

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2013

GCSE Drama (5DR01)
Paper 01 and 02 Drama Exploration

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Summer 2013

Publications Code UG035747

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5DR01 Drama Exploration

Introduction

This is the third year of examination of the three unit GCSE specification 2DR01.

As the significant changes to the legacy specification 1699 have therefore been in place for three examination years, centres new to 2DR01 but familiar with 1699 are advised to refer to the 2011 report for a summary of changes as a result of unitisation.

Content of 5DR01

This unit asks students to practically explore a specific theme, topic or issue over a series of teacher-led and teacher-assessed practical sessions. These sessions must total six hours of exploration for each teaching group, during which the students must be given opportunities to enhance their understanding of the theme, topic or issue through a minimum of two different types of stimuli, making use of at least four Drama Strategies, and at least two uses of the Drama medium. Students should also be given opportunities to make use of the elements of drama within their work, developing an understanding of how these can assist and clarify dramatic form. The centre has absolute free choice as to this topic/ theme/ issue and of the stimulus materials chosen to explore it.

Marks awarded should reflect the application and imagination shown in the workshops as students' practically explore the theme, topic or issue. A DVD/video recording of one sample practical session, with five students identified for moderation purposes, is a requirement of the unit, and for this reason students must identify themselves on the recording with clear statement of name and student number. Teachers must also clearly identify students on the D1c Sample Session Record card.

The Practical Exploration process is evaluated in the Documentary Response to Unit one, an on-paper evaluation, with a word maximum of 2,000 words. This piece of work must be completed in Controlled Conditions. Students must be given the opportunity to record the exploration process over the course of the unit. These notes may be used to support the completion of the final documentary response in the Controlled Conditions Assessment sessions and may be refined to encapsulate the students' evaluative response to the exploration process and the way in which they explored the theme, topic or issue throughout this exploration. All reflection, analysis and evaluation within the Documentary Response must relate to the six hour practical exploration.

There are no marks awarded for the production of any performance within the 6 hour Exploration or for the evaluation of any performance within the Documentary Response. While the sharing of work in process will be part of the six hours, the work shared will not have been polished or prepared to a performance standard as what is being assessed here is the process rather than the product of the practical exploration. Similarly the evaluation of the

work shared will link clearly to the exploration of the theme, topic or issue rather than to a specific performance or to performance skills.

Verbal evaluation as part of the six hour Exploration may be useful to the moderator in determining students' engagement with and understanding of the practical drama taking place in the session; however it must be noted that Evaluation itself is only assessed through the written Documentary Response

There is essential guidance for centres in the Administrative Support Guide (ASG) document. This document is updated each year and includes the assessment forms and instructions for Unit 1. It is required for all units as it includes information about procedures for Units 2 and 3; Centres should download it from the website as soon as it is available at the end of October.

In addition, all the Assessment forms for all three units will once again be available as a Word document which can be downloaded and edited for those centres who prefer to word process the teacher-examiner comments.

The main link to the Drama home page is:

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/drama/Pages/default.aspx>

And the quick link is:

<http://www.edexcel.com/gscedrama>

Records of Work (ROW)

War, Madness/A Different State of Mind and Outsiders remained popular as seen in 2011 and 2012 and in the Legacy Specification 1699. There were more units based on Oppression, Capital Punishment and Gun Crime in evidence and the London Riots of 2011 also remained inspirational for a number of centres. Stimuli tended to be largely literary with a significant proportion of centres using music and/ or images to supplement written stimuli. There were units which tended to focus on one particular story or character such as Ruth Ellis or Craig & Bentley. Generally, centres have continued to approach this unit pragmatically by choosing topics, themes or issues of which they have had previous experience of delivering.

While this use of existing knowledge and expertise was successful for many centres, it also meant that, in some cases, the demands of the single practical Assessment Objective of Exploration were not fully met. This was most clearly seen where Records of Work clearly referred to the legacy specification AOs: Response, Development and Evaluation. Where Records of Works showed that centres had reviewed and updated the unit, students were most able to meet the Assessment Criteria at an effective level.

The presentation of Records of Work this year varied widely and included annotated schemes of work, detailed lesson plans and brief lists of planned tasks. The use of published schemes of work which are appropriate for the Programme of Study but may not meet the requirements of the unit was seen from a number of centres. The majority of centres did submit a

separate ROW for each teaching group within the cohort although many did not clearly differentiate what each teaching group had done over the 6 hours. It is essential to note that the Records of Work must clearly outline all the exploration activities that students actually completed over the 6 hours rather than speculative activities that may be done over the course of the Drama Exploration. It is not necessary to submit lesson plans for each session; however, once again the practice seen did include timings and clear records of the actual strategies, medium and elements of Drama used in each session by each teaching group. A copy of the stimulus material, the Documentary Response notes tasks and/ or guidance sheets were helpfully presented by many centres and where this was the case, such additions aided the moderation process. Centres presented their records of work both in the future tense ("students will complete...") the present tense ("students complete...") and the past ("students completed...") and any of these options are acceptable provided that the activities listed are those actually completed rather than a planned scheme of possible tasks.

There were this year many centres where the distinction between the sharing of 'work in progress' and the performing of polished work was clearly understood; in the context of Unit 1 exploration, sharing is a highly appropriate activity and helpful to both teacher-assessor and moderator. The production of polished performance work however is not an appropriate exploration activity. A useful distinction to note, observed in many centres this year, is that in preparing for polished performance, students' will tend to repeat rather than develop ideas, and will focus their work on the audience. There were centres who continued to focus their 6 hours of practical on performance rather than exploration, using drama strategies as performance techniques or tools for rehearsal rather than as a method of gaining a deeper knowledge of the chosen theme, topic or issue.

The most successful ROWs offered students the opportunity to explore and experiment with form and were based on challenging issues/topics/themes which caught the imagination and interest of the students. Higher achieving centres clearly addressed the need for a range of strategies/medium in each session of the 6 hours, while less effective ROWs tended to show the use of one strategy per session or to make use of more basic strategies [eg freeze frame] without offering students the opportunity to develop these.

Practical Evidence

The practical activities carried out for the Sample Session ranged from the highly imaginative and clearly focused on the immediate exploration of the chosen theme, topic or issue, to the recording of activities which can and should take place outside of the 6 hour exploration such as note-taking, gaining knowledge of the stimulus material and warm up activities unrelated to the theme, topic or issue in question. The role of the teacher was of vital importance and it was noted that the most effective sample session recordings showed the teacher making a committed attempt to act as both teacher-assessor and facilitator, supporting student exploration rather than directing students too closely.

The majority of centres enabled students to access drama strategies and the use of the Drama medium in the recorded session. Where strategies were used at an appropriate pace and then developed into further exploration, generally students were more creative, had greater opportunities for collaboration, and their work was of a higher quality in all respects. Where the pace of activities lacked challenge, for example the completion of one still image as the main task for the session, students tended to drift into repetition and/or lose focus and of necessity, this limited the outcome for all students.

Student Identification

In 2013, while many centres had ensured that the five sample students were easily identifiable, moderators reported that identification was still a problem in some sample sessions. In these cases, students were very difficult to make out or identify from the evidence provided. Often students were not identified at the start of the recording and/or were not made visually easy to distinguish.

Filmed sessions which supported the moderation process in terms of identification and tracking of the sample students were those where students were clearly identified at the start; best practice was seen in centres where a full length shot was used for the identification 'line-up' and where students spoke their names and student numbers clearly and with an even pace. Some examples of excellent practice included the use of coloured bibs or t-shirts to differentiate the students and/ or the provision of photographs of the five sample students as they appeared in the session; this was especially helpful in larger teaching groups. Some students held up an A4 sheet printed with their student name and number as they identified themselves to camera at the start of the session. All of these practices were extremely helpful to moderators. Similarly centres where the judicious use of panning and zooming in the filming of the session and/ or the groups were encouraged to rotate around the space so that all students could be seen working, made the process of moderation effective and efficient.

By contrast, the use of small coloured ribbons and sticky labels on student uniforms was not helpful as these were not easy to distinguish on the recording.

The Importance of the Recording

The requirement of the unit is for a single unedited teaching session, ideally of one hour and of no longer than two hours in length. This must be recorded from a fixed camera position onto a clearly labelled disc enclosed in a hard, protective case and playable on a domestic DVD player. The quality of the DVD/VHS recording is of paramount importance; centres must ensure that they are able to produce a clear, good quality recording for the moderator. While many centres had taken on board feedback from 2012 and the information in the ASG, there were also centres this year where this was not the case.

The majority of centres provided their recorded evidence on DVD with very few centres submitting VHS tapes. There were some examples where DVDs were not formatted for a domestic DVD player, were unclearly chapterised or un-labelled, all of which were problematic for moderators. There were also a number of DVDs of generally poor quality, as well as some centres with edited material and/or who had supplied more than two hours of evidence. There were also centres who supplied more than one DVD of evidence per unit.

In some cases there were students identified on the sample session whose work was not sufficiently visible to camera to support the moderation process. There were also centres that made use of a 'roaming' camera and/or who asked students to explain their ideas to camera; this practice did not support students in their exploration as the camera/teacher-assessor became an intrusion/interruption and as marks awarded for this paper are for practical exploration only. As in 2012, the best practice was seen where teacher assessors had seemingly viewed the recording although this is not a requirement of the specification.

Further details about the importance of the recording are available in the ASG document on the Edexcel GCSE Drama website.

Marking of the Sample Session

Teacher-assessors are required to select the five sample students retrospectively, based on their achievement in this session only. Where teachers had identified their highest, middle achieving and lowest students based on their overall mark for the 6 hour assessment or their predicted grades for the unit, regardless of the quality of these students' achievement in the single session submitted, it was difficult or impossible for moderators to agree centre rank order for the individual session.

While many centres made effective use of the D1c (Sampled Students' Record Card) to record marks and comments regarding the achievement of the selected students during the sample session, there were still teacher-assessors who offered only repetition of the assessment criteria, which did not support moderation or those who commented on the whole six hours rather than on the sample session. As in 2012, teacher assessors were required to make a summative comment on students' achievement over the 6 hour exploration on the D1a Controlled Assessment Record card.

It is to be expected that marks may vary to some degree between this session and the whole 6 hour exploration. However, the sample session must provide evidence which supports the levels of achievement of that specific teaching group and this year centres were once again required to sign an authentication to this effect.

Administration of the Sample Session

Detailed identification comments on the D1c, where they were provided, were very helpful to moderators. Where teacher assessors had described students' appearance (for example "long brown hair"), this was often less

helpful than where such description was combined with comments about where the students were or what they did in the session (for example, "Dark hair tied up, working in group left hand side nearest camera for task one"). The best practice this year was seen where centres used the D1c comment sheet to alert the moderator to specific moments on the DVD where the sample students could be observed clearly.

Similarly the completion of a detailed D1b DVD/VHS Time Record Sheet was of immense help to moderators as was the excellent practice in some centres of identifying the specific activities that related to the sample students in the box at the top of the D1c. However there were centres where teacher-assessors completed neither in any depth and this did not support the moderation process.

Documentary Response

The majority of Documentary Responses were this year presented on A4 paper, word processed and in a continuous prose format. Where stills/diagram inclusions were annotated well, this could demonstrate understanding, but too often such tasks were reported or descriptive and did not aid student evaluations. Writing frames were used in lots of centres which was often limiting to more able students, particularly where the structure/question asked did not support evaluation and so responses were weak, rarely developing beyond description.

There was still evidence of students analysing the stimuli/topic rather than evaluating the exploration work. There was sometimes a lack of clear, justified evaluation and in other examples, evaluation was simplistic/undeveloped, for example students commenting that a task was 'effective' without explaining of why or how. However it was very pleasing to note that many centres this year had supported students in providing clear, specific examples of both their own work and the work of others, and the best practice showed students evaluating these very specific examples clearly and in balance. Equally it was evident that more centres this year had prepared students in considering their journey over the unit, with a sense of cross-reference between sessions, and of a development of ideas as a result of completing the six hour assessment. It is not a requirement that students write about all sessions; however, the highest achieving students will tend to communicate a sense of the whole six hours by clearly evaluating their learning about the theme/ topic/issue throughout the exploration process.

In most centres, students recorded accurate word counts for the documentary evidence but there were others where this was approximate, where the word count was not completed and/or where students had clearly exceeded the maximum number of words. In cases where the word limit was exceeded, some of the best work came after the 2,000 words, although this was not always the case. Documentary Responses were moderated only up to the point where the word count was exceeded.

Some very good practice was seen this year by centres where teacher-assessors drew the moderator's attention to specific example aspects of the

documentary response, without repeating the assessment criteria. Instead, these teacher-assessors justified clearly the mark awarded or simply highlighted helpful examples. Some noted the point at which they had stopped marking in overlong responses which was helpful to moderators. However, there were also centres where comments were brief and the marks awarded were justified only by quotations from the Assessment grid, unsupported by examples.

OPTEMS Deadlines and Administration

Centres were this year supported by once again being allocated a single moderator for both 5DR01 and 5DR02; as in 2012 this supported the moderation process and the administration for centres considerably and was widely praised.

The majority of centres completed both sets of OPTEMS for the unit accurately, although there were centres who completed an overall unit total on one or both of these OPTEMS or when entering marks electronically. Centres are reminded that the two papers which make up Unit 1 are assessed and moderated discretely. A unit total is therefore not required on either OPTEMS. Further guidance regarding this can be found in this year's ASG document.

The majority of teacher-assessors ensured that OPTEMS sheets and the Assessment forms were signed by the student and/or the standardising teacher, as appropriate. It must be emphasised that this is a requirement of the unit. The majority of centres met the deadline for the submission of Internally Assessed Units, which is a standard date for all subjects at all levels. Those who did not often included a letter of explanation to their moderator. Please note that although there are no extensions to the deadline, where there are genuine extenuating circumstances for a late submission, details of these circumstances must go direct to Edexcel via Examinations Officers. Similarly, in the rare instances where materials are submitted late, it is very helpful to moderators if centres notify Edexcel of this immediately.

Where there was confusion over administrative matters, centres generally responded quickly to the E6 forms from moderators and worked effectively with the Closure and Completion team at Edexcel to rectify these errors.

The Quality of Work Submitted for 5DR01: Paper 01 and Paper 02

High scoring work had some of these characteristics:

- Both papers reflected 30% of the teaching of a five term GCSE course with clear evidence that students were making use of strategies introduced as part of an earlier Programme of Study
- Students had been well taught and given the opportunity to practically explore a well-chosen theme, topic or issue through at least two appropriate, challenging stimuli

- Key lessons were detailed in the Record of Work that allowed students to focus on the use of strategies, the Drama medium, and the elements of Drama in terms of exploring the chosen theme, topic or issue
- The Sample Session was well focused and showed a range of strategies and uses of the Drama medium, with the emphasis on the students exploring the theme, facilitated by the teacher rather than on the teacher directing the students
- Students' Documentary Responses were the end product of a process of recording and reflecting on their exploration of the chosen theme, topic or issue
- These were concise and made full use of the available number of words but did not exceed them; they evaluated with clarity and communicated a sense of what they had learned through the exploration
- Students had clearly evaluated their own exploration work, and that of others within their teaching group, supporting their evaluation with clear, specific and well justified examples from the 6 hour practical exploration
- Teacher-assessor comments on the D1a for Paper 02 and the D1c for Paper 01 were detailed and specific, allowing the moderator to see examples of how and why marks had been awarded; D1a Paper 01 comments were a helpful summary of the student's overall achievement

Middle scoring work had some of these characteristics:

- In at least one paper, less than 30% of the teaching of a five term GCSE course had been spent on the on the preparation for and delivery of the unit and/or evidence that some of the strategies used had not been introduced as part of an earlier Programme of Study
- Themes/topics/issues did not fully meet the needs of the students
- Practical activities were not sufficiently explorative and/or there was lack of balance between teacher facilitation and student exploration
- The sample session showed a lack of depth, breadth and understanding to students' practical work and/or a focus on performance in aspects of the session
- Students' practical work in the sample session lacked a consistently sharp focus on the exploration of the chosen theme, topic or issue, or lacked consistent commitment or engagement on the part of the students.
- Documentary Responses were too long or did not make full use of the allowable word maximum

- Evaluation was not rooted in practical exploration or did not offer specific examples of students own work and/or the work of others
- Teacher-assessor comments were brief or repeated the Assessment Criteria and did not help the moderator see why marks had been awarded

Low scoring work had some of these characteristics:

- Evidence that far less than 30% of the teaching of a five term GCSE course had been spent on the preparation for and delivery of the unit, and/ or that strategies used were unfamiliar to many of the students
- Themes/topics/issues were poorly chosen, and/or were not clearly understood and/or explored by students
- Practical activities were teacher dominated in the recorded session and/or the ROW
- The sample session activities showed a lack of depth and or breadth to students' practical work practical and/or a focus on performance throughout the session
- Students' practical work in the sample session lacked focus on the exploration of the chosen theme, topic or issue, or lacked consistent commitment and engagement on the part of the students
- Documentary Responses exceeded the word limit and/or failed to make use of the allowable word maximum; these pieces of work were overly dependent on descriptive and/or reported comment rather than evaluation
- Tasks with little opportunity for evaluation were included such as factual information about the theme topic or issue or 'in role' writing tasks unrelated to the exploration process

Edexcel Feedback and Support to Centres

Results Plus

The breakdown for the moderated marks for both Paper 01 and 02 will be available to all centres as part of the free Results Plus service. This information will be available on line on results day. Centres are advised to ensure they have the information they need from their examinations officer to access this.

Enquiries About Results (EAR)

These are completed by members of the senior team using the original Documentary Responses, Responses to Live Performance and/or Recordings as well as the Assessment Forms which have this year been returned to centres. An Enquiry can be requested on either Paper 01 or Paper 02 or on both aspects of the unit. EARs for this unit are for the whole centre as the original moderation process will be repeated by the EAR moderator and

centres will be charged for re-moderation unless centre marks are re-instated. A detailed report will be produced for each centre, providing feedback for the centre, and explaining the findings of the re-moderation process.

Ask the Expert

This has continued to be a very popular service. There were seasonal surges in queries regarding the administration of the unit, for example many queries were submitted in the post-results period of the early autumn term. It must be noted that the Ask the Expert team have no access to centre data, and cannot comment on the moderation process in terms of mark regression or on the content of E9 reports to centres. Where centres require more detailed information, an EAR must be requested for that paper; there will be specific information regarding the procedure for this on the GCSE Drama home page.

As in 2012, the senior team will once again this year use these trends to formulate and update the FAQs document on the website and to enable Edexcel to support centres with direct contact regarding specific issues. All queries are answered from home by the members of the senior examining team. All 'experts' are required to respond within 2 working days of receiving the query from Edexcel. Centres are advised to ensure that the correct email address is used, and that "GCSE Drama" and the appropriate Unit number are clearly indicated in the subject header of the email. This will aid centres in gaining a swift response as queries will be assigned to the correct 'Expert' in the first instance.

Centres are reminded that this is an email service only and that the purpose of the service is to give answers to brief queries regarding the specification. Approval of material to be used or any administrative issues are beyond the remit of the service.

Drama Subject Advisor

Paul Webster, a full time member of Pearson/Edexcel staff, has been available throughout 2012/13 to respond to centre queries and to support centres via telephone and email contact as well as via social networking sites. This has proved a successful innovation for the specification. The subject advisor contact details are available on the GCSE Drama home page.

Training From Edexcel

Edexcel has a programme of national face to face free standardisation meetings as well as online training. All details are available on the Edexcel website via the training home page.

Conclusion

Moderators reported that this year there was once again significantly clearer understanding of the Assessment Objectives for the specification evidenced

both in how centres delivered the unit and in the way that students demonstrated a clearer focus within their exploration and evaluation work. The standardisation materials which were sent to all centres in the autumn of 2012 also supported all in demonstrating how this unit might be delivered, and in providing a clear example of the standard for both A01 and A03.

While centres were generally accurate in terms of the rank order of marks for students sampled on both papers, many centres have continued to struggle to accurately judge the level at which their students are working, particularly the highest achieving students. Having said this, downwards adjustments were generally of fewer marks than seen in 2012; while there were also many centres in 2013 where marks were agreed was adjusted upwards, showing that there was overall, a clearer grasp of the standard in centres across the country.

The 2DR01 specification offers the widest possible range of students the opportunity to achieve at GCSE level. In Unit 1, students' understanding of the chosen theme, topic or issue is heightened through their drama exploration, developing their creative, reflective and practical skills throughout the unit. The moderating team noted centres where good, excellent and outstanding practice supported students at all levels in 2013, and it continues to be self-evident that in addition to delivering the drama curriculum, 5DR01 offers students the opportunity to develop in maturity, empathy and understanding. The dedicated teachers of GCSE Drama must be congratulated for their efforts to support all their students in all aspects of Drama through this unit.

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