



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel
A Level Drama and Theatre
Component 2A: *Text in Performance*

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9DR0.02 Text in Performance, Non-Examined Assessment (NEA)

This component is externally assessed. This was the first full exam series since 2019, all components had changes to their assessment in light of the impact of covid, and following Centre Assessed Grades in 2020 and Teacher Assessed Grades in 2021.

In this component students were asked to develop and demonstrate theatre-making skills. For 2022, this meant centres selecting **either** 2A Monologue/Duologue **or** 2B Group Performance, working from **one** key extract. Candidates explored how to realise artistic intentions in performance.

For Component 2, students could enter as either a **Performer or a Designer**. The chosen area of focus in either 2A or 2B was then scaled up to make up a mark out of 60.

Candidates may complete this component either as a performer or as a designer.

The design roles are;

- costume design
- lighting design
- set design
- sound design.

All centres in 2022 uploaded materials onto the LWT for both 'live' performances and those assessed digitally. An important new document to support the work of the centre was the Centre Information Sheet or CIS form.

Centres were asked to;

- complete a CIS form for the centre, or a word CIS form per candidate.
- include a Statement of Intention for the monologue/duologue or the group performance.
- upload the text extract for each 2A candidate or 2B group.

Where centres saved the CIS form as a pdf, this made it problematic for examiners as marks need to be added to the CIS form(s) on the Learner Work Transfer platform.

Whilst the Statement of Intention is not an assessed part of the NEA, it provided a dialogue between the candidate and the examiner, giving their intentions behind the portrayal, chosen style/genre or decisions made regarding the design or performance that may have been pertinent to assessment.

In 2022, examiners reported that the SoI was sometimes used to justify interpretations of the chosen role that did not sit within the context of the play in performance.

Examiners also report that many SoI offered a real insight into the chosen portrayal or design in context, supporting the examiner in placing the work in the correct level.

In 2022 for **2A**, candidates worked alone or in a pair on either a monologue or a duologue. The new time limits for this series were clearly detailed in the Summer 2022 Support tab. Work under time was still subject to a sliding scale of mark reduction. Performers were assessed out of 24 on Vocal and Physical Techniques, Characterisation, Communication, Interpretation and Artistic Intention. **(AO2)**

Designers were also assessed out of 24, on Design Skills, Application of Materials, Creative Choices, Understanding of Design Function and Purpose and Creative Intent. **(AO2)**

In 2022 for **2B**, candidates worked on a group performance. Group sizes are clearly set out on page 36 of the specification. Performers were assessed on 3 assessment areas, each worth up to 12 marks, up to a maximum of 36. The assessment areas are Vocal and Physical skills,

Characterisation and Communication and Interpretation and Realisation of Artistic Intentions. **(A02)**

Designers are also assessed on 3 assessments areas - their design Skills using materials within time and resource constraints, Design in Context and Communication as well as Interpretation and Realisation of Artistic Intentions. **(A02)**

Marks for this NEA component are awarded as follows:

2A Monologue/Duologue/Design	24
2B Group Performance/Design	36

In the 2022 series, marks were then scaled up to the total mark for this component, 60 marks.

In order to support candidates in the 2022 series, the regulatory minimum performance times were changed to:

- monologue 1.5 minutes
- duologue 3 minutes
- group performance 3 minutes

This report is designed to feedback to centres on the delivery of Component 2 and address some of the issues raised by both centres and examiners. It will report on the successes in the first year after covid adjustments, as well as celebrating the work of candidates.

We are pleased to report that in 2022 we were able to offer live visits. Many centres chose a visit by an examiner. Digital assessment was offered to all International Centres and to any home centres who preferred this option in light of ongoing covid restrictions or issues. The option to select a live or digital assessment will continue in 2023.

Examiners reported seeing the full range of marks this series. This was for both live work seen and digital submissions. There were instances of full marks being awarded for both the group performance and the monologues/duologues, as well as candidates receiving marks in the limited level.

It was noted by examiners in this series:

- some centres had initially prepared 2 key extracts for **both** a monologue/duologue **and** a group performance.
- some centres failed to upload the correct paperwork on time, although we do recognise initial issues with the LWT.
- some candidates were sometimes unprepared for the demands of this component and produced limited work, or work that did not meet the minimum regulatory requirements.
- Centres appreciated the choice of a live visit or digital assessment.

It cannot be stressed enough how important it is for centres to read the Principal Examiner report(s), Specification, FAQs, Assessment Support Guides and other support materials each year.

Learner Work Transfer

The Learner Work Transfer platform was introduced for 2022, documentation and forms to support the examination process were not sent to examiners, but uploaded.

This meant that, for Component Two, centres opted for either 2A or 2B via their Exams Officer. Examiners reported that there were instances of work being uploaded to the incorrect code, which led to a lengthy process of re-uploading and sometimes a delay in the marking of work. There were issues with the LWT initially, these were resolved during the assessment process. The vast majority of centres and examiners reported no issues with the new system. The LWT allowed centres to upload materials in the same way regardless of whether they had selected a live visit or digital assessment.

There now follows some specific observations from the examination team, based on the observations of Examiners in 2022.

Many of the issues that candidates faced could have been avoided, if centres had carefully considered the available information or sought clarification from Drama Assessment or access the Ask the Expert service from Pearson.

This included, but was not limited to:

- Monologues and duologues which did not consider the significance of the performed extract within the text as a whole. In practice this meant that candidates did not consider the placement of other characters on the stage, or the inappropriate use of direct address to the audience, often treating the examiner or camera as the sole member of the audience.
- Some candidates reimagined the context of a monologue, meaning that it would not work within a production of the entire play.
- Monologues and duologues which were significantly longer than the maximum time permitted. This was most problematic when the climax or a key change in design or characterisation fell outside the maximum time limit.
- Group performance work which extended beyond the maximum time limit. This was most problematic when the most significant scene for a candidate fell outside the maximum time limit.
- Group performances where some characters, and therefore candidates, had very little stage time.

Text Extracts

For the monologue/duologue the extract **can** be edited to provide the right amount of material and still produce a coherent performance.

For a group performance, there is no need to retain the 'narrative arc', a performance of one act or scene is entirely appropriate. Examiners reported that both approaches were used and worked well.

Centres completed an online form regarding text choice, as detailed on page 7 of the specification, which was then checked by the Drama Assessment Team. This was available in the Autumn term for centres to upload their choice of texts.

All the text requirements for this component were detailed in Issue 4 of the A Level specification. This information was also in the Summer 2022 Support tab on the Pearson website.

There is a **free choice** of texts for centres, with the following constraints. The text extracts selected must meet the criteria given on pages 35 - 36 of the specification. They must be from plays professionally published, be substantial and provide sufficient depth and offer students the opportunity to demonstrate exploratory range and depth that is appropriate to the demands of A Level study.

Examiners reported that there were still some cases where this was not the case, for example performance texts downloaded/found in anthology books as stand-alone monologues, these texts lack depth or rigor and are therefore unsuitable for AL standard work. The **choice of**

performance text must also offer opportunity for candidates to respond as either performer and/or designer.

The requirement for the specification is that the texts in Component 2 must be different from the texts studied in Components 1 and 3, and the vast majority of centres adhered to this requirement. Examiners reported that there were still instances of centres selecting monologues or duologues, and group performances from these Forbidden Texts – Antigone and Equus were seen by examiners in the 2022 series.

In Component 2 centres do not need to select a specific practitioner or style of performance, but there is an expectation that **interpretations must include placing the key extracts in the context of the whole performance.**

As always, the selection of suitable texts, *for* candidates in the group performance or *by* candidates regarding the monologues or duologues, is key. Examiners reported some candidates struggling with the complexities of the chosen performance text or style.

Popular texts for Group Performances included Monster, Five Kinds of Silence, Girls Like That, Memory of Water, Medea, The Pillowman, Metamorphosis, Pool (No Water), Things I Know to be True, How to Disappear Completely, Our Country's Good and My Mother Said.

Popular texts for Monologues or Duologues included Things I Know to be True, Goodbye Charles, The Woman Who Cooked Her Husband, 4:48 Psychosis, The Pillowman, BU21, Lemons, Lemons, Lemons and various classic texts by Shakespeare or Greek playwrights.

Quality of recordings, group sizes and timings:

The majority of centres provided recordings that were clear in terms of visual and audio quality. The most effective recordings began with a clear image of the group in a long shot and candidates were then introduced by name and candidate numbers.

Centres that used identification placards or an on-screen titles or sign-systems provide the examiner with a helpful visual aid for monitoring purposes. Examiners reported that it was effective when candidates introduced themselves by name, number, character and distinguishing features/costume choices to demonstrate excellent practice, for both live work and digital submissions.

Centres are reminded that further guidance on 'Best practice when recording performance' is available on pages 77 - 78 of the AL specification (Appendix 4).

The recording is an essential tool for monitoring or in case of a Review of Marking and Moderation, centres are advised to do as much as possible to ensure the quality of the recording is as high as possible. The camera should be in a position to capture the dynamics and details of the performance.

Where the camera and the examiners were given 'the same best seat in the house', this supported examiners and the monitoring team in seeing the performance as best intended by the teacher-director. **Examiners reported there were instances that felt like the examination came second to the performance elements or audience experience, which does not benefit candidates.**

Some centres used dim lighting to create mood/atmosphere, limiting how much examiners could see of candidates, or loud music was used to underscore action which drowned out dialogue. **Please note - where the Visiting or Digital examiner cannot see who is/isn't speaking, they cannot attribute marks.**

Centres are no longer required, where a 'live examiner' does not visit the centre, to provide either a suggested level or mark for candidates with the centre recording.

To improve the overall quality of recordings:

- Centres should avoid frequent or prolonged high/low-lighting levels, as candidates must be clearly seen on the recording
- Make sure that music/sound is not played too close to the camera/microphone as this sound often impairs vocal clarity in performance
- Check the camera is placed in a strong, preferably central position to capture the performance
- Consider using costume to visually distinguish each candidate – **do not dress all candidates identically**
- Ensure that the microphone/sound recording is effective, prior to performance, by recording a dress run and reviewing this.

Centres are reminded to check all recordings, prior to uploading.

Centres are reminded to ensure performance times and group sizes comply with the requirements of the specification. Details are outlined on pages 36 and 37 of the specification and further exemplified in the ASG.

It is pleasing to report that examiners found no reported cases of students' group performances in 2B failing to meet the minimum Ofqual regulatory minimum performance time of 3 minutes. However, examiners reported seeing work for 2A that failed to meet the Ofqual regulatory minimum performance time of 1.5 minutes for a monologue or 3 minutes for a duologue.

Centre Visits/Recording Day

We would like to remind all centres that **examiners cannot speak to candidates** - other than to identify them prior to the performance. Many examiners reported they were asked when they would like to speak to candidates to talk through the NEA.

It is clear most centres had read and were familiar with the Safeguarding policy, which is in place to protect candidates and examiners. **Thank you to centres who accommodate these requirements without being reminded.** Examiners must not be left alone with candidates under any circumstances.

Many thanks to the vast majority of centres **who provide a desk, lamp and space for examiners in which to complete their marking during the examination session** in the auditorium. Similarly, a private space, often with refreshments, in which to go to between performances is always appreciated by examiners. This allowed them to check their marks against the National Standard, whilst giving centres the opportunity to reset the performance space.

Examiners had much appreciation once again for centres who have used costume colour, labels or other creative means to differentiate between candidates. Examiners find clear, at a glance, differences between candidates invaluable. However, there are still many reported instances of identically dressed, made up and hair styled performers with little or no defined means of identification. **Centres are strongly encouraged to not dress or make-up candidates identically, but to look for creative solutions to varying appearance in ensemble work.**

Centres once again responded positively to the request for an **agreed start/end indication for the monologue/duologue performances.** These ranged from lights up/down, a beep from a centre timer or a signal from the teacher, all of these worked well.

As previously stated in 2019, candidates no longer received 0 marks for work undertime. For 2022 the sliding scale of penalties is detailed below:

1.5-minute minimum for monologue**Total time (minutes and seconds)****Percentage applied to final mark**

1:25 to 1:29	93.75%
1:20 to 1:24	87.50%
1:14 to 1:19	81.25%
1:09 to 1:13	75.00%
1:03 to 1:08	68.75%
0:57 to 1:02	62.50%
0:52 to 0:56	56.25%
0:46 to 0:51	50.00%
0:40 to 0:45	43.75%
0:34 to 0:39	37.50%
0:29 to 0:33	31.25%
0:23 to 0:28	25.00%
0:17 to 0:22	18.75%
0:11 to 0:16	12.50%
0:06 to 0:10	6.25%
0:00 to 0:05	0.00%

3-minute minimum for duologue/group performance**Total time (minutes and seconds)****Percentage applied to final mark**

2:55 to 2:59	96.88%
2:50 to 2:54	93.75%
2:45 to 2:49	90.63%
2:39 to 2:44	87.5%
2:33 to 2:38	84.38%
2:27 to 2:32	81.25%
2:22 to 2:26	78.13%
2:16 to 2:21	75%
2:10 to 2:15	71.88%
2:04 to 2:09	68.75%
1:59 to 2:03	65.63%
1:53 to 1:58	62.5%
1:47 to 1:52	59.38%
1:41 to 1:46	56.25%
1:36 to 1:40	53.13%
1:30 to 1:35	50%
1:25 to 1:29	46.88%
1:20 to 1:24	43.75%
1:14 to 1:19	40.63%
1:09 to 1:13	37.5%
1:03 to 1:08	34.38%
0:57 to 1:02	31.25%
0:52 to 0:56	28.13%
0:46 to 0:51	25%
0:40 to 0:45	21.88%
0:34 to 0:39	18.75%
0:29 to 0:33	15.63%
0:23 to 0:28	12.5%
0:17 to 0:22	9.38%
0:11 to 0:16	6.25%
0:06 to 0:10	3.13%
0:00 to 0:05	0.00%

Examiners on live visits noted there were some centres who did not provide access to the chosen texts. Centres are reminded to provide access to the **full scripts on the night for both the group performance and the monologue/duologues**. It is not necessary to upload a full script prior to the visit. Examiners reported that some centres who had selected to digitally submit work, submitted the full 10 page text extract which helped contextualise the work, without uploading a full script.

After the Visit

Most centres uploaded the recording within the 7 working day time limit. It was much appreciated where centres were able to upload recordings as soon as possible, as this aided the monitoring process for examiners.

Where centres had selected digital assessment, examiners were appreciative of centres who uploaded within the 7 day limit, instead of the final deadline, for monitoring purposes.

Audiences

Post Covid, many centres chose to have only other candidates for audience –which was perfectly acceptable.

Some centres had an audience of family, friends and other candidates for the 2B performances, in smaller centres this was for both the 2A and 2B performances. Examiners reported that larger centres often chose to separate the group performances from the monologue/duologues. The group performances were usually performed in the evening or straight after school to a larger audience, with monologue/duologue performances often in the school day to drama classes or other candidates.

Examiners reported there were fewer performances where the audience did not appreciate the examination conditions required.

Audiences do not need to be silent to support candidates, indeed they were many instances of supportive audiences at comic performances who were receptive and laughing. Where centres had a well-chosen or well-prepared audience who understood the themes or issues, this allowed a clear appreciation and supportive environment for the examination and candidates.

Monologues or Duologues

As previously mentioned, there were still occurrences of monologues performed in a style of 'direct address' usually performed to the audience and/or at the examiner. This can disadvantage candidates if this would not reflect an *understanding of the playwright's intentions* within a performance of the text as a whole. **Candidates were most successful where the other character(s) being addressed were clearly indicated within the performance space by the candidate.**

As previously stated, centres do not need to select a specific practitioner or style of performance for this component. This is particularly the case with a monologue performance. Examiners saw effective work taken out of context, i.e., delivered to the audience as if they were the other character. This was usually a conscious decision by candidates, as stated in their Statement of Intention. **Where this occurred, these candidates were unable to achieve a mark above Level 3, Competent.**

Work that exceeded the maximum performance time could not be credited by examiners.

There are still centres/candidates who choose to type up monologues, duologues or the text for the group piece. Examiners reported that it was **far more helpful where centres had included a photocopy of the original text.**

It was most helpful when:

- The individual's SOI are uploaded and/or linked to individual candidates on the LWT
- The extract as performed:
 - was a photocopy from the full play text (not a book of monologues)
 - included the preceding 1-2 pages before the start of the monologue/ duologue
 - included the following 1-2 pages after the end of the monologue/ duologue
 - had the starting point for the performance clearly marked
 - had the end point for the performance clearly marked
 - had the dialogue to be spoken by each actor clearly highlighted
 - had any cuts to comply with the time restrictions clearly marked

A full range of work was seen by the examining team. Lower-level work was found to demonstrate some or all of the following characteristics;

- the Monologue was performed out to the audience, and this did not suit either the performance style or playwright's intentions
- the Monologue/Duologue was under the regulatory time limit or the candidate left the stage before the end of the scheduled performance
- there was a lack of vocal or physical technique or variety
- the text selected by the candidate lacked depth, or was too challenging or was too removed from the experience of the candidate for them to realise it effectively
- the candidate was mostly static in performance
- the candidate was hard to hear
- the candidate was uneasy, lacked confidence or rushed the material

Characteristics of top-level work included;

- monologues performed in line with the playwright's intentions, with a variety of creative means employed to suggest other characters onstage
- monologue/Duologue meeting the regulatory time limit and not exceeding the maximum
- there was a range of vocal and physical techniques
- text selected by candidate/teacher was sufficiently challenging,
- candidates were confident and made the most of their performance time

Group Performances

Examiners reported that Group Performances, and therefore candidates, were most effective where teachers had chosen an appropriate text for their cohort.

Lower level work was found to demonstrate some or all of the following characteristics;

- a candidate followed the ensemble, lacking attack/purpose/energy
- the performance lacked sense of ownership by candidates
- the text selected by the teacher(s) was too challenging or too simplistic for the cohort
- there was a lack of vocal or physical technique and/or variety
- the role(s) in the group performance did not allow enough depth of characterisation
- the candidate was not given sufficient stage time or too much stage time and was unable to maintain role, energy or dramatic tension
- the candidate did not appear until very close to the maximum time limit
- the communication with the rest of the cast and the audience was limited
- the candidate lacked confidence or was uneasy and/or performed behind the cast/flow of the performance

Examiners reported that there were many innovative and effective performances.

Characteristics of top-level work for group work included;

- a candidate was capable of leading the ensemble, with commitment, purpose and energy
- the performance had a real sense of ownership by the candidates and they engaged with the text
- the text selected by the teacher(s) was appropriate in challenge for the cohort
- there was a real range of vocal and physical techniques demonstrated
- their role allowed depth of characterisation and/or the candidate was able to multi role with confidence and distinction
- the candidates were given appropriate stage time and were therefore able to maintain their role(s), energy or dramatic tension
- the communication within the cast and the audience was sophisticated, and the candidates were well rehearsed
- the candidates were confident and performed with focus

Design Candidates

Design is less popular as a route than performance. However, there were instances of candidates for each design option for both the Group and the Monologue/Duologue Performance.

Lower level Design work was found to demonstrate some or all of the following characteristics:

- the design did not enhance the performance for the audience
- the technical skill was limited and/or felt like it had not been worked on for the full length of the rehearsal period
- the Design was not integral to the piece and felt like an afterthought or that the designer had worked in isolation from the performers
- the design lacked context, a sense of genre or style and/or link to the playwright's intentions of the piece
- the creative choices were obvious, limited or lacked depth and detail

Characteristics of top-level Design work for group work included;

- design which fully enhanced the performance
- technical skill that was sophisticated and had clearly been worked on throughout the rehearsal period, not as a bolt-on
- design that was integral to the piece and at the heart of the creative process, and where the designer had clearly worked with the performers
- design that had context, a sense of genre or style and/or a link to the playwright's intentions for the piece
- creative choices were sophisticated, authentic, and had depth and detail

International Centres

A small team of examiners and the Senior Team assessed work from International centres digitally, due to covid and travel restrictions. There were no International visits in 2022.

There was some confusion from some International centres about the final deadline for submission of recorded performances and/or materials. The window for performances was February 1st to 31st March, and International Centres were expected to provide the CIS forms and materials on the LWT by the final deadline of 15th April. International centres received specific information from Drama Assessment about approaches to this component in 2022.

Nearly all centres had accessed the PE report, ASG and support resources, so were therefore able to provide the examiners with the correct documentation and performances uploaded on time.

The evidence was that most candidates had been well-prepared for the examination and supported through the process by the teacher(s). Where this was not the case, it was for similar reasons to those mentioned previously in this report with, for example the choice of the text for

the group performance appearing to have been chosen without the specific needs and abilities of the group in mind.

Administration

Pearson are aware that some forms and administration requirements have changed since the launch of this specification and centres are thanked for their cooperation.

Consortium centres

Examiners have seen a definite increase in consortium centres for the new AL specification. Examiners noted it was very helpful where centres had included each centre number with the candidate numbers on the CIS form. Centres reported to examiners that their Exams Officers had communicated their consortium arrangement to the Allocations Team to Pearson, but still received duplicated contact by examiners to all centres within the consortium.

Centres are reminded that there are a number of resources available to support centres delivering the 2016 specification. Online support material is also available through the Pearson/Edexcel website.

'Ask the Expert' support service provides centres with answers and information regarding common issues, misconceptions or queries. Centres are also advised that the FAQ page is updated regularly and designed to answer questions regarding the delivery of the specification. It is important centres look at support materials, as this will help them gauge the expected standard and requirements of this component.

The web address is:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/drama-and-theatre-2016.html>