

# A Level Drama and Theatre Refresher





# Today's agenda

- Structure and assessment objectives
- Component 1
- Component 2
- Component 3
- Admin and resources guidance
- Q and As throughout
- Subject Advisor support

# A Level Drama and Theatre



Available since 2016



Summer 2018 first overall certification



External assessments (Components 2 and 3) available once a year (for year 13s only)



Internal assessment (Component 1) available until May of final year



Lead Examiner/Moderator reports after each series



Online live and recorded training available

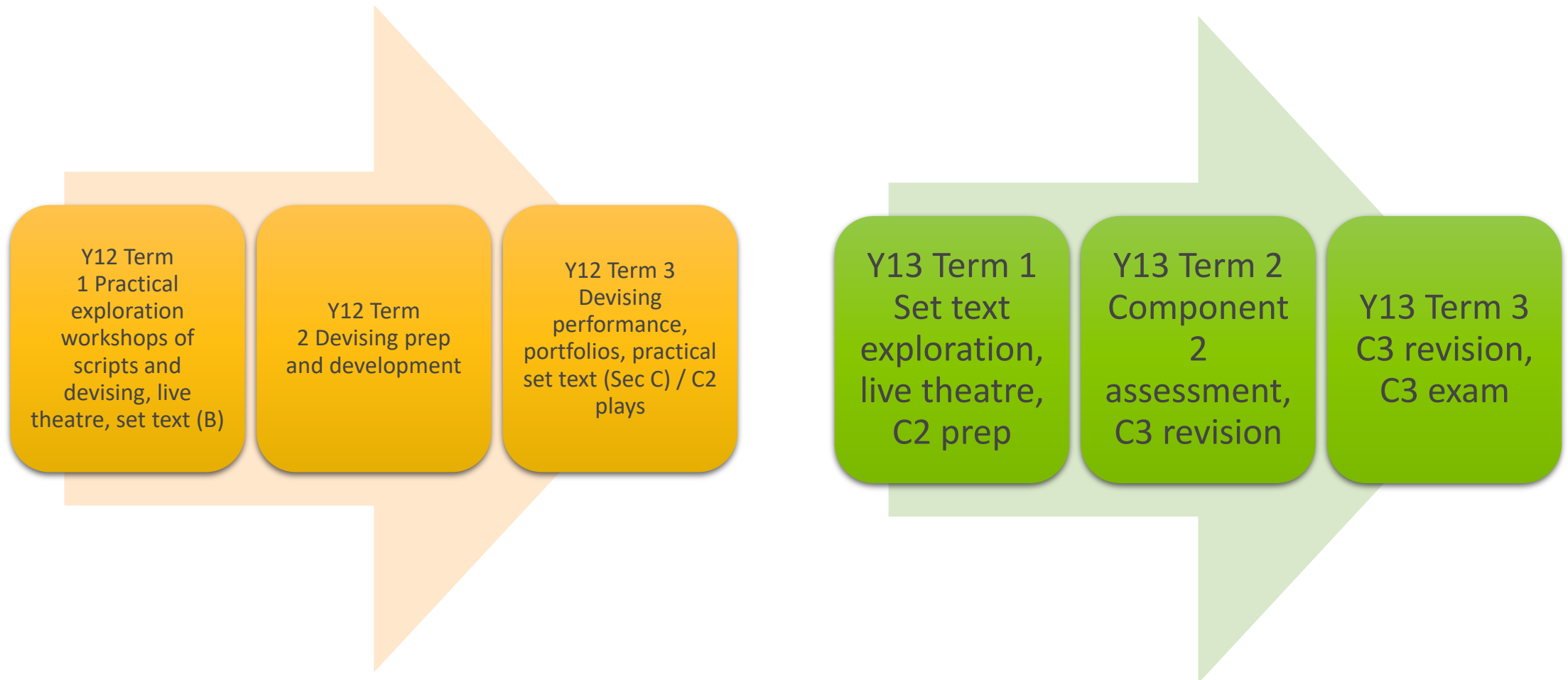


Published resources available

# A Level Drama and Theatre structure

Component	Overview	Assessment
Component 1 Devising 40% 80 marks	Students will devise a piece of theatre and either perform/design. They will record the process in a portfolio.	Internally assessed Externally moderated
Component 2 Text in Performance 20% 60 marks	Performance/design of extracts from two different texts	Externally assessed via visiting examiner/recording
Component 3 Theatre Makers in Practice 40% 80 marks	Practical exploration of two set texts to answer questions on interpreting plays. Evaluation of live theatre seen.	Exam: 2hrs 30mins Sec A: Live Theatre Evaluation Sec B: Page to Stage: Realising a Performance Text Sec C: Interpreting a Performance Text

# Structuring the course over two years



# AL Component 1 Devising

## Guide to Devising

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Students work in groups of 3-6 performers (with up to 4 designers)

---

Devise performance work lasting between 15 and 30 minutes

---

Use extract from a play text as stimuli

---

Apply the methods of one theatre practitioner

---

Influence of live theatre experienced

---

Perform to an audience – 25% of component marks

---

Teacher assessed

---

Create written/recorded portfolio of evaluation of process and performance – 75% of component marks

# 2024 Component 1 Devising

## Popular texts/extracts included:

- Metamorphosis
- 1984
- Things I Know to Be True
- 4.48 Psychosis
- Love Song
- The Crucible
- A Doll's House
- A Streetcar Named Desire
- Girls Like That
- The Jungle
- Small Island

## Popular practitioners:

- Berkoff
- Brecht
- Stanislavski
- Artaud
- Frantic Assembly

## Engaging and successful choices:

- Katie Mitchell
- Bruiser
- Wise Children
- Alecky Blythe
- Gecko
- Punchdrunk
- Complicite

## Popular themes and ideas included:

- Isolation
- Displacement
- Power/Control
- Equality
- Sexuality
- Domestic Abuse
- Dreams and Nightmares
- Addiction
- Love/Death
- the negative impact of social media, body image
- political corruption
- Misogyny
- mental health
- aftermath of the Global Pandemic and NHS

# Component 1 Practitioners

Artaud, Antonin
Berkoff, Steven
Blythe, Alecky
Boal, Augusto
Brecht, Bertolt
Brook, Peter
Bruiser
Complicite
DV8
Elliott, Marianne
Forced Entertainment
Frantic Assembly
Gecko
Godber, John
Grotowski, Jerzy
Headlong

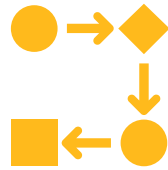
Kent, Nicholas
Kneehigh Theatre Company
Lecoq, Jacques
Littlewood, Joan
Meisner
Mitchell, Katie
Paper Birds
Piscator
Punchdrunk
Rice, Emma / Wise Children
Splendid Theatre co.
Stafford Clark, Max
Stanislavski



# Suggested approaches



encourage creativity and experimentation!



any pre-show activity counts in the time limit for the performance



find a balance between the need to engage a live audience and satisfy the requirements of assessment



the recording is an essential piece of evidence = please ensure the quality of the recording is as high as possible

# AL Component 1 Portfolio

It is recommended that the portfolio be submitted as:

- handwritten/typed evidence between 2500 and 3000 words

or

- recorded/verbal evidence between 12 and 14 minutes

or

- a combination of handwritten/typed evidence (between 1250 and 1500 words) and recorded/verbal evidence (between 6 and 7 minutes).

# AL Component 1 Portfolio



OUTLINE YOUR INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE KEY EXTRACT AND PRACTITIONER AND TRACK HOW IT WAS DEVELOPED THROUGHOUT THE DEVISING PROCESS



CONNECT YOUR RESEARCH MATERIAL/S TO KEY STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND TO PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES



EVALUATE HOW YOUR CHOSEN ROLE/S EMERGED AND DEVELOPED FROM INITIAL IDEAS THROUGH TO THE FINAL PERFORMANCE



ANALYSE HOW YOUR CONTRIBUTION WAS INFLUENCED BY THE SELECTED THEATRE PRACTITIONER AND/OR THEATRE MAKERS, AND THE IMPACT LIVE THEATRE HAS HAD ON YOUR OWN PRACTICAL WORK



DISCUSS HOW SOCIAL, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT HAS IMPACTED ON YOUR WORK



EVALUATE THE CREATIVE CHOICES YOU MADE AND WHETHER OR NOT THEY WERE SUCCESSFUL IN PERFORMANCE.

# AL Component 1 Portfolio

Tip: Students create a working diary



The practical work is a group activity



The portfolio is a personal reflection

# Exemplar work and support

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A levels

## Drama and Theatre (2016)



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- ☒ Teaching and learning materials (59)

#### CONTENT TYPE



### Teaching and learning materials (59)

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Coursework support



Exemplar material



Past training content



# Component 1

1

Do you change the stimuli each year?  
Or do you have go-to / reliable stimuli?

2

How do you support students with keeping notes on the process?

3

What strategies do you have for conflict and engagement issues?

4

How do you support them with direction and feedback?

FAQs

Can I direct  
their devised  
work?

Can students  
use  
Punchdrunk as  
practitioners  
in their  
devised work?

# FAQs

What is officially included as part of the word count?  
E.g. if a mind map illustration is uploaded, does each word used in that image count?

Is there any leeway on the 2500 – 3000 word limit?

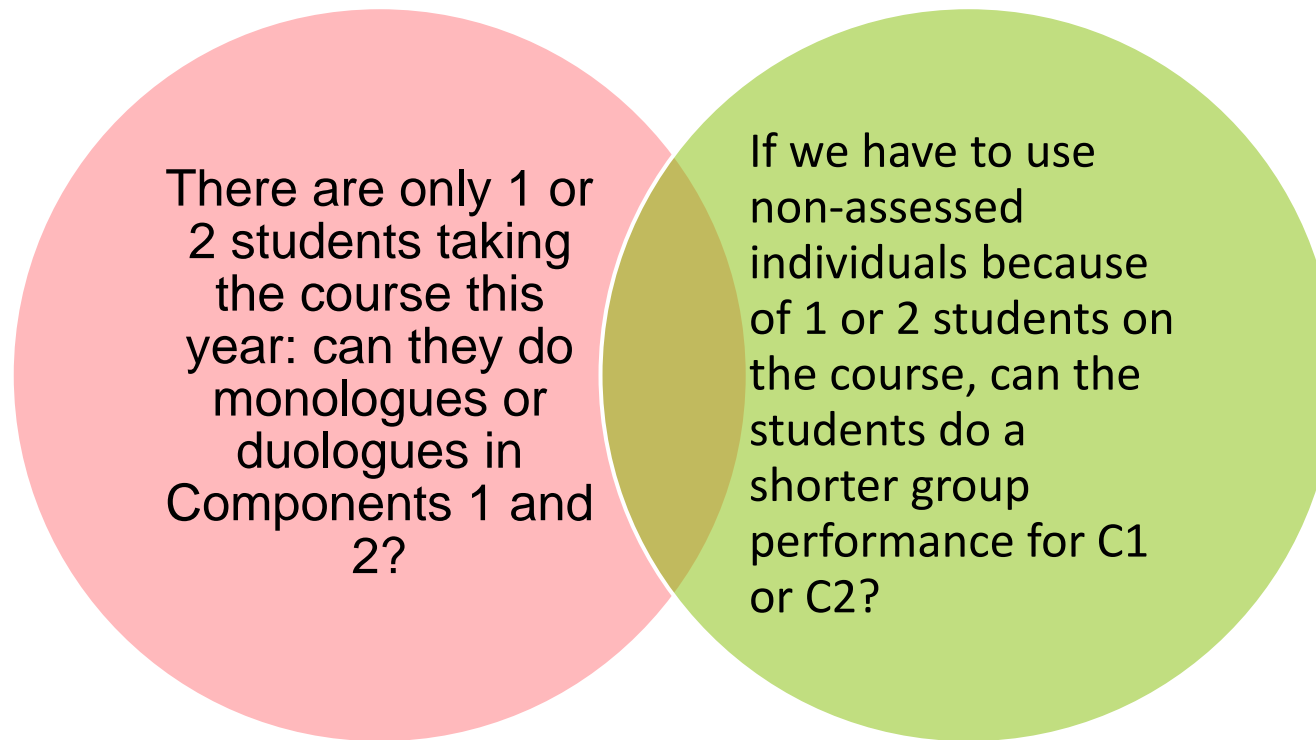
Are the statement titles not included in the word count?

Is a bibliography needed?

Should the work be annotated by the teacher-assessor?



# FAQs



# AL Component 2 Performance from text

---

Monologue or a duologue performance/design realisation from one key extract from one performance text

---

A group performance/design realisation of one key extract from a different performance text

---

A student can design or perform in both extracts

---

Group work - Groups are 3-6

---

**Perform/design to an audience** – 20% of qualification grade

---

Externally assessed in year 13 – Jan to April

---

Can be visiting examiner or digital submission

# Popular choices for mono/duos

[Lead Examiner report](#)

Things I Know  
to be True

Goodbye  
Charles

People Places  
and Things

Posh

Fleabag

Cock

Every Brilliant  
Thing

Hamlet

4:48 Psychosis

The  
Pillowman

BU21

Punk Rock

Two

The Almighty  
Sometimes

Lemons x 5

# Popular choices for groups

[Lead Examiner report](#)

Top Girls

All the Little  
Lights

Agnes of God

2:22 A Ghost  
Story

5 Kinds of  
Silence

A Monster Calls

Di, Viv and  
Rose

After Juliet

A Hundred  
Words for Snow

Memory of  
Water

Frozen

Metamorphosis

Pool (No Water)

Our Country's  
Good

Who's Afraid of  
Virginia Woolf

# Component 2

1

What texts do you use?  
Do they allow students to  
demonstrate a range of  
skills and emotions?

2

Do you 'action' the text?  
How do you make it  
accessible?

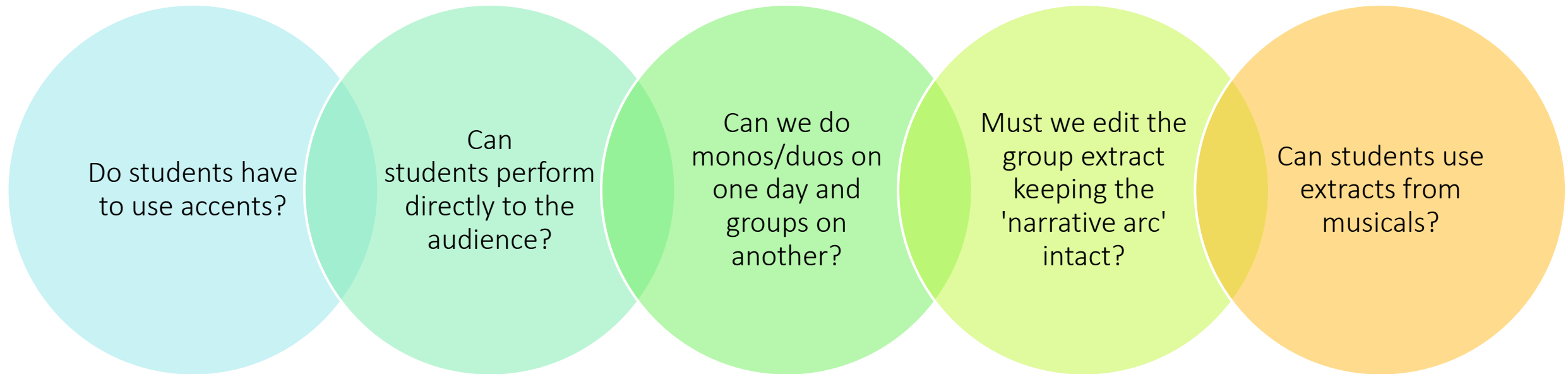
3

How do support students  
with rehearsal  
challenges: **attendance,**  
**engagement, and time**  
**constraints?**

4

How do you support  
them with direction and  
feedback?

# FAQs



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A levels

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Coursework support

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Exemplar material

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Past training content

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23



## Component 2

Q and A



# A brief outline of the Component 3 exam

consider, analyse and evaluate how different theatre makers create impact.

consider how production ideas and dramatic elements are communicated to an audience from the perspective of a director, a performer and a designer.

# A brief outline of the Component 3 exam



## SECTION A: LIVE THEATRE EVALUATION



Students select one question to answer from selection of 2



Analysis and evaluation of production in light of a given statement



**TOTAL 20 marks**



AO4 Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others



**Approx 45 minutes** on this section



500 Words of notes allowed

# Component 3: Section A

## Section A Notes Cover Sheet

- The performance can be an amateur or professional production
- Live theatre means being a member of the audience in the same performance space
- Recordings/streamed work allowed with permission
- Musicals allowed

Students are allowed to bring in theatre evaluation notes of up to a maximum of 500 words.

These notes may include reference to:

- performers
- design considerations
- the director's concept/interpretation
- impact on the audience
- the use of the theatre space
- how ideas were communicated

Sketches, drawings and diagrams may also be included in the notes

# Section A questions

## Question papers

### **EITHER**

- 1** Analyse and evaluate the live performance you have seen in light of the following statement:

‘Live theatre should make an audience laugh, not think.’

Your answer should:

- include analysis and evaluation of key moments from the performance you have seen and the contribution made by different theatre makers
- offer **balanced consideration** between your analysis and evaluation of the performance and your response to the statement.

(20)

### **OR**

- 2** Analyse and evaluate the live performance you have seen in light of the following statement:

‘There should be more emphasis on technology rather than actors when creating a live performance today.’

Your answer should:

- include analysis and evaluation of key moments from the performance you have seen and the contribution made by different theatre makers
- offer **balanced consideration** between your analysis and evaluation of the performance and your response to the statement.

(20)

# Section A indicative mark scheme

## AO4 = 20 marks

This question asks the candidate to respond to a thought-provoking statement in light of their live theatre experience.

At the heart of the statement is the debate that live theatre reflects changes in time and somehow connects to everyone's lives. Candidates will need to engage with the statement as informed members of the audience and discuss the contribution made by different theatre makers.

Candidates **might** refer to the following in their response:

- arguments that agree, disagree or offer a balanced reaction to the statement
- why they think theatre does or does not have elements from the past and/or present
- analysis and evaluation of how the performance may or may not have something to say to everyone
- analysis and understanding of the role of the director and how specific production values have been used to communicate ideas and meaning to an audience
- analysis and evaluation of how dramatic elements have been used to create theatrical impact such as set, lighting, costume, sound, staging and acting
- the evaluation of key theatre makers, their collaboration and the contribution they have made to specific aspects of the production
- consideration of performance style, influence and theatrical interpretation
- analysis of, and reference to, key moments
- analysis of audience and audience reaction
- references to other art forms and the role of theatre in society analysis and evaluation of the overall aims and intentions of the production.

## Mark schemes

## Section A Level based mark scheme

Level	Mark	Descriptor (AO4)
Level 5	17-20	<b>Sophisticated</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical and perceptive approach with sophisticated analysis of live performance elements, supported by precise knowledge and understanding and articulate use of subject-specific terminology.</li><li>• Perceptive evaluation demonstrating accomplished ability to formulate and justify personal judgements of how ideas, meaning and impact are created by different theatre makers' use of production values and dramatic elements.</li><li>• Sophisticated and in-depth personal response which perceptively draws together relevant and balanced elements of analysis and evaluation, showing sensitive reasoning, interpretation and engagement with the statement.</li></ul>

# A brief outline of the Component 3 exam



## SECTION B: Page to Stage: Realising a Performance Text



Students answer two questions:

First is performer focused

Second is design focused



Worth 36 marks (18 marks per question)



Students provided with extract in exam booklet



Approx 60 minutes



## Section B questions

- 3** As a **performer**, outline how you would use **stage space** to support your portrayal of **one** character in this extract.

*Your answer should make reference to the performance text as a whole.*

**(18)**

- 4** As a **designer**, outline how **EITHER sound OR lighting** could be developed to communicate meaning and ideas to an audience in this extract.

*Your answer should make reference to the performance text as a whole.*

**(18)**

## Section B indicative mark scheme (question 3)

**A03 = 18 marks**

This question is about acting and specifically asks the candidate to outline how they would use stage space to support their portrayal of one character. The question is about the candidate's response from the viewpoint of a performer of one character. Candidates should use the extract to qualify their ideas and intentions and make reference to the text as a whole.

They should respond from the viewpoint of **one** character only but may make pertinent reference to other characters or stage directions when this has a direct impact on the use of stage space by their chosen character".

Candidates **might** refer to the following in their response:

- use of their body within the space such as gesture, gestus, tempo, poise, stillness, body language, facial expressions, mime and other physical forms
- use of the available stage space in relation to scenery, props and furniture
- characterisation and the portrayal of one character in the extract
- the relationship between their use of space and its connection to the dialogue
- use of space, levels and proxemics
- entrances and exits
- performance style and theatrical influence
- intended audience impact
- research relating to the context of the text, such as time period, historical, social, and cultural aspects that develop and communicate ideas about the portrayal of one character.



## Section B Level based mark scheme

<b>Level 5</b>	16-18	<b>Sophisticated</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sophisticated interpretation of the extract showing comprehensive knowledge and understanding of how ideas and intentions are developed.</li><li>• Comprehensive knowledge of theatrical elements and techniques showing perceptive understanding of their application in the performance of the extract.</li><li>• Demonstrates sophisticated consideration of how theatrical elements can be used in performance to create mood, atmosphere and impact, and communicate meaning to an audience.</li><li>• Comprehensive ideas and examples are offered from the extract and the text as a whole. Articulate use of subject-specific terminology.</li></ul>
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## Section B questions

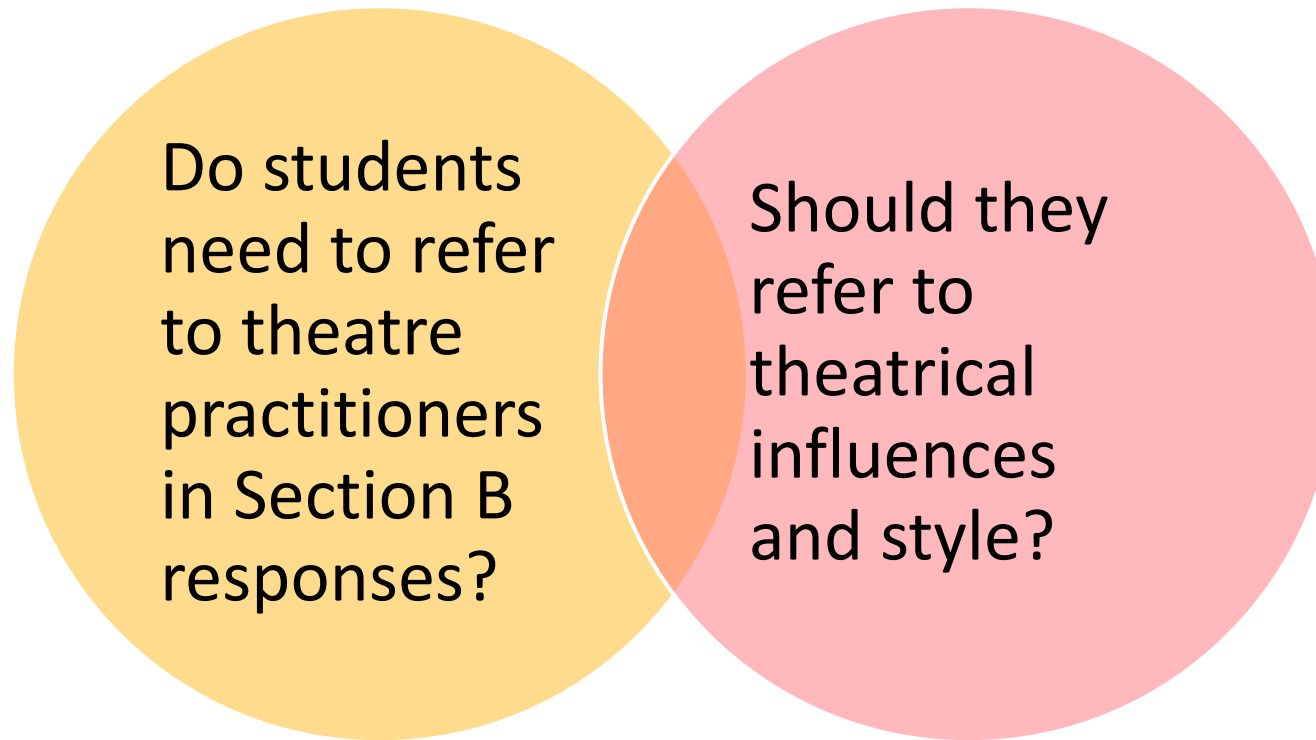
B questions	Q3 - performer	Q4 - design
2024	Vocal skills	Theatrical space
2023	Stage space	Sound or lighting
2022	Voice and non-verbal communication	One theatrical element
2019	Performance skills	One theatrical element
2018	Voice and gesture	Lighting

# FAQs

Students need to cover the extract as a whole in their responses (as well as references to the play as a whole):

- is there any guidance as to how many parts of the extract they should make reference to?
- Can they choose to structure this around various lines/stage directions from the extract?

# FAQs



# FAQs

Questions 3 and 4:  
what is the  
difference  
between 'how  
theatre is  
developed' and  
'how theatre is  
performed'?

# FAQs

Question 4:  
can students  
move the  
location to  
another time,  
place, setting?



# A brief outline of the Component 3 exam

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## SECTION C

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Production concept for a set text

---

chosen theatre practitioner

---

One answer from choice of two questions; performance or design

---

TOTAL 24 marks

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Approx 45 minutes to complete

## Section C questions

**You are the director of a new production concept of the performance text you have studied.**

### **EITHER**

- 5** As a director, discuss how you would apply the methodologies of your chosen theatre practitioner to effectively highlight characterisation in your production concept.

Your answer must focus on the named section listed on page 20 for your chosen performance text.

Your answer must make reference to:

- the overall aims of your production concept in response to the play as a whole
- how your practical ideas will work in performance
- the original performance conditions of your chosen performance text.

(24)

### **OR**

- 6** As a director, discuss how you would apply the methodologies of your chosen theatre practitioner to effectively combine design elements in your production concept.

Your answer must focus on the named section listed on page 20 for your chosen performance text.

Your answer must make reference to:

- the overall aims of your production concept in response to the play as a whole
- how your practical ideas will work in performance
- the original performance conditions of your chosen performance text.

(24)



# Section C indicative mark scheme

## AO3 = 24 marks

This question asks the candidate to respond as a theatre director and discuss how they have applied the methodologies of a recognised theatre practitioner to their production concept. The focus of the response should be on how they intend to highlight any or all of the given characters, and how the ideas of their chosen theatre practitioner might be realised and applied in a live performance context to embed the characterisation process.

The question also asks the candidate to make reference to and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the original performance conditions of their chosen text. However, this is a question about the text in performance; it is not a history essay.

References to the original production should demonstrate an understanding and awareness of how the text was first performed. Candidates should then use this knowledge to show how the conditions of the original performance have informed their own creative and theatrical ideas as directors.

Candidates **might** refer to the following in their response:

- relevant practitioner theory, research or influence
- the overall acting style(s) and interpretation of key roles
- reference to other practitioners and theatre makers
- overall performance style(s)
- ways and means that characterisation has been understood and demonstrated in performance
- characterisation including the use of voice, language, gesture, poise, stillness or other forms of non-verbal communication
- the use of production values or dramatic/theatrical elements to communicate ideas and meaning to an audience
- use of theatrical venue, stage space, levels and proxemics
- entrances and exits
- the relationship between characters
- the relationship between actors and audience.

The question asks the candidate to focus on a named section in their chosen performance text and the majority of examples offered should come from this specific section. However, candidates must also discuss how their production concept will work in the context of the play as a whole.

## Lysistrata

Candidates exploring this named section might refer to:

- the relationship between Lysistrata and Myrrhine
- the momentum created by Lysistrata and the other women
- the use of timing and body language by the women.

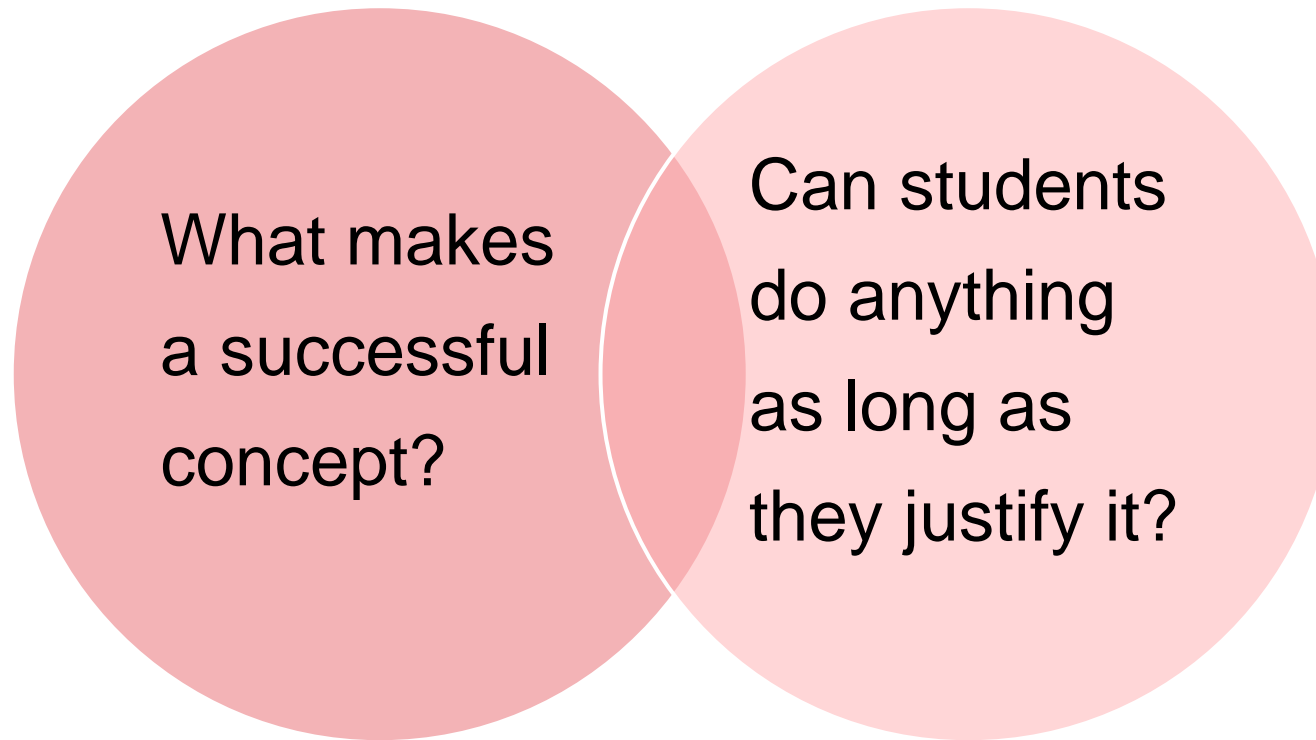
## Section C level based mark scheme

<b>Level 5</b>	20–24	<b>Sophisticated</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perceptive approach that makes sophisticated connections between the production concept and the performance text, demonstrating accomplished knowledge and understanding.</li><li>• Perceptive use of examples and key moments to justify creative ideas and intentions to create impact on the audience.</li><li>• Accomplished knowledge and understanding of the practitioner's methodologies, which are applied perceptively to their production concept, in relation to the specific element identified in the question.</li><li>• Perceptive research applied in relation to the original performance conditions with sophisticated connections made to the production concept.</li></ul>
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## Section C questions

C questions	Q5	Q6
2024	Voice and gesture	Sound elements
2023	Characterisation	Design elements
2022	One key character	Design elements
2019	Communicate effectively with the audience	Design elements
2018	Interpret character	Visual elements

# FAQs



# FAQs

Can students use  
a Component 3  
set text for  
Component 1 /  
Component 2 /  
Live Theatre  
Evaluation if they  
are not studying  
that text?

# Component 3

1

Do you practically explore the set texts? Are scenes/the play staged?

2

How do you make the design elements accessible?

3

How do support students with the exam time constraints?

4

What are the best ways to support students with evaluating live theatre?



## Component 3

Q and A

# AL Drama and Theatre qualification page


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**Exam materials (45)** **SORT BY** [Exam Series](#) [EXPAND ALL](#)

June 2024

June 2023

June 2022





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**CONTENT TYPE**

- ☒ All
- ☐ Course planner (2)
- ☐ Coursework support (4)
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**Teaching and learning materials (59)**

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- Course planner
- Coursework support
- Exemplar material
- FAQs
- Guidance for centres

# A Level Drama and Theatre qualification page

## Specification



**DOWNLOAD**

PDF | 1.1 MB

First teaching: **2016**  
First assessment: **2018**

Here you'll find everything you need to prepare for A level Drama and Theatre including our specification and sample assessment materials.

### High-quality assessments: Unbeatable support

- clear and accessible assessments
- unbeatable support throughout the qualification
- fast expert advice.

## Performance and set text choices 2024/25

Submit your performance text and set text choices for 2024/25.

[➤ Learn more](#)

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Forms and administration (9)

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Administrative support guide

 **A level Drama and Theatre Administrative Support Guide Summer 2025 Assessment**  
Version 3, updated 22.11.24  
| PDF 5.3 MB | 22 November 2024



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Administrative support



Component 1

**NEW**



Component 1 - Design Templates

**NEW**

| ZIP 381.5 KB | 28 June 2024



GCE Drama & Theatre NEA Authentication Sheet

| DOCX 41.8 KB | 20 February 2024



9DRO 01 Candidate Centre Information Sheet

For use for academic year 2023-2024

| XLSX 87.7 KB | 06 September 2023

Component 2

**NEW**



Component 3



# Key Dates for 2025-26 for year 13 students

Play Texts and Practitioners submissions	1st Sept 2025 - 7th March 2026
Component 2 assessment window	5th Jan - 24th April 2026
Component 2 uploading work	31st Jan – 6th May 2026
Confirmation of live theatre	7th April – 9th May 2026
Component 1 moderation submission deadline	15th May 2026
Component 3 examination	21st May 2026

# Subject Advisor page

[Drama, Theatre and Performing Arts](#)

Overview

News

BTEC in Performing Arts

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## Drama, Theatre and Performing Arts

GCSE and A level Drama June 2025 update

BTEC Performing Arts June 2025 update

Appointment booking service with your subject advisor

### GCSE and A level Drama June 2025 update

My latest update for June 2025 includes new training and support events for GCSE and A Level teachers this term, live productions of set texts happening this summer, and much more



[Access June 2025 update](#)

### Qualifications

Sort by: Qualification



A Level (1)



BTEC Entry Level and Level 1 (1)



BTEC Firsts (1)



BTEC Higher Nationals (8)



BTEC International Level 2 (1)



# Subject Advisor

Paul Webster

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Telephone: 03330 463 2535

Facebook: [Pearson Edexcel - Drama and Theatre teacher group](#)

Bookings appointments: 15 mins at a time that suits you

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/PearsonDramaandPerformingArts@pearsoneducationinc.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>

Monthly Updates:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/subjects/drama-theatre-and-performing-arts.html>



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