

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2013

GCE Drama and Theatre Studies
(6DR02)
Unit 2: Theatre Text in Performance

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6DR02 Theatre Text in Performance

Introduction

This is the externally examined unit of the AS year. However the assessment objectives and criteria do not change from those printed in the specification. In this respect this unit uniquely has elements of both an examined and coursework unit.

There is no externally set brief or text that changes every year as is the case with other Edexcel specifications.

Edexcel does not approve or recommend any texts for this unit. The requirement is that all texts chosen must be professionally published with an ISBN number. It is the responsibility of each centre to select the play texts, appropriate options and audiences to support student achievement.

This report will focus on the performance and some administrative issues of the 2013 cohort.

The following section summarises the requirements of the unit.

Section A

The monologue/duologue performances are worth 30% of the total AS mark.

All criteria are equally weighted.

Students can be examined as a single performer in a monologue, with one other performance student in a duologue or as a designer working on the same text as performance students. Design candidates' work must be seen in a performance by examination students.

Maximum time limits of 2 minutes for monologues and 5 minutes for duologues are also set in line with the time limits set by most tertiary institutions which require a demonstration of practical ability as part of the selection process.

For all students independent research into the complete text is a requirement.

All students are required to complete under supervised conditions a written concept to support their practical work. This must be sent to the examiner to arrive at least 7 working days in advance of the Section A examination.

Section B

The group performance is worth 30% of the AS marks.

All criteria are equally weighted.

Students can be examined as a performer or designer in a performance.

The text must be chosen, cast and directed by a teacher/tutor.

The text can be adapted to meet the requirements of the maximum time limits in relation to the group size but only the words of the text can be used in the examination performance.

Performance of Students in the 2013 Series

The work presented for examination is selected by the centre so this report does not need to reflect the individual demands of the questions in a written examination.

Section A

Marks were awarded in all mark bands as in previous series.

There was a minority of centres which did not put in place the requirements of this section and this disadvantaged students.

The majority of students performed monologues again this year however there were centres where nearly all students performed duologues. There was no evidence that students did better in either monologues or duologues.

Duologues must be performed by two examination students. If there should be in a centre an uneven number of students that all wish to perform duologues then a single non exam student may support the exam student. Advance permission for this must be given in writing by Edexcel and a hard copy of the permission included with all other documentation sent in advance to the examiner.

The Written Performance Concept (WPC)/Written Design Concept (WDC)

Examiners report that the majority of students had shown understanding of the requirements of Section A. Form DTS2B/D must be completed to support students in clarifying the requirements of this part of the examination by giving information regarding the text and extract chosen. This information should not be repeated in the Written Performance Concept (WPC).

The completion of this form is a student task not a teacher/tutor one.

Where centres had enabled candidates to complete the DTS2B/D correctly examiners reported it had a correlation to the quality of the work seen for Section A.

Centres are advised to ensure that enough time is given in the preparation of candidates for the examination in order for all sections of this form to be completed in full and accurately.

The most common error was not entering the word count for the Written Concept/Annotation.

Many were either left blank or just had 500 entered despite the fact it was clear to examiners that the WPC was either well in excess of this or in some cases well under.

Centres must ensure that all students have been given time under supervised conditions to complete and enter an accurate word count. Students at this time can self-edit before the WPCs are sent to the examiner.

Overall examiners report that centres had prepared students better for Section A in 2013.

Where students produced work marked in the lower mark bands examiners reported that this may have been because insufficient time had been spent in preparation for this section or that candidates had not acquired the skills to achieve at a higher level.

There was an increase in the number of centres completing Section B group performances first. This was felt to support students in having experience of a range of rehearsal and preparation ideas that they could then transfer to their individual work in Section A.

Other centres chose to complete Section B towards the end of the examination period as they felt it gave a sense of group achievement that celebrated the AS year and was a positive lead into preparation for Unit 3.

Design Students

The number of design students was in line with those in 2012. It is not possible to give accurate figures for this as marks are entered only for Section A and not differentiated. There was no evidence that students did better in any of the design options.

Costume seemed the most popular choice. There were examples of both sound and lighting. In monologues due to the two minute performance time this was felt to be a more challenging option.

The majority of students were well prepared to give the presentation to the examiner.

Examiners report that for the majority of design students this had been a positive choice. There was again this year a number of students who it was felt had not been given the support needed both in teaching and resources to achieve at AS level. Centres need to consider if it is possible for them to provide this in future series for students wishing to take these design options.

Performance Students

Choice of Text

The choice of text for each individual student is the foundation of achievement in this unit.

Examiners reported that where students had been given clear guidance and support in selecting material the work seen was appropriate and accessible for examination performances. There were a few students who it seemed had been left to prepare for the examination on their own.

Again this year there was a small amount of work that was not a positive choice for examination usually because of the content of the text or the level of challenge for AS achievement.

There were also some concerns that the content and language of the material chosen was inappropriate for examination work at AS level. It is a requirement that all students have access to the complete text and individual research is undertaken. Where this was not completed students were disadvantaged.

There was an increase in centres choosing either a single text or several texts from a playwright and all monologues or duologues were chosen from this. Although this could support students, particularly design students in gaining an overview of the complete text, there was a concern that this did not always allow individuals to complete their own research or find their own interpretation of the character.

Centres are reminded again this year that they must be aware that some publications for other examinations have both monologues and duologues that are not from complete published play texts but are adaptations from novels or other material. Screenplays, radio and television scripts, monologues or texts written as a series of monologues do not meet the requirements of Section A.

The vast majority of candidates had the complete texts available for the examiner prior to the examination session. Examiners will request that copies of the text be sent to them after the examination session if they are not available to confirm the candidates had had access to the text.

Timings

The maximum time is stated in the specification and the Administrative Support Guide and students are reminded of this on the DTS2B forms. It is very disappointing to report that again this year many students performed well in excess of the maximum time limit.

As with the word limits in Units 1 and 3 there is no tolerance on this. For students who exceeded the time limit some did gain their marks within the time limit but many examiners report that often the strongest work was after the time limit and could not be awarded any marks.

Performances that were under the time limit were self penalising. Students who worked to the time limit had clearly built this into the preparation process. Centres should consider ensuring emphasis is placed and time is spent on ensuring the work presented meets the required time limit.

It is a requirement for Section A that all performances must be seen as it would be seen in a complete performance of the text. This should reflect the research completed on the complete text.

The use of music/sound or projection making 'mini productions' was seen far less this year.

Students were disadvantaged where performances were directed straight to the examiner often making them another character in the scene. This would not be appropriate in a complete performance of the text.

Stronger work was seen where the student had a clear understanding of where the other character(s) would be positioned in the stage space and addressed the performance appropriately to them.

Extracts that were audience address were best done when directed to the audience present and not directly to the examiner.

Students should not be present in the stage space until the examiner indicates they are ready. Examiners are required to write notes between each performance.

Examiners will start timing the work and marking as soon as the student(s) performance begins.

This can be either the first speaking of the text or some non verbal aspect of the performance.

Many centres put in place a system of clearly sign posting when each performance would begin for example bringing up the lighting or the student turning to face the examiner.

It is good to report this year that there were a very few examples of students losing focus and forgetting their lines completely. This was very stressful for those candidates. Centres understood that the examiner cannot intervene and that there are no 'second chances' in Section A. This is made clear to all students on the DTS2B forms

All examiners are required to make and record accurate timings of each performance. This information must also be entered on the DTS2E form when the DVD is checked prior to sending to the examiner. When work was reviewed on DVD as part of the monitoring process it was noted that many of these timings by centres were inaccurate and often gave either no time or 2/5 minutes. The timings must be of the performance and not include the student introductions. The timings are those on the DVD not the approximate times of the live performance.

All Section A performances/presentations must be chapterised before sending to the examiner.

The visiting examiners do not look at the recordings as all marks are awarded on the live performance only.

Non Examination Students

It is very disappointing to report again this year that there were examples of other performers being present in Section A. When this was seen at the start of the examination performance examiners are instructed to ask them to leave.

For all performances any other characters that would be present in a performance of the complete text must be imagined. Chairs may be used as a focus point but no animate or inanimate bodies can be used in performance.

Examination Conditions

The vast majority of examiners were provided with the facilities as detailed in the Administrative Support Guide. This needs to be clarified and agreed with the examiner before the exam session(s). The majority of exam sessions enabled examiners to remain in the exam space for an agreed number of candidates and then leave for a period of time to consider their marks in a private space. There is no requirement for an audience for Section A.

Most centres chose an audience of other AS drama students or invited peers. This was felt by the majority of examiners to provide the best conditions to support the examination performances.

All Section A performances must be completed with at least a one chair space on either side of and behind the examiner and this same space between the performer(s) and the examiner.

It is positive to report that the vast majority of centres met this requirement in 2013.

Centres are reminded that examiners are not permitted to speak to students at any time in the Section A examination. It was reported as good practice by examiners that many centres had prepared students for this.

Centres are strongly advised to allow approximately 5 minutes per monologue and 10 minutes per duologue when planning the examination session, as detailed in The Administrative Support Guide 2013. The vast majority of centres had supported the examination by ensuring that both the examiner and students were working under appropriate examination conditions.

Performance Candidates

Vocal Skills

Centres must ensure that all students have the opportunity to meet the criteria as listed. There is no requirement for students to use an accent in Unit 2 however there seemed to be an increase in the number of students who had chosen to perform in the appropriate accent. This could be very successful but centres are reminded that this is centre choice and the effectiveness and sustaining of the accent will be taken into account in marking vocal skills.

Examiners report that centres had considered the importance of projection and that this was an improvement on last year. Where there was a lack of pace and pause seen in performance it was felt this could be due to nervousness. Students did well when the preparation had included performing the pieces to others and receiving ongoing feedback or used recording and playback as part of the preparation process. This was detailed in some of the WPCs.

Where students had annotated the text there was evidence of students considering the importance of vocal delivery.

Movement Skills

It was reported that many centres had considered the importance of choosing texts that supported students in achieving in the criteria for movement skills. Again this year many examiners report students' ability to use stillness at times to great effect. Very static performances did not support student achievement. These were most often where students sat behind a table throughout the performance.

Both gesture and facial expression are considered by examiners in awarding marks for movement.

Centres which had considered the stage space and position of the examiner to see these clearly supported the students.

There were fewer examples of where inappropriate movement was seen and this reflected a greater understanding of the requirement that the movement must be considered in the context of a complete performance. It is positive to report that the majority of students had considered the importance of creating by effective use of 'eye line' and focus the other character(s) that would be present in a performance of the chosen extract.

Characterisation

The performance must reflect an understanding of the role in the context of the complete text. Within the time constraints many examiners reported seeing very powerful and convincing work that reflected a high level of understanding of the text, context of the play and its contemporary relevance.

It is also disappointing to report, however, that there were also performances that lacked any or very little understanding of the role. Often this lack of knowledge was also evidenced in the Written Performance Concept.

Examiners report that some of the roles chosen by candidates were extremely challenging for the understanding and skill level of AS students. In many cases this did limit achievement. Edexcel has no issues with gender in performance. If students did not have compelling reasons, which some certainly did, choosing to perform in a cross gender role was not always a positive choice.

Fewer students this year had based some or much of their characterisation on watching performances of the role either on DVD or You Tube. It was felt centres had a greater understanding that this did not enable them to have a creative experience in finding their own characterisation.

Stronger characterisations often referred in the WPC to the personal engagement and understanding the student had for the chosen role.

Written Performance Concept (WPC)

The most significant improvement in Section A was in the standard of the Written Performance Concepts.

This was because more WPCs covered all 3 areas in balance. Many centres either ensured that students wrote to 3 sub headings or this structure was clear when reading and marking the WPCs. This meant that examiners had to complete less 'best fit' marking where one of the areas had been omitted by students.

An increased number of students are now well prepared and therefore are achieving at an equivalent standard as the three practical elements. Other very accomplished performers produced less considered WPCs although the performances suggested an implicit understanding.

Many centres are now building into the AS year preparatory work for the final Written Performance Concept. There was less of a sense of a 'one off and hurried' piece of writing completed just before the examination performance but that the WPC had been built into the complete preparation process.

Students who achieved in this response had understood that only 500 words would be marked and had refined their responses to include all information succinctly.

All centres are reminded that examiners only mark the first 500 words beginning with the rationale. If this was met or exceeded in the rationale word limit any annotation on the text was not marked. This was often the section where candidates detailed their intended interpretation.

The challenge for students in the 500 word limit is to organise their knowledge and understanding succinctly and to cover all 3 areas. Centres are reminded that the WPCs sent to the examiner must be completed under controlled conditions. The strongest work was a personal response that reflected each individual understanding of their chosen role and their preparation process.

Centres must ensure that every page of the Written Performance Concept and the text are clearly identified with candidate name and number and all are attached firmly to the DTS2B/D.

Social, Historical, Cultural and Political Context

Many students again this year merely copied or downloaded basic information about the text, author, plot and/or role chosen. This was awarded no marks as much of this information is now given on the DTS2B/D form. Students are instructed not to repeat this information but again this year many did so. The result was that students used words that could have been used to meet the requirements of the other elements of the concept.

The key is to show understanding of context in the light of their individual interpretation rather than just state factual information.

In some cases there were too many direct quotes of others' opinions from the introductions of frequently used editions. Students who achieved in this section captured how their knowledge and understanding of the context had impacted on their performance. Not all four elements have to be covered. Students should choose those that are most relevant to their individual performance.

Preparation Process

There was a clearer focus on what each individual student had completed during the preparation process.

It is taken as a given that in preparation students will read, study and research to whole text. Students who stated this were not using the word limit well. The focus needs to be on the actual preparation using research and rehearsal techniques.

Choosing significant moments was most successful in communicating several preparation activities within the word limit. Students often cited group activities led by the teacher but to achieve students needed to state their own individual involvement.

There were fewer instances where just a list of preparation or rehearsal tasks/techniques was listed with no reference to what the individual student actually did.

Intended Interpretation

Where candidates had annotated the text to be performed this could be an effective way of indicating intentions for performance rather than including it in the rationale. However annotation alone did not always clarify the intended interpretation but stated what could be seen in performance. Details of why was needed to achieve in the higher mark bands.

It is positive to report that there were not many students either stating what they will be wearing and using as a set or what they would like to wear and have as a set. Within the constraints of the 500 word limit this information does not support the requirements of the criteria.

Duologue candidates must ensure that their rationale is individual with the focus on their character in the performance. Duologue candidates will have worked together throughout the preparation process but each response must be personal and individual.

The majority of rationales were received 7 working days in advance of the examination. Examiners are required to read and mark all the Written Performance Concepts before the examination sessions.

No marks are awarded or adjusted after the performances.

Teachers are not required to mark the WPCs or make any comments on them before sending to the examiner.

Design Candidates

Materials and Equipment

It was felt that where students had been given the opportunity to work with straightforward materials and equipment this supported them in making effective design work. Students awarded marks in the higher mark bands were confident in using the materials/equipment and demonstrated a depth of understanding of the application within the performance. However some students had access to such limited resources that they were disadvantaged. They often lacked confidence or understanding of how the chosen skill enhanced performance.

Realisation of Design

This was seen as the greatest challenge as students had to have a design concept for the complete text but then meet the demands of demonstrating the skill in a short period of time.

Those awarded marks in the higher bands had clearly spent considerable time on this aspect and worked closely with the performance student(s), the available space and materials/equipment

Written Design Concept

In general students responded well to the 500 word design concept. Students awarded marks in the higher bands had the 'big picture' in relation to both the complete text and the extract chosen for performance.

Design Documentation

Students awarded marks in the higher mark bands had detailed and thoughtful documentation. Many students used power point presentations as well as the requirements as detailed in the specification.

Students talked confidently about their written design concept and documentation and did not just read them to the examiner.

Some presentations were longer than 10 minutes, usually due to the enthusiasm of the candidates.

However centres should ensure that the presentation meets the time limit.

The presentations need to be made to the camera. Some examiners report that candidates sat down with the examiner to 'share' the documentation.

This meant the presentation could not be caught effectively on the recording. Most centres did ensure that all the documentation could clearly be seen in the recording and some recorded the portfolios again after the presentation.

Section B

The standard of work seen in previous series of Section B performances was maintained this year.

There was good level of understanding of the requirements of group performance and the majority of students were well prepared.

However again this year examiners report that there were some students being poorly prepared by centres for this unit and producing work that did not meet the AS standard. There was evidence of students not making the individual effort needed to achieve at a higher level. This was usually evidenced by lack of security with the text and the overall interpretation. These students frequently lacked focus and commitment in performance and this could have an effect on other students' achievement.

Centres must meet the requirements of the specification in terms of group size and length of performance. These were clearly stated in both the specification and The Administrative Support Guide 2013.

There seemed to be an increase in very short group performances. These disadvantaged students as there was insufficient time for examiners to clearly identify individual student achievement.

But as in previous series there were more considerably overlong performances. Centres must understand that all examiners are instructed to stop examining at the maximum time limit as stated in the ASG.

Many examiners report that it is disappointing when work is seen outside the time limit that is often the best achieved by some students.

The maximum time limit will also be in place for any monitoring of performances by the senior team using the recorded evidence and for any review as part of EAR procedures.

Whatever the group size examiners felt candidates achieved by performing towards the lower time limit as it enabled performances to have sustained energy and focus. This was particularly true of smaller groups of 3 or 4.

There were a number of centres where only one or two students were entered for the examination.

These performances are marked on DVD.

Centres must ensure that non exam students make up the minimum group size of 3 and the performance is a maximum of 25 minutes. There were cases this year where up to 5 non exam students were in the performance and the performances ran for up to 45 minutes. This disadvantaged the examination students. The strongest work was when a group of 3 performed for slightly less than 25 minutes and the non exam students supported in minor roles.

In larger groups non examination students can only take part when a candidate that has been entered for the exam and completed Unit 1, cannot take part in the performance due to circumstances at the last minute. This is defined as 'extreme circumstances' in the ASG. Centres finding themselves in this situation must contact Edexcel and receive written permission. A hard copy of this must be included with all other documentation sent to the examiner prior to the exam session.

Examiners will not view the same interpretation twice with some students being substituted in a second performance.

Audiences

Examiners reported that the majority of audiences understood that this was an examination and responded appropriately and supported the students. In part this was due to the fact that although 'it is an examination that happens to be a performance' (ASG 2013 page 14) teacher/tutor directors had enabled the students to have a very positive learning experience. The whole process of creating live and vibrant theatre was communicated to audience members. The response of the audiences in many cases clearly enhanced the whole experience and supported examiners in awarding marks for communication.

There were a few instances where inappropriate audiences had a negative effect on the performance and marks for communication.

The Text

There is now a canon of texts that have been used for AS group performances both in the legacy specification and in previous series. Centres are reminded that Edexcel has a policy of not approving or recommending texts for Unit 2. It is the ethos of this unit that it is the teacher/tutor who has the knowledge of both the skills and interests of their students and will use this to select supportive texts. Centres must consider very carefully the suitability of the content or the language of the text. It was also reported that many newly published texts were used. These were often from the Royal Court, National Theatre or RSC but it is also positive to report new work from regional theatres was also being used.

There is not the requirement of the text for Section B being at least 60 minutes in performance length that is a requirement of Section A. It must meet all other requirements of being professionally published, substantial and written for theatre performance. Smaller groups often chose shorter texts.

Screenplays and radio/television scripts do not meet the requirements of Section B.

Again this year many examiners reported very positively about the variety and suitability of texts. The choice of text is crucial to enable students to meet the requirements of the examination. Consideration of students' skills and interests is the foundation for achievement in this section. It is clear there are a number of texts that work very well and centres are using them over several years but giving them new and unique interpretations. Plays that have the episodic form worked particularly well giving the teacher/tutor director the flexibility to choose episodes that supported all students.

Stylised and physical approaches to performance work can support students at AS level. More naturalistic performances often started well but could lack pace and some became all on the same level.

There are some texts, often those written with no designated roles that did not always support students in a group examination. Whilst these could be effective productions enjoyed and appreciated by the audiences, examiners must be able to identify each student's individual contribution and this was at times very challenging.

Centres must ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate in performance their skills of characterisation.

Centres are reminded that this is a live examination and examiners can only award marks on the live performance. No first line examiner will view the recording after the examination

There were still a very few centres that had students performing a full-length play but designate in which section students were to be awarded marks. This does not meet the requirements of the specification. It

presented an enormous challenge for examiners to have the correct focus on the examination students. It made too great a demand on students to be involved in performance work for which they cannot be awarded marks. There was a concern that these performances had not been prepared for examination as there were also examples of some non-examination students being present in the performance.

The narrative arc of the complete text must be seen in the examination performance. It does not meet the requirements of the group performance for students to perform in an extract of the complete text. There were still a few centres which performed a complete text with different performance groups taking on an Act or Section. This disadvantaged students particularly in both characterisation and communication criteria.

Many examiners report very positively on the skill and creativity of teachers/tutors in editing and adapting scripts. This was particularly true where the chosen focus of the interpretation was clarified by the edited text.

Examiners also report on the requirement that if a text has been adapted and in particular if an interpretation involves the division of roles/multi roles / chorus work then the script sent to the examiner must indicate this clearly. This frequently was not completed again this year.

This was of particular concern when a single role had been divided between several students. For example where a character was played by more than one performer and the interpretation was that each student was a different aspect of the character this was a challenge to identify and award marks to each individual student.

It is a requirement to provide a copy of the text as performed. It is perfectly acceptable to send the published text with cuts clearly indicated. Some centres sent the text within a collection and this is also acceptable. A few centres requested the return of the text from the examiner. This is not possible as the texts must be enclosed with all other material for this section to be sent to Edexcel to support any subsequent review of the marks awarded. As there are a wide range of texts chosen by centres for this section it is important that examiners are well prepared by checking the text as performed in advance.

Any extra dialogue including scenes and roles that were not in the original text cannot be awarded any marks but will count in the total performance time. There were examples of 'pre shows', some of considerable length or devised dialogue sections within the complete performances.

These created considerable extra work for examiners and members of the senior team in monitoring these performances to disregard this extraneous material.

There is not the requirement of the text being at least 60 minutes in performance length that is a requirement of Section A. It must meet all

other requirements of being professionally published, substantial and written for theatre performance. Smaller groups often chose shorter texts.

The Teacher Director's Interpretation Notes

Most examiners report that the majority of centres understand that along with the choice of text this is an important aspect of success in this unit. Centres are reminded that in the group performance students are not only marked on their understanding of the director's concept but on their individual characterisation in performance.

Notes that had a focus on the individual roles and an explanation of the overall performance style/form were both very supportive to students' preparation for the examination and also for examiners in preparing for the examination performance.

The most successful examination work demonstrated that students had been engaged in the overall director's interpretation and their roles within it. Less successful performances often seemed not to go much beyond cutting the text and students learning the lines or approximating the playwright's dialogue and delivering them.

Performance Students

This was the option taken by the majority of students. Work was seen across the complete mark range. There were again this year students who worked with such skill, enthusiasm and commitment that performances were seen that fully deserved marks in the top bands.

It was clear that most centres had given the majority of students a well-structured preparation period and the final examination performance had a real sense of both occasion and theatre.

Centres are reminded that examiners can only award marks for the criteria printed in the specification. Performances that enabled examiners to concentrate on these were most suitable for examination success. The use of costume, make up and effects whether there were design students or not often enhanced the group performances. In other centres it was felt there was too high a reliance on these and it detracted from the students focus on their performance.

Overwhelmingly the greatest concern reported by the majority of examiners is the importance of clear identification of all students in the performance. This was usually 'theatre blacks' but there were also examples of identical boiler suits or uniforms.

It was most often observed in texts where there were undefined roles or students playing more than one role.

If examiners cannot clearly identify what students do and say in performance then they are disadvantaged, particularly with large groups.

Another concern was when there were many costume changes. These costume changes must be detailed to the examiner prior to the performance.

There was an increase in the number of centres providing clear full length photographs of students.

These do not need to be sent in advance but should be given to the examiner on arrival at the centre. All examiners reported that this made the identification a much more straightforward process.

Centres are reminded that examiners are only permitted to speak to students to clarify student identification. Photographs of students in costume made this unnecessary and enabled all students to focus on the performance.

Design Candidates

In line with Section A the number of design students seemed stable. The vast majority of centres had none. In most centres there was only one. In larger centres often with Performing Arts status and/or the input of theatre technicians there was evidence that these students had had the opportunity to work creatively with individual groups.

Examiners reported that it had been a positive choice for most students. There was some excellent work which clearly demonstrated that the students had been given opportunities to have a real creative input working with the director on realising the production ideas.

Most design students choose a single skill but a few students took on more than one skill and showed an understanding of the whole production values of the performance. It was felt that there was no advantage in either approach.

Many were very effective examples of how to achieve a great deal on a limited budget.

There were a few students for whom this had not been a positive choice. They had not understood the requirements of this option and produced poorly considered and executed work that failed to add anything to the overall performance. Centres must ensure that they have both the teaching expertise and resources to support all design students.

There are no marks for the presentation to the examiner. There is no requirement in Section B to produce any documentation so this gives the students the opportunity to put their design work in context. Presentations to the examiner varied in quality but most were of a good standard. Some presentations took place in the performance space, others in another room. This is entirely centre choice. Lighting, sound and set students often used the performance space as they could use the work to be seen in performance to support their presentation. Only a few centres chose to prerecord the presentations.

All options are fairly equally represented with the exception of masks/makeup. Many candidates used technology to provide often very impressive projection and sound work. Some centres now have more sophisticated lighting technology. This was used to create atmosphere and enhance the overall performance but at times it did obscure facial expression and student identification and this could disadvantage the assessment of performance students.

All centres are reminded that if strobe lighting is being used all audience members and most importantly the examiner must be told in advance.

Administration of the Examination

In previous years this has formed a substantial section of the report. However as the examination is now well established this has not been included this year.

Edexcel provides in the specification and Assessment Support Guide all the information that centres need to complete the administration of Unit 2. All that is required is that centres follow the procedures to best support their students in future series.

Edexcel understands that there is a great deal of documentation needed to support this examination but much of it should be completed by the students rather than teachers/tutors.

The majority of examiners report that centres were better organised this year and the written documentation and overall organisation by the centres for both Section A and B was completed with thought and attention to detail.

Conclusion

The work students presented for examination was in line with that seen in previous series.

In Section A it was felt that the achievement by students had been maintained this year. In the higher mark bands students were well prepared and confident in both their chosen material and performance skills and had made positive and teacher guided choices in the texts and roles chosen.

In the lower mark bands students were often struggling with the demands of a GCE course. Completing individual research had been challenging and preparation/rehearsal techniques not fully understood. Some students performed texts and roles that were not supportive to their skill level or seemed to have caught their interest and imagination. There was, however an improvement in the quality of the Written Performance Concepts at all levels.

In Section B it was felt that the standard has been maintained. Examiners reported that many of the performances achieved a great deal beyond its requirements as the AS Text in Performance examination.

Although this report identifies issues of concern from the examining team, overwhelmingly examiners conclude their reports by saying that much of the work seen was exhilarating, thought provoking and engaging. This reflects the commitment and understanding of this unit by the teachers/tutors in 2013.

In the wide range of performances examined this year there was very real sense of achievement in creating vibrant and stimulating theatre for the twenty first century. It is also felt that as well as the focus on this unit being Text in Performance students had gained many other 'life skills' such as team work, confidence and cooperation that will stand them in good stead in their futures.

Based on the work seen for this examination centres and students should:

- Centres must ensure the information in both the specification and The Assessment Support Guide is adhered to in preparing students for both the Section A and B examinations
- Centres must confirm with examiners the actual number of students entered for the examination when arranging examination sessions
- Centres must understand that the dates confirmed for the examination sessions cannot be changed at late notice
- Centres should prepare students to understand the examiner is not permitted to speak to them at any time during or after the examination sessions
- Centres should ensure the best possible recording is made of all examination sessions and is an unobstructed view of the performances which must be chapterised
- Centres must ensure that examination conditions are in place for both Section A and B performances
- Students must complete individual research of the complete text chosen for Section A
- Students must cover all 3 areas in the Written Performance Concept
- Students must be easily identified in Section B Group Performance

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