

Drama (SDD315120)

External Assessment Specifications

External Assessment Specifications inform the development of external assessments. The primary audience for this document is the course Setting Examiner and Exam Critics. It may also be of use to teachers and students.

These specifications must be read in conjunction with the current Drama Level 3 course document, available on the [TASC Courses](#) webpage.

The external assessment for this course consists of a written exam.

WRITTEN EXAM STRUCTURE

The written exam is TWO hours.

Students will have an additional 15-minute preparation time during which students can take notes on the note paper provided and highlight any key words in the exam booklet during the allocated time. Students will not be permitted to start their exam until advised by the Exam Supervisor.

The written exam includes TWO sections.

The criteria to be externally assessed are:

Criterion 7: appraise personal drama skills

Criterion 8: appraise dramatic performances.

SPECIFIC MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT APPROVED FOR USE BY STUDENTS

There is no external Information Sheet for this course.

ASSESSMENT

All criteria are assessed using extended ratings of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, t+, t, t- or z. Note that a C- is a low C, in that it just meets the standards for a C but is not a t.

A set of solutions or a marking tool will be developed by the Setting Examiner, provided to markers at the marking meeting that follows the external written exam; and will be available from TASC in the following year.

The external assessment must include questions that, separately or together, give opportunities to demonstrate the standards from rating C to rating A.

Final results will be awarded as a rating of A, B, C, t or z in the above criteria. These ratings are used in determining the final award according to the algorithm in the course document.

WRITTEN EXAM CONTENT

A representative sample, encompassing a large proportion of the targeted course content areas, tests the standard of skills, knowledge and understanding of a student.

Where a part requires responses to more than one (1) question, the relative weighting of the questions is explicitly stated as having equal value.

The relative weighting of questions is indicated by:

- The relative allocation of marks, and
- Space for responses

SECTION A

Structure

- This section will take students approximately 60 minutes to respond to.
- Students will respond to ONE of THREE questions.
- This section will address course content from Area 4 – Live theatre analysis.

Assessed Criteria

Criterion 8: appraise dramatic performances (all elements except Element 7). The degree of 'range' noted in Element 3 and 4 is restricted to the range set by the exam question.

Nature of Questions

- This section may contain questions relating to acting, technical elements and a more general question discussing the dramatic elements including acting, technical elements and direction.

Nature of Responses

- Responses will be assessed using extended alpha ratings.
- Students answer a question relating to the experience and understanding of live theatre productions viewed during the year.
- Students must refer to at least two (2) specific productions, **one (1)** can be a recording of a professional live theatre performance.
- Where possible, the productions discussed should be professional. No more than one of them should be a school or college production.
- Students must not refer to productions seen in previous years or productions they have performed in.
- Students must be able to draw from at least two (2) of the productions, specific and detailed examples to support the response to the question.
- Open-ended response in extended essay response.
- Students are advised against writing about musicals.

Section B

Structure

- This section will take students approximately 60 minutes to respond to.
- Students will respond to only ONE of THREE questions.
- This section will address the following course content:
 - Area 1 – Skills Development
 - Area 2 – Exploring and Devising
 - Area 3 – Presenting and Reflecting

Assessed Criteria

Criterion 7: appraise personal drama skills (all elements except Element 7). The degree of 'range' noted in Element 3 and 4 is restricted to the range set by the exam question.

Nature of Questions

- This section may contain questions relation to dramatic and technical choices, themes, issues, ideas and message, acting, character and performance skills, contrasts, challenges or a general question with dot points.

Nature of Responses

- Responses will be assessed using extended alpha ratings.
- Students answer a question relating to the preparation and performance of their major mid-year production of Scripted Drama, Children's Theatre or Documentary Drama.
- In the written exam students **MUST NOT** write about the group play presented for the end of year external practical performance.
- Open-ended response in extended essay response.

PRACTICAL EXAM STRUCTURE

The practical assessment requires students to perform in a dramatic program linked thematically or conceptually.

A student's performance (group, solo and thematic linking material*) will be assessed by an exam panel convened by TASC.

*Thematic linking material must be rehearsed: no improvisation.

The three components are:

- A group performance of a published scripted dramatic extract
- A memorised solo performance chosen from published poetry, prose or monologue.
- Creative content used to link and connect pieces thematically

In choosing material with students, teachers are to look closely at the externally assessable criterion standards so as to ensure that material chosen for both the group and the solo performance allows students the opportunity to demonstrate the specified skills to their best advantage.

Type of text (traditional vs contemporary) is not a factor in determining student ratings against the criteria and standards.

The criteria to be externally assessed are:

Criterion 1: use vocal techniques to communicate meaning

Criterion 2: create and sustain characters

Criterion 6: present polished drama works

Assessment

All criteria are assessed using extended ratings of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, t+, t, t- or z. Note that a C- is a low C, in that it just meets the standards for a C but is not a t.

Final results will be awarded as a rating of A, B, C, t or z in the above criteria. These ratings are used in determining the final award according to the algorithm in the course document.

Structure

- A practical performance comprising of a Solo and a Group/Play Extract.
- This section will address course content from Areas 1, 2 and 3.

Assessed Criteria

- Criterion 1: use vocal techniques to communicate meaning (all Elements).
- Criterion 2: create and sustain characters (all Elements).
- Criterion 6: present polished drama works (Elements 2, 3, 4 and 5).

Nature of Performance

- Memorised solo performance of published prose or poetry or monologue
- Memorised and blocked group performance of published play extract
- Linking transitions

Nature of Responses

Solos: 2 to 4 minutes per student.

Students and teachers need to be reminded to adhere to this time allowance for their solo work. Solo performances that are 1 minute and 45 seconds or less in duration will incur a 't' rating on the memorisation standard element of Criterion 6.

Group:

- Group/Play extract is half of overall time.
- Group of three (3) - thirty (30) minutes (includes Solo, Group and Creative Element)
- Group of four (4) – forty (40) minutes (includes Solo, Group and Creative Element)
- Group of five (5) – fifty (50) minutes (includes Solo, Group and Creative Element)

If scripted extract or linking contributes to undertime group presentation, penalties will apply to Criterion 6.

Each group's performance should be presented as a total package in a continuous flowing presentation, with no more than necessary pausing between sections of the program.

Five minutes changeover time is allocated between any two groups.

Teachers are asked to keep within strict time limits. The examiners will not assess work that is performed beyond the allocated group time. The examiners will not assess work taking place during the change-over time between groups.

PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

These guidelines provide students, teachers and markers with details about what students have to do for the display that forms part of the external assessment for this subject.

This document does not repeat essential information found in other documents and must be read in the context of the current course document, available on the [TASC Courses](#) webpage.

The *TASC Frequently Asked Questions – Externally assessed folios* document on the [TASC Folio Assessment](#) webpage, provides general information for all students and teachers about externally assessed folios.

Information about academic integrity requirements is available on the [TASC Academic Integrity](#) webpage.

The course Assessment Report addresses issues, strengths and weaknesses of the previous year's assessment and should be read in conjunction with this document.

The timetable for the practical assessment for Drama is published on the TASC website in Term 3 every year.

GROUP PERFORMANCE

Size

A class must be divided into groups of three or four students who intend to undertake Drama for external assessment. The only permissible variations on this requirement are:

- (a) where there are only five students in the class

- (b) where a student who had enrolled for drama and who had been placed in a group of three or four and in extreme circumstances, subsequently decided not to sit the external assessment. In this case the group would be made up of two or three students being examined and one student playing the role that is not being assessed in the group play. Group performance time would be reduced accordingly.

Absent Students

In exceptional circumstances, where a group of three or four had been reduced to a group of two or three because a student decided, subsequent to the formation of the group, not to sit for external assessment, the group performance time would be reduced by 5 minutes, i.e. a group of three that became a group of two would still have a 15 minute play, and up to 10 minutes of solo performance time. There would be no requirement to reduce the performance time of the play in such circumstances.

When a student is ill on the day of the assessment, the expectation is that another student will read in the missing student's role in the play, and that the total group performance time will be reduced by 5 minutes for the missing solo performance. Teachers are advised to have contingency plans in place for such circumstances.

Teacher(s) or any other adult (or mature age student) cannot fill the missing role(s) or cannot directly participate in any other way in a group drama piece. The replacement **MUST** be a student of that same school. If a student of that same school is not available then a **recent past student** may read. This individual must have been a student at the school in the previous year and have a current Registration to work with vulnerable people (Employment/Volunteer). Schools must contact TASC if a past student will be reading for a missing student.

SOLO PERFORMANCE

There should be a strong contrast in mood and/or style between the solo selection and the role in the play. This is to enable the student to show his/her ability in differing presentational modes.

The solo piece may be chosen from published poetry, prose passages or dramatic monologues.

Students are expected to perform monologues in character. Full costume changes are not appropriate, but the use of simple props, such as a hat, a walking stick or a handbag is acceptable and may be beneficial. Teachers are to ensure that students have an opportunity through the combination of both practical performances to display their skills to the best of their ability.

The genre, title and author of the solo piece must be written on the official TASC coversheet. The performance style is to be appropriate to the genre.

Creative Element

Creative content is used to link the play excerpt and solo work thematically or contextually.

The Creative Element provides a coherence in the program, links the material and creates an overall 'performance'. The content should be used to fill the remainder of the time allocation for the group. The creative element can take the form of any dramatic performance e.g. movement, song, inner monologue, verse speaking etc.

Creative content should be clearly identified in the running order for examiners and appropriate material provided.

The creative element will contribute to a student's assessment on Criterion 6.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENT

Prompting

Teachers must make arrangements for any necessary prompting, either by doing it themselves or by arranging for someone else who is familiar with the performance in question to prompt.

Students must not say 'prompt' in the piece; they must pause and wait for the teacher to prompt.

The use of prompts has an impact on Criterion 2 - Element 1 and Criterion 6 - Element 1 and 5.

Students who exceed 2 prompts in solo work would be placed in a 't' range on those standard elements which may affect their overall rating on those criteria.

Students who exceed 3 prompts in the ensemble would be placed in a 't' range on those standard elements which may affect their overall rating on those criteria.

Examiners will not prompt.

Lighting

If arranging performance lighting, teachers are requested to ensure that performers in solo work can be clearly seen by the examiners. Facial expression and eye contact with the audience/examiners is an essential part of solo performances. Lighting must be bright and unshadowed so as to ensure clear communication.

Costume and Props

Costume and props are a part of the internal requirements for Criterion 3 - Element 4 and 5. This does not form part of External assessment.

A formality of presentation is expected e.g. appropriate clothing, no personal jewellery or adornment that detracts from the character.

Accent

Teachers are advised that Criterion 1, Element 5 requires voice appropriate to context, genre and style. There is no reference to 'authorial intent', therefore reinterpretation/contextualization of piece is allowed and vocal/accent adjustments made accordingly for consistency.

Audience

Teachers are encouraged to arrange audiences for assessment performances but it is important to impress upon an audience that once a performance starts, there is to be no movement in or out of the audience area.

Selection of Material

Material selected will:

- be published and of a high literary standard. The performance of the student's own writing, or the writing of peers is not acceptable
- have dramatic merit
- be an excellent example of form and genre
- provide challenge for the performer
- be appropriate and inclusive for students
- be appropriate for the age and development of students, and in that context, reflect current community standards and expectations.

Ensemble Playing

Play extracts should ideally allow all group members to be on stage, as an interactive ensemble, for the duration of the play which directly contributes to Criterion 6, Element 2 and 4. This provides the best opportunity to demonstrate strong role-playing and characterisation skills. It is acceptable to make adaptations of scripts for assessment purposes. Pieces that challenge students to physicalise characters and use the space are ideal for exam purposes.

Type of text (traditional vs contemporary) is not a factor in determining student ratings against the criteria and standards.

A script with maximum opportunity for ensemble work may provide students with better opportunity to demonstrate their abilities than one dominated by duologues etc.

Booklet Requirements

You must give each of the three members of the examining panel a stapled or spiral booklet for each group being assessed.. The booklet will contain the full text of ALL performance material, both solos, play, and linking, in order, and with the first name and student number clearly indicated on each page of the solo program. You must arrange the material in the booklet in the correct running order.

The booklet must include only the material that is being performed, without extraneous material. The booklet must not include scenes or passages that have been cut. Photocopying of material should be from an original source where possible.

The exam panel will not begin the examining process until all material is presented.

Cover Pages and Photographs

Each booklet must include the TASC cover pages for each group member. The genre must be identified on the TASC Cover page.

The photograph on the cover page must resemble the student's appearance in the solo performance as far as possible. Where the student looks substantially different in the group play, an additional photograph in role may be helpful.

Program Running Order Page

Each booklet must contain a front page indicating the running order of the group's program. This will include the title of the solo piece, the genre with the first name and student number of the performer, and the role/s being performed in the group play (refer to Appendix 1). The creative element should be identified in the running order.

Copies

The expectation is that one original copy will be provided, with an additional two photocopies of all material. Photocopies of students' photographs will be adequate for the second and third copies.

PROVISIONS FOR THE EXAMINING PANEL

Venue Facilities

A secure examiners room must be available at least half an hour prior to the exam starting and for the duration of the exam process. It is recommended that all booklets and running sheets are available in this room.

The examining panel must be seated together. Each examiner requires a desk or desk space sufficient to allow both a booklet to be left open and room for writing on assessment sheets.

Each examiner must have a low-powered reading lamp, preferably with a blue globe or blue gel to cut down the amount of light spill, in order to follow the script and to make notes about performers.

Teachers are asked to ensure that the positioning of the examiners allows clear and unimpeded sightlines to the performance area.

Confidentiality

For reasons of confidentiality, care should be taken to ensure that no one is sitting behind, or close by, the examiners.

Examiners must also be provided with a private room for use in their discussion and assessment of students. This could be a separate room, or it could be provided by ensuring that the exam room is cleared. Examiners should be provided with this area at morning/afternoon tea breaks, lunch breaks and at the end of an examining session in any one particular school.

You are required to ensure confidentiality at all times, and specifically in performance and examiners discussions.

Exam Times

Because examiners work to a tight schedule, you are required to ensure that performance time does not exceed the specified group performance times, and that the total time spent in a school does not run overtime.

VIDEO RECORDING OF PRACTICAL EXAMINATION WORK IS NOT PERMITTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

ATTACHMENT 1 - EXAM QUESTION TYPES

In these specifications, the term ‘question’ is defined as an individual task to be undertaken by students. The task may be divided into several parts.

Question types can be categorised as follows:

CATEGORY	QUESTION TYPES AND DEFINITIONS	
The context of the question	<p><i>Routine context</i></p> <p>These questions require rehearsed skills in the use of language and in familiar contexts.</p> <p><i>Non-routine context</i></p> <p>These questions require procedures not previously encountered in expected prior learning activities. These require the combination, and sometimes the selection, of a set of skills in unfamiliar contexts.</p>	
The format of response	<p>Essay reponse</p> <p>These are questions that require responses that follow essay writing principles; included that responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have an introduction (general statement related to question, brief summary of the main topics/arguments/points to be made in the essay) • have body paragraphs (with topic sentences to start followed by supporting sentences) • have a conclusion (restatement or summary of the main points made in the body paragraphs and a final comment. 	
Assessment of response	<p>Open-ended response</p> <p>These are questions for which there may be multiple correct responses OR in which the quality of the argument and/or the expression is being assessed.</p>	<p>(Reference: Drama Exam Paper 2013, Section B, Question 6)</p> <p>Discuss some of the strengths and weaknesses of your production this year. How did they influence the communication of the key themes or messages of your production?</p>

APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLE OF PROGRAM PAGE

DRAMA COLLEGE

DRAMA (SDD315120) PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

Group Intention (theme/concept)

Title

Group Four

Program

1. <Solo> by <genre>

Performed by <student first name> <98X0000>

Linking material

2. <Solo> by <genre>

Performed by <student first name> <99Y0011>

Linking material

3. <Solo> by <genre>

Performed by <student first name> <98B1111>

Linking material

4. <Play title>

by <playwright>

<Character A> played by <student first name> <98X0000>

<Character B> played by <student first name> <99Y0011>

<Character C> played by <student first name> <98B1111>

Concluding material