate the effectiveness of this drama student's contribution to the rehearsal process and/or final performance. The candidate: - has given a full and detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of this drama student's contribution to the rehearsal process and/or final performance 4 marks - has given a good evaluation of the effectiveness of this drama student's contribution to the rehearsal process and/or final performance 3 marks - has given an adequate evaluation of the effectiveness of this drama student's contribution to the rehearsal process and/or final performance 2 marks - has given a limited evaluation of the effectiveness of this drama student's contribution to the rehearsal process and/or final performance 1 mark	4	Candidate responses should be evaluative. Marks should not be awarded if the candidate offers a general evaluation of the group's performance. Marks should not be awarded for story-telling or general descriptive comments. If an evaluative comment is clearly implied, without being explicitly stated, a maximum of 3 marks can be awarded. For example, 'This helped the audience understand . . . ' etc. Correct terminology must be used, otherwise no marks can be awarded. Candidates must refer to the same drama student described in Q3, Q4 and Q5, though this can be implicit.

SECTION 2

Candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of creating drama by responding to stimuli. The drama **must** be suitable for a live theatrical performance.

Question			Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
7.			Candidates are asked to state the form of their drama. The candidate: • has stated the form of their drama 1 mark	1	Possible forms may include: • a scripted play • an improvised play • physical theatre • mime • monologue • dance drama • musical • pantomime • forum theatre Or any other relevant form. If no form is identified, then no mark can be awarded.
8.			Candidates are asked to identify the genre of their drama. 1 mark	1	Possible genres may include: • action • adventure • courtroom drama • detective • docudrama • fantasy • science-fiction • thriller • western • comedy • satire • crime • horror • mystery • romance • slice of life • tragedy • drama • tragicomedy • historical Or any other appropriate genre. If no genre is identified, then no mark can be awarded.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
9.	(a)		Candidates are asked to identify the time period(s) in which their drama is set, with a reason. 1+1 The candidate: - has identified the time period(s) in which their drama is set 1 mark - has given a reason for their answer 1 mark	2	Candidates must identify a time period. Time periods could include: - modern day - a particular decade - an era in history or the future Or any other relevant time period.
	(b)		Candidates are asked to explain one way the time period would be communicated to the audience in the opening scene. The candidate: - has fully explained one way the time period would be communicated to the audience in the opening scene 2 marks - has given a basic explanation of one way the time period would be communicated to the audience in the opening scene 1 mark	2	The explanation should make clear the relationship between the way the time period is communicated and its effect to the audience. If a candidate has not made this clear, a maximum of 1 mark can be awarded. Candidates may refer to performance and/or production concepts. The ideas must be practicable. If no performance or production concepts are explained, then a maximum of 1 mark can be awarded. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response [NR] for (a), but time period(s) are clearly implied in the answer to (b), the full range of marks (2) are available.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
10.	(a)		Candidates are asked to identify a character who they consider to be important in their drama, with justification. 1+1 The candidate: - has identified an important character 1 mark - has justified their answer 1 mark	2	Candidates should identify the character by name or role within the drama. The justification for the important character is a personal opinion, and candidates might talk about how they relate to the character in terms of interest, empathy, personality etc, as well as the character's importance in terms of purpose/function in the drama.
	(b)		Candidates are asked to describe two rehearsal activities to help an actor develop the character identified in (a), with justification. Candidates must choose two of the following: - improvisation - hot seating - research - thought tunnel 2 marks are available for each rehearsal activity. 2+2 The candidate: - has given a description of the rehearsal activity, demonstrating an understanding of the activity in practice 1 mark - has justified why it would help an actor develop the character identified in (a) 1 mark	4	The description of the rehearsal activity should demonstrate a clear understanding of the activity in practice. It is not enough for a candidate to simply name the activity. The description of research in practice may include the method of obtaining information and/or a description of research that is specifically relevant to the character identified in (a) If only one activity is described, a maximum of 2 marks can be awarded. If a candidate makes no specific reference to their drama, in either the description of the rehearsal activity or the justification, a maximum of 1 mark can be awarded for each activity. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response (NR) in (a), but an important character is clearly implied in the answer to (b), the full range of marks (4) are available.

Question		Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
	(c)	Candidates are asked to describe the ways an actor could use voice and movement to portray this character in a performance. Candidates must refer to both voice and movement using correct terminology. 1 mark for each appropriate description of how voice and movement would be used. This can be 2+2 or 3+1. Candidates may choose to give any combination of voice and movement: • 3 voice and 1 movement • 2 voice and 2 movement • 1 voice and 3 movement All are acceptable.	4	Answer should be from the point of view of an actor. Voice Candidates may refer to: • volume • pace • pitch • accent • tone • emphasis • clarity • pause • fluency • articulation • intonation • register Or any other relevant voice term. Movement Candidates may refer to: • facial expression • body language • gesture • eye contact • use of space • posture • stance Or any other relevant movement term. If only voice or movement is described, a maximum of 3 marks can be awarded. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response [NR] in (a) or (b), but a character they consider to be important is clearly implied in the answer to (c), the full range of marks (4) are available.

Question			Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
11.	(a)		Candidates are asked to describe a relationship between two characters in their drama, which is positive and/or negative. The candidate: - has fully described a relationship between two characters in their drama, which is positive and/or negative 2 marks - has given a basic description of a relationship between two characters in their drama, which is positive and/or negative 1 mark	2	Characters must be identified by name and/or role. Candidates may choose to describe positive and/or negative aspects of the characters relationship and/or describe the characters relationship in the context of a scene, either is acceptable. The interpretation of positive or negative can be the candidate's personal opinion or can be implied in the answer. If the relationship is from one characters point of view a maximum of 1 mark can be awarded.
	(b)		Candidates are asked to describe the way(s) they would use positioning on stage to highlight the relationship between these two characters. The candidate: - has fully described the way(s) they would use positioning on stage to highlight the relationship between these two characters 2 marks - has given a basic description of the way(s) they would use positioning on stage to highlight the relationship between these two characters 1 mark	2	Both characters must be referred to. If only one character is referred to a maximum of 1 mark can be awarded. If the candidate does not refer to the areas of the stage, a maximum of 1 mark can be awarded. Candidates may refer to: - areas of the stage - proxemics - blocking - use of space - movement - physical contact - use of levels Or any other relevant use of stage positioning. Correct terminology must be used.

Question			Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
	(c)		The candidate is asked to identify one reaction the audience would have to the relationship between these two characters, with a reason. 1+1 The candidate has: - has given one reaction the audience would have to the relationship between these two characters 1 mark The candidate has: - given a reason for their answer 1 mark	2	The answer must relate to the characters described in (a) and (b), otherwise no marks can be awarded. Candidates should demonstrate their understanding of audience reactions. They may refer to: - emotional - cerebral - empathetic - changing perception Or any other relevant reaction. Where candidates have explained more than one reaction, mark the best one. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or been awarded No Response [NR] in (a) and/or (b), but a relationship between two characters is clearly implied, the full range of marks (2) are available.

Question			Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
12.	(a)		Candidates are asked to state the purpose of their drama. The candidate: has stated the purpose of the drama 1 mark	1	The candidate must demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of their drama. A variety of purposes may be stated, these could include: - to communicate a message - to entertain - to tell a story - to educate - to explore a theme or issue - to explain - to experience Or any other appropriate purpose.
	(b)		Candidates are asked to describe the ways in which they would use two of the listed conventions to highlight this purpose. Candidates must choose two of the following: - voice over - flashback - tableau - Aside 2 marks are available for each convention activity. 2+2 The candidate: - has fully described the way(s) in which they would use the convention to highlight this purpose 2 marks - has given a basic description of the way(s) in which they would use the convention to highlight this purpose 1 mark	4	Candidates must demonstrate an understanding of the conventions in practice. Where candidates have described more than two conventions, mark the best two. If only one convention is described, a maximum of 2 marks can be awarded. The convention should relate to the purpose identified in (a), though this can be implicit. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response (NR) in (a) but a purpose is clearly implied in the answer to (b), the full range of marks (4) are available.

Question			Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
13.	(a)		Candidates are asked to identify a personal prop that is important to a character in their drama. The candidate: has identified a personal prop 1 mark	1	If more than one prop is identified mark the best one.
	(b)		Candidates are asked to describe this important personal prop. The candidate: - has fully described this important personal prop 2 marks - has given a basic description of this important personal prop 1 mark	2	The ideas must be practicable. Candidates may describe the prop in terms of: - colour - size - make - model - condition - material - style - personalisation - function - time period Or any other relevant aspect. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response [NR] for (a), but an important personal prop has been described in the answer to (b), the full range of marks (2) are available.

Question			Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
	(c)		Candidates are asked to explain the way(s) that they would direct the actor to use this personal prop to highlight its importance to this character. The candidate: - has given a full explanation of the way(s) that they would direct the actor to use this personal prop to highlight its importance to this character 2 marks - has given a basic explanation of the way(s) that they would direct the actor to use this personal prop to highlight its importance to this character 1 mark	2	Responses may refer to the use of the prop in the context of the drama. Eg: - physical interaction - character reactions - blocking Or any other relevant use. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response [NR] for (a) or (b), but a character's personal prop is clearly explained in the answer to (c), the full range of marks (2) are available.

Question			Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
14.	(a)		Candidates are asked to describe the mood and/or atmosphere in one scene. The candidate: - has given a full description of the mood and/or atmosphere in this scene. 2 marks - has given a basic description of the mood and/or atmosphere in this scene. 1 mark	2	The mood and/or atmosphere must be specific to one scene. A variety of moods and/or atmospheres could be identified. If the candidate merely retells the story/plot, no marks can be awarded.

Question		Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
	(b)	Candidates are asked to describe the way(s) a designer could use set or costume in this scene to help create this mood and/or atmosphere, with justification. The candidate: - has given a full description of the way(s) a designer could use set or costume to create the mood and/or atmosphere with full justification 3 marks - has given an adequate description of the way(s) a designer could use set or costume to create the mood and/or atmosphere with some justification 2 marks - has given a limited description of the way(s) a designer could use set or costume to create the mood and/or atmosphere with little or no justification 1 mark	3	The description of set or costume should be related to the mood and/or atmosphere described in (a), though this can be implicit. Candidates should use correct terminology. The ideas must be practicable. Responses may include: Set: - the use of furniture - the use of scenery - the use of set dressings - the use of levels - the positioning on stage - the use of projections Or any other relevant set design concept. Costume: - cut, colour and condition - style - choice of pattern/fabric - accessories eg costume jewellery - shoes/hats/wigs - adornment Or any other relevant costume concept. If both set and costume have been described, mark the best one. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response (NR) in (a), but a mood and/or atmosphere is clearly implied in the answer to (b), the full range of marks (3) are available.

Question			Expected responses(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
	(c)		Candidates are asked to describe the way(s) a designer could use lighting or sound in this scene to help create this mood and/or atmosphere with justification. The candidate: - has given a full description of the way(s) a designer could use lighting or sound to create the mood and/or atmosphere with full justification 3 marks - has given an adequate description of the way(s) a designer could use lighting or sound to create the mood and/or atmosphere with some justification 2 marks - has given a limited description of the way(s) a designer could use lighting or sound to create the mood and/or atmosphere with little or no justification 1 mark	3	The description of lighting or sound should be related to the mood and/or atmosphere described in (a), though this can be implicit. Candidates should use correct terminology. The ideas must be practicable. Responses may include: Lighting: - the specific types of lantern - the length of transitions - the intensity level - the colour of gel or LED Or any other appropriate use of lighting. Sound: - the specific music used - the use of specific live or prerecorded sound effects - the volume level - the duration or type of sound - cue Or any other relevant sound concept. If both lighting and sound have been described, mark the best one. If a candidate has been awarded 0 marks or offered No Response (NR) in (a), but a mood and/or atmosphere is clearly implied in the answer to (c), the full range of marks (3) are available.

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]