

AS Drama and Theatre FAQ* March 2017

- Do the texts need to be contrasting like GCSE?
 - No. Students should study a range of performance texts. For more details please see page 9 of the AS specification.
- I am looking for a definition of 'performance text' as used in the AS specification. I can see that on page 9 of the AS Level specification, there are bullet descriptors but can you define more clearly what a performance text must be?
 - A performance text is something that has been written and/or created for theatrical presentation. It will provide the structure for the performance and might include, for example, dialogue, stage directions and design considerations. The other considerations as set out in the specifications must also be taken into account when selecting an appropriate performance text.
- Do I need to submit my text choices to Pearson for approval?
 - Yes. The choices need to be submitted by the end of January in the year of certification. There is a form you should use to submit your text choices available on our website [here](#).
- Can I please confirm that if a text is on the set text list e.g. Equus then it cannot be used in Component 1 even if it is not my chosen set text, I am using Colder Than Here as my set text for List A but was hoping to use Equus as my text for Text in Performance.
 - You cannot use any of the performance texts from the set text list for Component 1 or use them for your Live Theatre Evaluation.
- **Would you be able to clarify what is meant by the term 'theatre makers' in the specification?**
 - **The term theatre maker is a term used by Ofqual/DFE across all examination boards and for the purposes of our specification a theatre maker is a director, designer or performer. It is a useful term for people that cannot necessarily be pigeon-holed into once discipline or category.**

Component 1

- Can there be a different choice of key extract and practitioner for each group?
 - Yes. There can be a different choice of key extract and practitioner for each group.

- Students perform from a text in both Sections 1 and 2 of Component 1; can the text be the same in both sections?
 - No. Students need to perform from different texts for these two sections. Across the AS, students are required to study at least 3 texts. One of these is in the written exam (component 2) and the other two are in this component.

- I would like to use more than one practitioner for component 1, is that possible?
 - Yes you can, however it is very clearly indicated in the mark scheme on p23-33 of the AS specification that the portfolio and performance needs to make perceptive connections with the work of one chosen practitioner. For example, if your chosen practitioner is Stanislavski the performance style will be naturalistic. The portfolio will be dominated by the work and methodology of Stanislavski. If your chosen practitioner is Frantic Assembly, the portfolio and performance will communicate a variety of styles and influences.

- On page 12 of the specification it is unclear as to whether or not the influence of the chosen practitioner must be evident in the performance, the portfolio or both. Please clarify.
 - For candidates being assessed as performers, the influence of the chosen practitioner must be evident in both the portfolio and the performance.

- Is there a requirement to write an artistic intention?
 - Yes, for the monologue/duologue. This is not required for the group performance as the performance intention is covered in the portfolio.

- On pages 13 and 14 of the AS specification it states that the 150-250 words for the mono/duo should be submitted as part of the portfolio. Is this correct?
 - No. The 150-250 words should be attached to the Non-examined assessment authentication sheet for each candidate. (Page 51 of the AS Specification). This will be corrected in the specification.

Performance:

- When students need to perform to an audience, but the performance is also being recorded, where should the student focus?
 - The focus of the student should be appropriate to the performance style selected. If they just focus on the camera this could create an audition tape quality to the performance, which is not the aim of the component.

- Can the teacher direct the monologues/duologues?
 - No, but the teacher can help facilitate.

- Can the teacher direct the group text-based performance?
 - Yes. The teacher can direct the group performance.

- What is the difference between facilitating and directing?
 - Further information about the differences can be found on pages 12 and 13 of the AS specification.

- For the group text-based performance and monologue/duologue, does every group/student have to perform from the same text?
 - No. Each group/student can perform/design from a different text.

- As a set designer or lighting designer can I use projection?
 - Yes, the use of projection could be a feature of your overall design. It is not possible to be assessed solely on the use of projection as this is not a specified design role as outlined on page 8 on the AS specification.

- Is the weighting of the group performance/monologue/duologue equal?
 - The weighting is heavier for the group performance. There are 32 marks for the Group performance, 16 marks for the Monologue/duologue and 48 marks for the portfolio. Please see the assessment grids in the specification.

- I have read that my candidates will receive 0 marks for performance if they do not meet the minimum performance time in component 1. Could you clarify this?
 - Yes, this is correct. If you look at page 10 of the specification the information is here. In Section A for the group performance there is a regulatory minimum performance requirement of 5 minutes, irrespective of the size of group and your attention is drawn to the recommended minimum and maximum performance times in the grid, depending on the number of students in the group.
 - In Section B for monologues/duologues, students must meet the minimum performance times as indicated in the grid in order to achieve marks in this section.
 - If students fail to reach the regulatory minimum performance time, whether in the group performance or in a monologue or duologue they must be awarded 0 marks for that section of this component. They may still, of course, access marks for the other section and for the portfolio.

Portfolio:

- Does the portfolio need to be written like an essay or can you use the statements that are in the specification as headings which the students answer?
 - There is no requirement to write the portfolio like an essay; students can use the statements as headings. The statements are on page 17 of the AS specification.

- Do I have to use the statements?

- Yes. The statements must be used. We strongly recommend that the wording of the statements is used to structure the portfolio.
- What format can the portfolio take, especially if it is a combination of written and video, will a blog suffice, written logs, etc.?
 - It is necessary that students meet the minimum requirements as stated in the specification i.e. the minimum and maximum word limits, the minimum and maximum recorded limit, or the combination. We have clarified all of the possible format options in the ASG. You must ensure that your students respond to the statements included in the specification, to meet the assessment criteria.
- If a student submits recorded evidence for the portfolio, does it have to be recorded in one take or can it be edited?
 - It can be edited and it can be recorded in many short takes. However, to ensure parity with the written evidence, feedback from the teacher can only be given once to the student.
- Is it possible for my students to submit their portfolio electronically or does it have to be a hard copy? Some of my students want to combine both written work and audio.
 - There are multiple options described in detail in the Administrative Support Guide. You must also refer to the JCQ Guidance for Non-examined assessment.
- Are students assessed on their presentation skills if they are submitting audio-visual evidence?
 - No. Students are not assessed on their presentation skills, they are assessed on the content of what they are saying. It is possible for students to use flashcards or notes when they are speaking.
- Can teachers annotate the work?
 - In line with the JCQ Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2016-2017, teachers are responsible for marking work in accordance with the marking criteria detailed in the relevant specification and associated subject-specific documents. Teacher annotation should be used to provide evidence to indicate how and why marks have been awarded to facilitate the standardisation of marking within the centre, and to enable the moderator to check that marking is in line with the assessment criteria.
 - How to annotate the work:
 - Follow guidance in the relevant specification and associated subject-specific documents.

- Provide evidence to support your marks. Identify the assessment criteria that have been met.
- Be clear and unambiguous.
- Use key phrases from the criteria. For example, awareness of values, uses a variety of techniques, selects appropriate data.
- Insert annotations at the appropriate point in the work - in the margin or in the text – or write comments on the cover sheet to show clearly how credit has been awarded.
 - For audio evidence, the teacher can send the transcript and annotate the transcript accordingly.
 - For video evidence, the teacher can add text boxes as annotations.
- The specifications states a recommended word count of 2000 to 2500 words or a time limit of 10 to 12 minutes, does that mean if the students go over it will still be marked?
 - No. Students will need to stay within the recommended word/time limit. The teacher assessor must not mark beyond the maximum word/time count and must indicate at what point marking stops.
- Are the portfolio questions the same as the A level questions?
 - No. In the A Level portfolio students will be discussing their devising process whereas the AS portfolio will focus on the development of a text-based performance.
- **If a student annotates dialogue from the performance text extract in the portfolio, does the dialogue from the extract contribute to the word count?**
 - **Script extracts and research material from additional sources (including published work) will not contribute towards the final word count. However, candidate annotations will contribute towards the final word count. Equally, references and quotes from research or play texts that are embedded within the sentences of the portfolio and candidate's own work, will count towards the final word count.**
- Can I use Lysistrata (or indeed any of the A level List B texts) in the AS for the component 1 performance?
 - Yes. You can use Lysistrata in component 1 and 2 (for the Live Theatre Evaluation) of the AS as it is a separate qualification. You need to be aware that if you go on to teach the A level qualification to the same group of students, you wouldn't be able to use Lysistrata for either components 1 or 2 or for component 3 Live Theatre Evaluation.

- **Can you tell me which Assessment Objective is linked to each statement in the AS Portfolio (Component 1)?**
 - **Clearly there is possibility for overlap across all statements as students may decide to discuss the development of ideas, make connections between theory and practice and analyse and evaluate their own work in a variety of ways. However, teacher-assessors should note that there are more marks available for A01 and it should be clear to a moderator on the comment/mark sheet (Appendix 1) where marks have been awarded.**
The statements are listed below with possible links to the Assessment Objectives for the Portfolio.
Outline your initial response to the key extract from the performance text and track your contribution to the rehearsal process (A01)
Discuss how the chosen practitioner influenced your contribution to the rehearsal and to the performance (AO1)
Connect your research material/s to key moments in the rehearsal and state the impact on the performance (A01&A04)
Analyse and evaluate the contribution your own theatrical skill/s and ideas made to the performance (A04)
Discuss the impact of social, historical and cultural context on your work. (AO1)

Component 2

- Do I have to teach from the editions listed in the specification?
 - It is recommended that candidates use the editions listed in the specifications as all extracts and named sections will be taken directly from these specific editions. (Please see page 41 of the AS specification).
- Will Pearson be supplying digital versions of the set texts?
 - No. These will need to be purchased. We have provided the ISBN's of the versions we recommend in the specification.
- What do students have access to in the written exam?
 - Section A: 500 words of notes for the live theatre evaluation on one performance they have seen.
 - Section B: they will be provided with an extract in the exam.
- Is the perspective from which students answer questions the same as at A level?
 - No. Students will only answer questions from 2 sections – Section A and Section B in the AS written exam. These are questions from the perspective of a performer and designer, not a director. Please see the sample assessment material.

- For the live evaluation can the student view more than one live production?
 - Yes. There is no limit on how many productions a student sees, however, their notes and answers can only be about one production. Please see page 39 of the AS specification.

- For the live theatre evaluation, can students see one of the other texts they have used in the course?
 - They can see productions of the texts they have performed in/designed for or that have been used as a stimulus in their devising. We would encourage them to see as much live theatre as they can over the course of the qualification, but they cannot use any of the set texts for their live theatre evaluation. (Please see page 39 of the AS specification).

- Is it necessary to keep the 'Live theatre evaluation notes form' after the exam?
 - Yes, Centres must retain the 'Live theatre evaluation notes form' until after the Post-Results Services deadline. See page 40 of the specification. To ensure adherence to the requirements the notes are randomly selected by Pearson for review during this period.

- Why is there no mention of the audience in the Section B question, but there is reference to the audience in the mark scheme?
 - In a question which is asking about performance or production, we would expect to see references to intended impact on the audience.

- Do my students have to make reference to the play as a whole or the extract provided in Section B, Page to Stage?
 - Both. The extract should focus the answer and help provide examples but there should also be a reference to the play as a whole. This is clearly signposted in the mark scheme.

- Will there always be a new extract every exam series, or will they be repeated?
 - The extracts will never be repeated in their entirety, but there may be overlaps between series.

- **Does 'development' in Component 2 Section B (and Component 3 of the A-Level Section B) require students to refer to rehearsal?**
 - **No. Realisation of ideas should come from a genuine practical exploration and further clarification can be found on Page 41 of the AS Specification. On Page 42 of the Specification the knowledge and understanding that students are required to have for this particular section of the exam is exemplified in a number of bullet points. References are made to performance, realisation and the communication of ideas to an audience throughout. The focus for development is in regard to how ideas and intentions are developed from Page to Stage within the context of the complete performance text.**

- **For the written paper – the SAMs example questions are about production elements. Could there be a question about the actors' performances in the live theatre production?**
 - **It is possible that performers might feature in future questions.**

- **For the set text questions, can they ask about how you would get the actors to act in the given extract?**
 - **It is not the case that all the questions are production focused; we have deliberately considered Performers and Performance Support candidates equally.**
In Section A Live Theatre Evaluation - Q2 is about stage space, So this could be answered 'how did the actors use the stage space'.
In section B Q3 begins with the words 'As a Performer...'

- **If students go against Shaffer's stage and lighting description in the Equus text, could they be penalised? Shaffer himself in "A note on the text" at the start of the script states 'What appears in this text is a description of the first production of Equus at the National Theatre in 1973. In making this description,**

I am partly satisfying myself, but also partly bowing to demand." This would suggest that there could be some justification for a different staging interpretation..., wouldn't it?

- The stage directions are part of the published extract and of course, the whole text. They must be considered as an integral part of each text so we would advise against 'ignoring' them.
If a student chooses to change them, this must be acknowledged and justified.
Any changes made must take into account the playwright's intentions, explaining why alternatives could be used and how these retain the original intentions of the playwright.
Clearly, this question is also looking for a creative response, so the route above, to acknowledge stage directions before suggesting how they might stage the piece would seem the best way forward.
- In the SAMS the questions are quite generic eg choose a character from the extract... Describe your choices for (any?) production element.
In the actual exam will the questions be in this form or will they specify a character/production element for students to focus their answer on?
 - The SAMS material are indicative of the format the examination will take in this and subsequent years. The questions asked have to cover a range of texts with differing demands and considerations, consequently one question covering all texts will be generic by default. Candidates will be approaching the examination with a range of skills and interests, consequently the questions have to be generic in order to allow access for all. The nature of the extract chosen will allow the candidate an element of choice regarding the key role and how this will be realised in performance. The challenge comes with the fact that the extract will change year on year. The design question may also be generic allowing candidates the opportunity to make choices regarding design. The challenge comes with the fact that the extract will change year on year. It would be beneficial to candidates to approach the performance text holistically, practically exploring how all theatrical elements can be utilised to realise text in performance.
- For 'performer' questions, is it good practice to refer to rehearsal techniques to explain how you have developed the characterisation as an actor ready for performance (for example, practised inner monologue techniques using lines from other parts of the play)? Or just not mention them at all?
 - At no point does Section B refer to rehearsal techniques, either in the question or the mark scheme. This section (Realising a Performance Text), refers to the practical application of theatrical elements and acting choices used to realise a key role - there is a really helpful list in the indicative content on Page 59 of the AS level SAMS. The emphasis is on how candidates will realise a key role from the extract, and subsequently what this might look like in performance (Page to Stage). The focus rests firmly on what they're going to do in performance, not

what they might 'have done in rehearsal by way of exploration/preparation. Practically exploring the text with this in mind will ensure your candidates are much more likely to address the question and meet the descriptors in the mark scheme.

- Can I clarify what is permitted in the 500 words for AS Component 2, Theatre Evaluation. Are quotes from the play allowed, for example?
 - The theatre visit is traditionally a group activity that will lead to discussion about aspects of the production that will support a response in section A of Component 2.
The notes are the individual students' own work with a maximum of 500 words allowed. As the notes are to be taken into the examination room the 500 word limit is absolute. Therefore, if individuals wish to use quotes from the production, it is permissible to do so but any quote must be included in the total word count of the notes. This will also apply to section A, Component 3 in the A level examination.
- Please could you clarify whether students can include quotes from the text in their 500 words for Component 2 live theatre evaluation and if these count as part of the word count? The text is in theory pre-published material so I wasn't sure.
 - The 500 words are obviously the students OWN notes on the production that they saw. Appendix 2 in the AS specification details what they might look like.
Please see previous questions.
It is for each student to decide what they wish to put into their prepared notes but whatever that is, the notes in their entirety cannot exceed 500 words maximum.

Co-teachability

- In the written exam can we use the same text for AS and A level Section B?
 - Yes.
- Do marks gained in AS Level count towards A Level?
 - No. They are now two separate qualifications.
- Can work assessed as part of the AS course be re-used and re-assessed in the A level?
 - Yes. Students can re-use their exploration of a set text, and their monologue/duologue and group performances. Please see more detail in the link below. It should be noted that they will be assessed at a higher standard as part of the A Level.

- How is it possible to co-teach these courses?
 - There are a number of ways of teaching the course; we have provided a number of possible ways [here](#).

- I am hoping to co-teach the course to AS and A level students. Is it possible that A level students can perform with AS students as non-assessed candidates and vice versa?
 - Yes. You would need to contact drama assessment in advance to request permission. Please email your requests to drama.assessment@pearson.com. A copy of the email from Drama Assessment must be included with the work sent to the moderator/shown to the examiner. Your attention is drawn to page 19 of the specification for the regulations governing the use of non-assessed individuals and it is important that these regulations are understood before work on Component 1 begins.