

# 2025 ASSESSMENT REPORT

## SDP315120 THEATRE PERFORMANCE

### General Comments

Marking panels across the state were impressed of the variety of works presented for practical examinations. The establishment and following of clear exam protocols supported students to present their best work and was appreciated by markers. The most successful students presented polished and appropriate work that enabled them to demonstrate the full range of their performance skills providing sustained evidence against all elements of externally assessed criteria.

**All teachers must ensure they and students read the 2026 course documentation and 2026 External Assessment Specifications – both these documents will be updates from previous versions.**

Teachers are encouraged to note the following feedback for each criterion and share this with their students.

**Please note:** All references to criterion elements in this report are for the current course that expires 31 December 2025.

### Practical Component

**Play productions must follow the timing requirements as stated in the External Assessment Specifications.** Some productions were undertime which impacted the opportunity for all students to demonstrate a full range of their skills. Teachers should note that marking panels may need to excuse themselves from the theatre/performance space should a play continue well after the allocated time.

#### Criterion 1: Use a range of vocal techniques to create character

Students who achieved an A rating for this criterion fully demonstrated a skilful use of their voice delivering text with good articulation (Element 2), adequate volume for the venue and measured projection (not yelling or overextending their voice) (Element 1), and sustained control of pitch, pace and breath (Elements 3,4 and 7). Additionally, students are to be commended on accent work that accurately reflected their play and or their monologue's context (Elements 5 and 6). It was pleasing to see students who undertook multiple roles in their class's production embrace the opportunity to demonstrate a range of vocal techniques.

The monologue is designed to provide students with an opportunity to further showcase their skills and, can in many cases, lift the rating for this criterion.

A concerning number of students still self-penalised their assessment by presenting work that:

- was under the required time limit
- was not from a published play text (but from a screen play, novel or a section of edited dialogue)
- employed an accent the same as was used in the class play
- paraphrased the text to the degree authorial intention was impacted.

As part of course work students are required to prepare and perform two contrasting polished monologues of the required exam length over the course of the year. In many cases, one of these pieces will be appropriate to present for the monologue exam. If neither piece provides the student with opportunity to demonstrate a '*range of vocal techniques*' students must be supported and advised to select and prepare a new monologue.

## Criterion 2: Use stagecraft and theatrical production elements in polished performances

Teachers are encouraged to work with students throughout the year on Element 6: *responds appropriately to cues and reacts appropriately and generously to other performers on stage*. Students who achieved an A rating for this criterion remained actively engaged in the action on stage when not delivering their own lines, sustained appropriate eye contact to support characterisation and story, varied their energy to support the style of their production, and did not break or pull focus from other performers.

## Criterion 3: Perform and sustain a range of characters

Teachers are encouraged to ensure the staging and direction of the exam play provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate, as fully as they are able, the stagecraft skills assessed in this criterion.

Prolonged static scenes and or blocking where a student remains seated for extended periods of time in scenes, limits the evidence marking panels can observe of a student's physical character skills (Elements 1 and 2), use of the acting space (Element 4) and adjustments in energy (Element 5), and, therefore, may negatively impact the student's assessment.

# Folio Component

## Criterion 7: Appraise own dramatic and performance techniques.

The most successful students submitted well-structured Independent Reflective Study (IRS) essays that successfully detailed their personal acting process in preparing their roles as part of their ensemble production and for their monologue exam. Less successful students once again tended to retell the plot of the play and outline the class process (we read the play, we blocked the play, we added costumes) without going to explain acting and rehearsal decisions that impacted their acting work. Students may benefit from reading some high standard IRS examples.

Teachers are advised to select acting theorists whose approach is suited to the genre and style of the class play and, importantly, can be applied practically and is therefore evident in work presented on stage for assessment. Class and individual work on more internal process-based theorists can be excellent preparatory work but must be accompanied by the study of theorists

whose approach directly influences a student's vocal and physical choices. It is difficult for marking panels to discern if an 'emotional memory' has been applied or an 'internal objective' is driving an action. If, however, a student articulates in their IRS that their work on 'internal objectives' led to specific physical actions or vocal choices in a particular scene and explain why, then the markers can look for evidence of this when assessing.

The lack of an accuracy of in-text citation and collation of the reference list continues to need attention by a significant number of students. Assessment of this criterion is impacted if the requirements of Elements 7, 8 and 9 are not met. Of note is the research part at the beginning of the IRS where the student provides the marker with the context of their class's play text(s). This information is, on almost every occasion, sourced from websites, textbooks, play texts, articles, YouTube interviews, etc. and therefore contains facts and knowledge that are not the student's own work/words. Failing to provide accurate in-text citation to acknowledge the use of the work of others breaches the Academic Integrity Policy.

**The use of AI for research, writing or grammatical correction purposes should be strongly discouraged as the work should be that of the student and markers wish to read about the student's personal acting exploration and process.**

Teachers should ensure students:

- adhere to the advised minimum and maximum word limit
- proofread their work for grammar and spelling errors
- avoid personal comments about their peers or teacher(s) and do not name other students in their writing. For example, a student could write, *"the student playing Macbeth and I would work on the timing of the moment he turns to me..."* or *"I needed to ensure I sustained eye contact with the student playing Mary until they turn away from me..."*
- do not include numerous appendices as these are not assessed
- discuss working with their ensemble and the importance of the collaborative process of performing (Element 1)
- clearly label any images included in the IRS so the markers understand the relevance of each image. For example, an image depicting physical characterisation choices can support a student's explanation of their work whereas images such as wide shots of groups scenes, photos of the set, Laban Efforts charts, or playwright headshots do not support any of the elements of Criterion 7
- avoid long description of acting theorists approaches and methods. Rather, provide a brief lead-in sentence that moves to discussing their practical application of the theory. For example, *"Brecht's gestus theory aims to adopt specific physical and vocal attitudes that clearly embody and reveal the character's social and political function (Unwin, 2014), and I began with focussing on my stance in the Prologue as this is the first time Arturo is first seen by the audience."* (Elements 2 and 5)
- focus on explaining their practical application of one or two theorists who approach is most relevant to their play and character(s) rather than listing five or six theorists they 'looked at' but then providing no insight into how and why a theorist's work was practically applied in their character development (Element 2)
- continue to focus on the how and why of decisions, rather than just the what. For example, *"I made sure I moved downstage to the student playing Mr Black because my character is evil"* describes an action and only briefly hints at why. Rather the sentence might read, *"I needed*

*to ensure I moved swiftly downstage to the student playing Mr Black, positioning myself close to his right shoulder in order to convey my character's menacing nature and, through my aside, over my shoulder, communicate to the audience my character's true intentions."*  
(Elements 1 and 2)

- avoid stating "*I looked at clips on YouTube*" unless they provide accurate in-text citations of the video and explain what content was used and why
- use one consistent and accurate in-text referencing method throughout their writing
- include an accurate and full reference list for all sources used in both the play IRS and monologue section. No bibliography is required, just the sources cited in the body of the IRS
- include an accurate copy of their monologue text from the original source.