

2022 ASSESSMENT REPORT

SDP315120 – THEATRE PERFORMANCE

A concerning number of these matters relating to the group play, monologue and Independent Reflective Study are clearly stated in the External Assessment Specifications for Theatre Performance. It is an expectation that all teachers delivering this course comply with all aspects of what students are required to do for external assessment in this course. Where the EAS have not been followed, there is the potential for students to have their overall external assessment impacted.

CLASS PRODUCTIONS

Generally, across all assessment centres, the group plays successfully provided students with the opportunity to present polished work that demonstrated drama and performance skills. Markers were pleased to see new works and well-selected plays that provided good ensemble opportunities. Where students were part of a group staging a published play text with a clear genre and story, there was strong evidence of thorough rehearsal and application of stagecraft, vocal and characterisation techniques. These are all important aspects which the students are required to write about in the Independent Reflective Study.

Teachers are reminded to ensure all students meet the required minimum of 15 minutes of stage time during the group play. It is equally important to ensure that this stage time is active, engages with the ensemble and allows the student to demonstrate skills for assessment against the criteria. Being placed at the side of the stage or in the background with no dialogue and minimal physical action must be in addition to the 15-minute minimum as this stage time does not support the student to show vocal or characterisation skills.

Students are encouraged to continue to be mindful of paraphrasing the published play text. Disregarding the playwright's language and phrasing impacts the overall authorial intention and can impact other members of the ensemble, as well as impact their own assessment. If the selected play text's genre and context require an accent, students may be disadvantaged by disregarding this aspect of the work. If the production is a reinterpretation, for example, a contemporary re-setting of a classic text, then the change or removal of the accent should be explained throughout students' Independent Reflective Studies.

MONOLOGUES

Reminder of the guidelines for the timing of the monologue performance: 3-5 minutes.

It is strongly advised and advantageous for students to select a monologue that differs in age, accent, style, and period from the role(s) they have undertaken in the class production.

The purpose of the monologue is for students to demonstrate **range** in skills, and thereby ideally supplementing or consolidating their assessment from the group play. Successful students had carefully selected a monologue of sufficient length that contrasted their group play performance in regard to age

of character, use of accent, era of play, text publication and the style/genre of play text. The most successful students performed their work with confidence, for the required time, reflecting an understanding of their character in the context of having read the whole play, and showed artistic consideration of stagecraft and the overall shaping of their solo.

Less successful students, irrespective of skill, presented work under time, performed a character that was the same or very similar to their group play role and/or made little or no artistic use of the acting space. In many cases this impacted their final ratings for criteria 1, 2 and 3. Students can use a monologue they have presented earlier in the year as part of solo performance programs but **only** if this solo provides a contrast once the group play is chosen and cast.

Accents are assessed as part of criterion 1 and related directly to elements 5 and 6. Should a student not wish to use an accent, rather than simply omit or change to another accent that suits, a monologue from a published play written in their own accent should be selected.

Again, a number of students performed pieces with grammatical, syntax and mispronunciation errors, directly as a result of using typed-up versions of the monologue which contained errors. Teachers are expected to support students to source the full play text and ensure the copy students use for rehearsals and the exam are from the published play text.

Teachers are strongly urged to provide clear guidance for students to address all these matters.

INDEPENDENT REFLECTIVE STUDY (IRS)

A number of the matters below are repeated issues previously noted. Teachers are asked to please consider issues relating to the following:

- Referencing
- Not writing in first person, past tense

Content that lacks relevance:

- Describing process
- Analysis of play text and author
- Choice, and application of, acting theorists

REFERENCING

The IRS is a formal, academic, externally assessed piece of work. Teachers and students are provided with clear guidelines for the development of this essay. There must be a consistent use of in-text citation throughout the IRS including the monologue section. A lack of attention to this requirement impacts elements 7, 8 and 9 of Criterion 7.

Too often students failed to reference the following: their play text, biographical information about the playwright, genre, historical or contextual information clearly sourced from websites or study guides, acting theorists, YouTube clips, music, live theatre viewed, images and films.

Many students didn't cite accurately or consistently; i.e., using n.d. when in fact the publication date

was easily found, not acknowledging the author of collated information (citing 'studyguide.com', 'class study guide', 'class notes' etc.), not including an accessed date for URLs or simply rewriting a paragraph from a website (implying that it was their own work). Students are encouraged to use images of their character work, but these must be labelled, connected to their writing, and referenced.

Teachers signing the cover page are indicating that they have sighted drafts of the IRS and that the essay is **all the student's own work**.

The IRS does not require: a bibliography, appendices, tables or lists of theorists' steps, or images of playwrights.

The **word count** should be clearly stated on the cover page in three parts: IRS word count, monologue word count and total essay word count. *The cover page will be amended for 2023 to provide a box for this information.* Teachers and students should note the minimum and maximum word count.

IRS POINT OF VIEW/TENSE

The IRS is to be written in the first person, past tense.

CONTENT

The focus of the IRS – as stated in the EAS – is on students **analysing, reflecting upon, and synthesising their understanding of the craft of acting**.

Successful students linked and explained each part of their discussion to the relevant aspect of their group play, context and genre, message or issue, rehearsals, application of relevant theorists' theory, development of their character and preparation of production elements for performance **to their own work on stage. They provided not only the 'why' but the 'how'.**

Teachers are advised that should an overall genre be a key aspect of the group play, students should be encouraged to demonstrate through their writing an understanding of this genre and its relationship to their acting, the ensemble, and directorial choices.

Less successful students tended to do one or more of the following: described the process of understanding their character, explained the role of the play to the marker, explained the purpose of performing a monologue to the marker, outlined what they were planning to write about in their IRS document, included irrelevant biographical playwright information, wrote out full or overly long plot details, analysed the play from a literary point-of-view and/or made generalised or incorrect statements about their monologue which indicated they had not read the full play text.

Less successful students also tended to: describe the choosing, reading and/or casting of the play; describe details of the set, lighting, music, sound effects, costumes, and props for the group play; add unlabelled photos from the group play. But they **did not link any of the above** to their use of voice and body on stage.

Teachers are advised to consider carefully the most useful theorists to study as part of the rehearsal process for the group exam play. Students who referred to internal method acting theories where their

application involved imagining, thinking about, or writing detailed backstories for their character(s) struggled to connect this theory to practical acting outcomes that would be evident on the stage. They struggled to explain how their thinking helped develop the portrayal of their character(s), enhanced their stagecraft, or contributed to their work as part of an ensemble. Less successful students tended to state a theorist name, list or describe their theory and then state which step or attribute they chose, but did not then link this to moments in the production, the text they delivered or decisions they made about the vocal or physical portrayal of their character(s).

The most successful students chose to write about the active and practical application of theorists' approaches to acting whose work impacted vocal and physical choices that helped with their development of character in rehearsals and influenced their stagecraft; the outcomes of which were clearly evident onstage in their performance.

ADMINISTRATION

A number of the matters below are repeated issues previously noted. Teachers are asked to please note the following:

All marking panels thank teachers for the provision of a quiet, secure place to meet and assess prior to and following the group play and monologue performances. The excellent hospitality at venues was also appreciated. For those panel members moving between multiple venues, the allocated parking spots were most helpful. Some venues did not provide parking and this impacted the assessment time. Prior communication from teachers to the markers coming to their school/college regarding parking, where to meet hosts or to sign in etc., was greatly appreciated and supported the smooth running of exams across the schools and colleges.

Paperwork once again contained errors such as past students' TASC numbers still being visible, missing text, poor photocopies that were difficult to read in low light, play and solo text with multiple typos/spelling errors, missing or wrong monologues attached to IRS; placements either not provided, missing students or just images with character names. The inclusion of the students' names helps to assist markers to quickly identify students when they appear on stage.

Teachers are asked to ensure the name on cover sheets, placemats, solos etc., all match the preferred name registered with TASC. For students with the same first name, noting Lily A (white shirt), Lily B (blue dress) etc., was really helpful.

It is essential that markers can sit comfortably and ergonomically to assess group plays and monologues. Adjustable tables and/or seating and lamp light that is sufficient to read and write by is required by all markers.