

Frequently Asked Questions - GCSE 2009 Drama

5DR01 Unit 1: Drama Exploration 5DR02 Unit 2: Exploring Play Texts

5DR03 Unit 3: Drama Performance

General

When will I be sent the Administrative Support Guide (ASG)?

Centres will not be sent the ASG document. It is available to download and print from the Edexcel website.

Internally Assessed Units 5DR01 and 5DR02

What will happen if my students go over the word limit?

Teachers must stop marking at the word limit. Moderators will stop moderating once the word limit has been reached.

What if my Records of Work has more sessions than I used in the 6 hours of practical exploration?

You must annotate a Scheme of Work to indicate which tasks have been completed. A record of work indicates what was actually undertaken.

Can I indicate which portions of the Documentary Responses the Moderator should assess?

No. Teachers must not edit the student's documentary responses in any way nor lead the Moderator.

What should I write in the comment box on the Controlled Assessment Record Cards and the Sample Session Record Cards?

You should write clear examples to support the marks awarded rather than using quotation(s) from the Assessment Criteria.

What is a Record of Work?

A record of the activities which were actually completed by students rather than a plan of what they were intended to do.

How long should my recorded session be for Units 1 and 2?

Your recorded session should be of a normal teaching session of approximately one hour recommended for each unit up to a maximum of two hours.

I have finished the assessed session for Unit 1/2. The students did not identify themselves at the start of the session as required. What should I do?

You must record introductions of students separately. These must be edited in before the start of the session or submitted on a separate file/ disc. As far as possible students should be in the same clothes as worn in the sample session. If there has been a significant change in the appearance of a student, this must be highlighted in notes to the moderator. Photographs of the sample students are also extremely helpful and may be submitted to support the moderation process

Why have further samples been requested?

Samples are requested for awarding purposes, training purposes and moderators may need a further sample of work in the appropriate mark range.

Will the word count be included in the students' documentary response?

The word count must be clearly stated on the Controlled Assessment Record Card.

I have students who have missed one of the sessions in my Unit 1/Unit 2 practical exploration. What should I do?

Provided that you are happy that this absence was for genuine reasons, you may repeat the missed session with your absentee students as part of a larger group but you must only count the marks for this session for your absentee students. Marks for other students in the session must not be counted towards the 6 hours.

Alternatively, if a repeat session is not feasible for your students, for example if students have not been absent at the same time, you may run a follow up session in which you must only count the marks for this session for your absentee students. Marks for other students in the session must not be counted towards the 6 hours.

If you do not assess the students in repeat/ follow up sessions, their marks must reflect their absence accordingly.

How should I indicate student absence to my moderator?

You should note this on the student's D1a/D2a (the form stapled to the front of the Documentary Response) along with reference to any repeat/ follow up sessions or to the fact that marks were adjusted to reflect their absence. You should also indicate this on the ROW detailing, for any repeated sessions, what the students actually did in both sessions and ensuring that any follow up sessions are included in the ROW.

How do I decide whether to run repeat/ follow up sessions?

That is a centre decision.

Some of my students, who took part in a 'follow up' session for absentee students, wish to write about this in their Documentary Response. Is this permissible?

No. Students must only write about the sessions in which they were assessed.

Is there any support on controlled conditions?

Edexcel has provided support materials specific to GCSE Drama on the website.

Why do I have two OPTEMS to complete for each unit?

Centres will receive two sets of OPTEMS for each unit: one OPTEMS for practical assessment (paper 01) and one OPTEMS for documentary response (paper 02).

The lowest achieving student from my Unit 1/ 2 sample session has been withdrawn since the session was recorded and he/ she is not listed on the OPTEMS. What should I do?

This will not affect the moderation of your sample session. Submit the mark for this student on the D1c/ D2c sample session record card as normal.

Unit 1: Drama Exploration

Can I use the same themes, issues and play text for more than one year?

Yes, you can use the same themes, issues and play text but the delivery of the materials and structure must be adapted for each teaching group.

Must all classes use the same material?

No. Each teacher can select the materials and structure for their teaching group. However, the centre must ensure all teachers are internally standardised.

Can I mark each student for longer than 6 hours in each unit?

Each student must only be assessed on 6 hours of practical work for the unit.

Will students be penalised if they go over the word limit for the documentary response?

No, but Moderators will not moderate past the 2000 words.

My students have written in excess of the 2000 words. Can I edit their work before sending it to the Moderator?

No. The Teacher-Assessor must only mark the work submitted for moderation up to the maximum word limit of 2000 words.

Is there any support on controlled conditions?

There are a range of support materials specific to GCSE Drama available on the Edexcel website.

Can I plan to do a performance based on the themes, topics and issues as part of the assessment in Unit 1?

No you cannot. There are no marks for performance in Unit 1. If you wish to do a rehearsed performance for Unit 3, this must not form any part of the assessment for Unit 1.

Unit 2: Exploring Play Texts

Can I use the same play text for more than one year?

Yes, you can use the same play text but the delivery of the materials and structure must be adapted for each teaching group.

Must all classes use the same material?

No. Each teacher can select the materials and structure for their teaching group. However, the centre must ensure all teachers are internally standardised and must submit a Record of Work for every teaching group.

Must my students see a professional production?

No, but they must experience a live performance as a member of the audience and write about it. Recordings will be disallowed.

Do my students have to go to the theatre for the Unit 2 response to live performance?

For Unit 2, your students must be able to respond to the work of others in a live performance. This may be a live performance in a professional theatre; it could also be of a performance within your centre of visiting actors, students or peers.

Must my students see a performance of the text I am exploring in Unit 2?

No. There need not be any connection between the play text explored in Unit 2 and the performance.

Is there any support on controlled conditions?

Edexcel is providing support materials specific to GCSE Drama on the website.

Can I mark each student for longer than 6 hours?

Each student must only be assessed on 6 hours of practical work for the unit.

Will students be penalised if they go over the word limit for the documentary response?

No, but Moderators will not moderate past the word limit.

Can the documentary response to live theatre be about the same play they have explored for Unit 2?

Yes.

How do I mark my students for their performance of scenes through the text of Unit 2?

You cannot. There are no marks for performance in Unit 2.

May my students include an extract of the Unit 2 text in their documentary response?

Only where the students have explored that extract in the 6 hours. The extract should not count as part of the student's maximum word limit.

Do my students have to go to the theatre for the Unit 2 response to live performance?

For Unit 2, your students must be able to respond to the work of others in a live performance. This may be a live performance in a professional theatre; it could also be of a performance within your centre of visiting actors, students or peers.

In Unit 2 my students enjoy devising scenes based around the characters in the play text. Does this comply with specification requirements?

No. All the assessed 6 hours must focus on exploration of the play text itself. For further guidance on the use of off-text activities please refer to the '*5DR02 - Exploring Play Texts: Off Text Information*', document which can be found under the '*Controlled Assessment Units 1 and 2, Key Information*' section at

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

My students explore alternative endings to the play text. Does this work meet specification requirements?

No. All the assessed 6 hours must focus on exploration of the play text itself.

How is unit 2 assessed differently to unit 1?

For the documentary response students must evaluate their use of mediums & elements for both units just as they must write about their own work & the work of others. Failure to do so will be reflected in the final mark awarded.

Strategies however must be evaluated for unit one and may be evaluated for unit 2. Students will have used them and will therefore find themselves referring to strategies, but the criteria does not demand this so marks will not be affected if they choose not to write about strategies in order to produce the more streamlined concise evaluation required for the Unit 2 documentary response.

Having said that, their evaluation of strategies will inevitably be intertwined with reference to mediums/ elements however, so students will still be rewarded for examples focusing on strategies.

Teachers therefore need to guide students to focus mainly on mediums and elements for the Unit 2 documentary response.

Unit 3: Drama Performance

When will my centre be sent the assignment brief?

The assignment brief will be available on the Edexcel website the last Monday in October every year. Hard copies will not be sent to centres for this specification.

When will I know who my examiner is for Unit 3?

Your examiner will contact you directly in February 2016. Edexcel does not give out examiners' details.

If I do not wish to have my allocated examiner, will Edexcel find a replacement?

No, all examines have been standardised and have agreed their allocation. All examiners will have to inform Edexcel of any centres where there may be a conflict of interest. If a centre does not wish to have the allocated examiner, a recording must be made and sent to Edexcel.

How long should my students spend preparing for their performance?

This is entirely a centre decision. However, 6-8 weeks is used by many centres.

Can my students wear costumes for Unit 3?

Yes. Centres MUST ensure that all students can clearly be identified by both the visiting examiner and in the recording. Students must not wear similar clothing e.g all dressed in black.

Can my students perform longer than the time allowed in the specification?

Examiners will only mark up to the time limit specified in the specification.

I do not have any technical facilities, will this affect my students' marks?

No. Performance students are marks on the criteria as published in the specification.

My students performance is considerably shorter, will this affect their marks? Very short pieces can be self penalising. The examiner must have sufficient time to identify and assess individuals.

In Unit 3 , a group in my centre wants to perform a piece, but there is an additional role. Can a non-examination student perform with the group?

No. A non-examination student can only be involved in a performance in extreme circumstances e.g. absence of a student on the day of the examination. Edexcel & the visiting examiner must be informed of any arrangements with exact circumstances as soon as possible. A script could be cut or amended at the start or during the rehearsal period to nullify this problem.

Who can be in the audience for the performance?

This is entirely a centre decision. Most centres have an audience of the student's peers who are taking GCSE Drama, Some centres have other students, teachers, family and friends. Not all groups have to have the same audience. Less confident groups can have a smaller audience. Centre should consider what audience would be the most supportive to the students in the examination performances.

Why are examiners not permitted to talk to students/staff?

Unit 3 is an examination and all examiners are instructed to maintain a professional distance at all times during the time spent in the centre. This is to ensure as far as possible that the examination is in line with all other external examinations.

Is a lighting design student able to work from a detailed description of scenes and relevant cues rather than a fully written up script? The group are devising their work and I am unsure what the examiner will expect in the documentation. If he works from a detailed description and relevant verbal or action cues will this be sufficient as documentation?

For many devised performances students do not produce a script (although many do). Having a cue sheet that refers to either actions seen in performance or extracts of dialogue as will be seen and heard in the examination performance meets the requirements of the documentation.

We are restricted by facilities, budget and resources for lighting. Will a design student get credit for describing and demonstrating the techniques and designs he would have used e.g. in models for different scenes, even if these can't always be fully realised in the actual performance? Can he gain marks for something he says he would do in the presentation, that can be imagined in context by the examiner in the performance?

No, it is not possible for any marks to be awarded for work that is not seen in the examination performance. The presentation could include descriptions of why a certain lamp or lamps were not used in the final performance and the reasons why. But this must be based on the actual lamps available and must have been actually experimented with during the rehearsal period. There can be no marks awarded for any hypothetical lighting.

What does a costume designer need to do in the presentation? Can she use other students to model the costumes? Can the presentation be completed before the practical exam, without an audience?

You will find some information regarding Performance Support in the Examiner's Report for Unit 3 for the 2015 series. All presentations are done before the performance and most are just to the examiner and whoever is making the recording as well as the teacher. Some have the other students in that performance group but not all students or all audience. For costume in previous series most students have the performer/s in costume standing next to them and modeling the costume/s. This helps the Performance Support student who can point out any particular features that have influenced the design and realisation of the costume.

The portfolio can be either in a book or loose leaf folder that is shown to examiner as the student goes through the presentation or some students present this as a power point.

The presentation can be prerecorded and the recording shown to the examiner immediately before the performance but the vast majority of centres and students do a live presentation.



Support Services

There are several other support services available to help you in your teachings of GCSE Drama.

INSET training courses and customised training are available for the GCSE Drama 2DR01 specification. INSET events may be booked on the Edexcel website <http://www.edexcel.com/training>



Examiners' report is a report written by the Principal Moderator, Principal Examiner and Chair of Examiners providing useful feedback on each drama paper for the current examination series. The Examiners' reports for GCSE Drama can be accessed at <http://www.edexcel.com/gcsedrama>



Results Plus is the only analysis tool that allows teachers to see how their students have performed on different parts of the paper and the specification. You can compare your centre's results with those of other centres. This may help you to identify specific areas that need to be addressed. <http://www.edexcel.com/resultsplus>



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<http://www.edexcel.com/gcsedrama> <http://www.edexcel.com/drama>



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Our dedicated team offers a range of expert support including:

Subject Advisors: if you have any subject specific teaching queries please contact the Subject Advisor team on e-mail TeachingPerformingArts@pearson.com or call 0844 372 2191

Ask the Expert:

You may submit any subject specific queries to the **Ask The Expert** service. This is a free service which allows for all of your subject specific queries to be answered by Drama senior examiners and moderators. Please email your subject specific queries to TeachingPerformingArts@pearson.com

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Subject pages

You can check out the Performing Arts and Drama subject page at <http://www.edexcel.com/subjects/Performing-Arts/Pages/default.aspx>

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