

Principal examiner reports for teachers

Principal examiner reports for teachers summarise what candidates did well and what candidates needed to improve for this examination series only.

This report is to be used in conjunction with the question paper and mark scheme.

For guidance on teaching and learning we provide resources for many of our syllabuses.

Resource	Where to find it
Grade descriptions – Grade descriptions describe the level of performance typically demonstrated by candidates achieving the different grades awarded for a qualification.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Syllabus and specimen materials
Schemes of work – Schemes of work are designed to support you in your teaching and lesson planning.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Lesson planning – Guidance on how to plan a lesson.	Lesson planning
Resource plus – There may be additional resources such as teaching packs containing lesson plans, resources and worksheets and videos for aspects of your syllabus.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Teaching tools	Teaching Tools
Exemplar candidate responses	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Learner guide – A guide for students to help them understand what the course involves.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Community forums – Do you have a question or something to share? Our online forums are great way to keep up to date with your subject and the global Cambridge community.	Community forum on the school support hub
Access to scripts for this series.	Access to scripts service
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DRAMA

Paper 9482/11 Open-Book Written Examination
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Key messages

What candidates did well

- Candidates addressed the question directly and referred in detail to either the prescribed extract (in **Section A**) or to appropriately selected moments from the set play (in **Section B**) to support well-structured responses focused on the precise demands of the question.
- Short, appropriate quotations from the texts were cited accurately to illustrate clear practical suggestions, creating a vivid realisation of specific moments of the play for the reader.
- Candidates' ideas were wholly consonant with the style, genre and context of their chosen play texts and their answers made explicit and pertinent reference to these aspects.
- Candidates offered well-developed and inventive suggestions for interpreting their selected texts, bringing the extract or text vividly to life for the reader.
- Candidates explained both what their directorial, performance or design choices would be, depending on the perspective stipulated in the question, and how these choices would achieve their theatrical intentions in relation to the demands of the question.
- Short, appropriate quotations from the texts were cited accurately to illustrate clear practical suggestions, creating a vivid realisation of specific moments of the play for the reader.
- Candidates' ideas were wholly consonant with the style, genre and context of their chosen play texts, and their responses made explicit and pertinent reference to these aspects.
- Candidates offered well-developed and inventive suggestions for interpreting their selected texts, bringing the extract or text vividly to life for the reader.

What candidates needed to improve

- Candidates would benefit from focusing their responses more closely on the precise demands of the examination question. Responses would benefit from avoiding pre-prepared material that was not fully relevant to the specific wording of the question.
- Some candidates referred to material not included in the prescribed extract (in **Section A**) or not relevant to the question focus (in **Section B**). Greater attention to the precise requirements of the Question Paper would improve responses.
- Some candidates approached questions requiring a directorial perspective from the standpoint of a designer.
- In these responses, discussion of design elements such as lighting, sound, set and costume reduced opportunities to develop suggestions for directing the cast. Candidates should be aware that the director's role lies principally in directing actors in the delivery of their lines, in their use of space, in their vocal and physical interactions with other characters, and in their use of props or accessories.
- Some candidates' ideas were inappropriate to the style, genre and context of their chosen play texts or they did not refer to these aspects, at all, in their answers, either explicitly or did not refer to these aspects explicitly or implicitly in their responses.
- Some candidates referred to page numbers in their answers to questions in **Section B** to identify the sections that they had chosen to discuss. As most of these plays are translated texts and editions are not prescribed, page references did not provide an effective means of identifying selected sections.
- Some candidates used truncated or incomplete quotations, which made references less clear for the reader.
- Some candidates focused on one or two brief moments from the extract in **Section A** or to only one or two very short moments from the text in **Section B**.
- Some candidates restricted their performance suggestions to tone of voice with occasional reference to facial expressions.
- Some candidates adopted a disjointed approach in their answers. For example, they discussed how an actor might use their tone of voice throughout the chosen moment/section, and then they described how they might use their facial expressions, in the same moment/section. Finally, they considered their

gesture in the same moment/section. A more integrated approach would improve the effectiveness of performance suggestions.

- A few candidates made suggestions for changing the playwright's text to achieve their own dramatic aims.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a director's perspective, with a focus on directing the actors in the prescribed extract.
- Were focused on the creation of specific effects.
- Included a range of potential effects, including surprise, suspense, shock or pity for Rosalind when she faints.
- Directed the delivery of key lines of text from selected moments to illustrate their answers.
- Included reference to, or examples of, the Pastoral Comedy or 'Romance' genre, naturalistic performance styles, and the conventions of disguise in Elizabethan drama.

Limited responses

- Wrote a narrative of events from the extract rather than adopting a director's perspective.
- Paid limited attention to the requirement to identify and achieve specific effects through their ideas.
- Where effects were considered, there was limited discussion of strategies that could achieve them.
- Focused on a narrow range of moments, sometimes referencing only Rosalind's 'faint'.
- Considered the fact that Rosalind and Celia appear disguised.
- Used limited textual reference from the extract to support their ideas.
- Offered little or no explicit reference to SGC and limited implicit reference to it.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a performer's perspective.
- Outlined a clear interpretation of Oliver's character as revealed in the prescribed extract from Act 4, Scene 3.
- Offered clear performance ideas for conveying that interpretation of Oliver.
- Presented Oliver's 'reformed' character as remorseful for his past actions, humbled by Orlando's bravery in saving his life, and humane and kind in his reaction to Ganymede's sudden faint. Many also referred to Oliver's ability to tell an enthralling story.
- Illustrated their ideas using well-chosen textual support and referred to both vocal and physical aspects of characterisation in Oliver's interactions with Ganymede and Aliena.
- Included references to, or examples of, the Pastoral Comedy or Romance genres, naturalistic performance, and the convention of disguise in Elizabethan drama.

Limited responses

- Wrote a narrative of some of the events from the extract, without adopting a director's perspective.
- Paid little if any attention to the requirement to nominate and achieve specific effects through their ideas.
- Where 'effects' were considered, there were few strategies suggested that could achieve them.
- Were focused on a narrow range of moments; sometimes only referencing Rosalind's 'faint'.
- Appeared to have forgotten that Rosalind and Celia appear 'disguised'.
- Directed the delivery of key lines of text from selected moments to illustrate their answers.

Question 2

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a director's perspective, with focus on creating comedy for the audience from the deceitful nature of servants, Lucy and Fag, in the prescribed extract.
- Were focused on the creation of comedy from, for example: Lucy's barefaced lies to Sir Lucius about their meeting place and about 'Lydia's' letter – which she knows to come from Mrs Malaprop, Lucy's amusement at Sir Lucius' fondness for 'Dalia',
- Adopted the comic conventions that Sheridan so relies on, including, for example: the comic 'aside', acknowledging and 'playing to' the audience, the servant characters who are wiser than their masters or mistresses while acting less so.
- Mentioned Lucy's ease in deceiving Sir Lucius about 'Dahlia's' infatuation with him.
- Referred to Fag's deception of Lucy, who does not know the identity of 'Ensign Beverley'.
- Commented on the servant's outward show of complicity, concealing the mutual duplicity.
- Directed the delivery of key lines of text, from selected moments, to illustrate their comical ideas answers.
- Included reference to the Comedy of Manners genre and/or to 'the use of 'heightened naturalism' and to audience address and/or to the conventions of the 'witty servant' in drama through the ages.

Limited responses

- Adopted a narrative approach, describing the exchanges between Lucy and Sir Lucius and Lucy and Fag offering few directorial suggestions.
- Paid little, if any, attention to the requirement to create comedy or were unable to persuade the reader that the directions offered would achieve a comic effect.
- Dealt with either the section between Lucy and Sir Lucius or the section between Lucy and Fag rather than dealing with each of them.
- Appeared not to understand who 'Dahlia' is believed to be, by Sir Lucius, or who she is known to be, by Lucy.
- Appeared not to fully understand the archaic language of the text.
- Used a minimal amount of text from the extract to illustrate their answers; did not use the delivery of the text to create comedy, relying instead on comical facial expressions and/or gestures.
- Offered no explicit and limited implicit reference to SGC without much evidence of knowledge/understanding of the comic conventions of the latter part of the 18th Century. Mistakenly labelled *The Rivals* as a 'Restoration comedy'.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a performer's perspective.
- Outlined a clear interpretation of Sir Lucius' character as revealed in the prescribed extract from Act 2, Scene 2.
- Offered clear performance ideas for conveying an interpretation of Sir Lucius. Many of these ideas focused on his flirtatiousness towards Lucy and his eagerness to secure a marriage with a beautiful, seventeen-year-old heiress. These qualities were often presented as unsettling.
- Offered detailed suggestions for how these qualities could be conveyed, using well-chosen textual support and suitable performance ideas.
- Other aspects of candidates' interpretations of Sir Lucius included his gullibility, lack of self-awareness and determination to get his own way.
- Sir Lucius was presented as a flamboyant and exuberant character. Some candidates also described him as a 'stock Irishman' and focused on his vigorous gesturing, loud voice and Irish accent. In some responses, Sir Lucius was presented as over-familiar with Lucy, invading her personal space and engaging in performative 'ogling' when Lucy was looking the other way.

Limited responses

- Adopted a narrative approach, describing Sir Lucius' interaction with Lucy, with limited performance detail to support an interpretation of his character.
- Used limited textual support to justify interpretations of Sir Lucius' character.
- Offered a narrow range of performance ideas. In some responses, the same suggestion was repeated across a series of quoted lines.
- Demonstrated limited understanding of aspects of the plot of the play.

- Made little or no reference to the Comedy of Manners style, and some responses confused this with Restoration Comedy conventions.

Question 3

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a performer's perspective and focused on the demands of the question to convey an interpretation of Beatrice's feelings at this point in the play, taken from the latter half of Act 1.
- Outlined a clear interpretation of Beatrice's feelings in the prescribed extract. For example, many candidates believed Beatrice to be feeling frustration with Eddie's continued obsession with Catherine, feeling resentment towards him and feeling anxious for her future.
- In the section where Beatrice is comforting Catherine, candidates suggested that her feelings were quite complicated; that she felt supportive of Catherine and irritated with her apparent obliviousness to Eddie's excessive interest in her and frustrated that her own previous attempts to warn Catherine have not been heeded.
- Offered clear performance ideas for conveying these mixed feelings, creating vivid realisations of the role through well-chosen references to the text supported by clear performance detail.
- Offered pertinent reference to the style, genre or context of the play that was relevant to the extract, for example, referring explicitly to the issue of a 'green card' for qualifying immigrants.
- Some candidates offered convincingly naturalistic performance ideas.

Limited responses

- Missed the actual focus of the question and wrote about an interpretation of Beatrice's character, rather than of her feelings.
- Adopted a narrative approach, describing the unfolding events of the extract.
- Did not use the text to support assertions about Beatrice's feelings.
- Offered a narrow range of generalised performance ideas, such as shouting at Eddie or rubbing Catherine's back
- Many candidates placed the scene in Catherine's bedroom without establishing a clear sense of the use of stage space.
- Some candidates drew on ideas from Ivo Van Hove's recent production of the play without acknowledging this influence or justifying these ideas in relation to the question.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Understood the precise demands of the question, which focused on achieving a specific audience response to Eddie's ambiguous feelings for Catherine rather than simply showing those feelings.
- Outlined their intended audience response to Eddie's ambiguous feelings for Catherine at the start of their answer and explained how specific directorial choices in the extract would elicit that response.
- Identified achievable audience responses such as shock, horror, disgust, pity and understanding.
- Acknowledged that Eddie's feelings, bordering on the incestuous at this point in the play, stemmed from an initial familial love for the child whom he and Beatrice had adopted as their own after Catherine was orphaned.
- Recognised Eddie's initial 'paternal' impulse to protect Catherine from being exploited, leading to a mixture of audience responses.
- Included scrutiny of Eddie's motives in visiting Alfieri, suggesting that Eddie himself is unaware of his own inner desires.
- Suggested that the audience may understand Eddie's suspicions of Rodolpho, whom he sees as having robbed him of his relationship with Catherine, whatever the nature of that relationship.
- Suggested how the arrival of the cousins had disrupted every aspect of Eddie's life at home and at work, making his situation intolerable and his responses understandable.
- Offered pertinent reference to the style, genre or context of the play that was relevant to the extract.

Limited responses

- Wrote about how to 'show' Eddie's ambiguous feelings.
- Adopted a narrative approach, describing the unfolding events of the extract.

- Made assertions about Eddie's feelings or about the audience responses to the demonstration of those feelings.
- Offered a narrow range of generalised performance ideas often focused on the confrontation between Eddie and Beatrice.
- Referred to moments from Ivo Van Hove's recent production of the play without explaining why

Question 4

No responses were seen on this text in this series.

Question 5

(a) There were too few responses to this question option to allow for meaningful comment.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- The question focused on Queenie's mixed emotions, and most candidates understood and addressed this clearly.
- Candidates adopted a performer's perspective and a sequential approach to the extract, which allowed them to cover the full range of Queenie's emotions.
- Most candidates noted how Queenie demonstrated immense love for her child, using a gentle tone of voice and soothing gestures while interacting with him privately before the arrival of Gilbert and Hortense.
- On the arrival of Hortense and Gilbert, there was a focus on Queenie's desperation to find her son a safe and loving home, free from prejudice.
- They conveyed Queenie's genuine appreciation of Gilbert and Hortense as a couple who would be caring and loving guardians for her baby.
- Later in the extract, Queenie's fear about what could happen to the baby was linked to Bernard's entrance, his aggressive behaviour and his comments about the future.
- Some candidates focused on Queenie's disbelief at Bernard's offer to bring baby Michael up together.
- They included appropriate reference to the social and political context of the play, especially the issue of racism in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Limited responses

- Wrote rather generally
- Adopted a narrative approach
- Did not use the text to support ideas about Queenie's mixed emotions.
- Referred extensively to the National Theatre's production of the play without establishing its relevance to the question or to their interpretation of Queenie's emotions.
- Included reference to SGC that was not closely linked to the extract or the focus of the question.

Question 6

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Recognised that the question required a performer's perspective and adopted this approach from the beginning of their responses.
- Focused on Oedipus' determination to serve and save the people of Thebes.
- Selected and dealt effectively with Oedipus' first appearance, where he addresses the citizens of Thebes and sets out his intention to serve their interests and save them from the effects of the plague.
- Offered appropriate performance suggestions to convey Oedipus' sincerity as he pledges to follow the instructions of the Oracle of Apollo.
- Discussed Oedipus' openness in instructing Creon to reveal the message from the Oracle in public, stating that the people's sorrow means more to him than his own.
- Emphasised Oedipus' determination to seek out the truth about Laius' murder to save the city and its citizens.
- Noted how Oedipus unwittingly curses himself when he curses the originator of the suffering of the people.

- Used the text well to illustrate Oedipus' relentless pursuit of the truth, despite Jocasta's attempts to persuade him to abandon his quest.
- Showed secure, and occasionally perceptive, knowledge and understanding of relevant SGC issues.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a performer's perspective.
- Omitted to mention Oedipus' mission to serve and save the people of Thebes.
- Wrote about Oedipus' first appearance only.
- Spent time/space referring to Oedipus' physical appearance, his costume and accessories
- Described the unfolding action
- Did not use the text to support ideas.
- Focused on Oedipus' miserable exit from the play without a mention of 'serving/saving' the people of Thebes.
- Included copious reference to SGC that was not made relevant to the question focus.

(b)

Comprehensive responses

- Focused on engaging the sympathy of the audience for Jocasta, approached from a performer's perspective.
- Focused on Jocasta's motherly approach towards Oedipus and Creon when she hears them quarrelling.
- Commented on Jocasta's unhappiness at seeing friction between two men whom she loves.
- Offered performance ideas to suggest her role as peacemaker between them.
- Discussed and illustrated Jocasta's trusting nature and her concern for Oedipus' well-being.
- Offered performance ideas to reveal her courageous acceptance of her fate.
- Revealed secure, and at times perceptive, understanding of context, genre and style through appropriate performance suggestions.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a performer's perspective.
- Did not offer performance suggestion likely to elicit sympathy.
- Did not use the text to support performance ideas.
- Suggested imperfect knowledge of the progress of Jocasta's developing understanding of the truth about her relationship with her husband/son.
- Included reference to SGC that was tangential to the question focus.

Question 7

(a)

Comprehensive responses

- This question attracted very few responses.
- Comprehensive responses opened with a clearly defined and developed 'design vision'.
- Some candidates outlined a vision founded on the creation of comedy or satire, using a 'cartoon'-inspired approach.
- 'Visions' that were defined included: authentic period setting for Russia in the mid-nineteenth century, modernised 21st century equivalents with 'high-tech' set and props, or 'modernised' to emphasise the life-style choices of the Mayor and his family as they live extravagantly—though with little 'taste'—on the proceeds of the Mayor's corruption.
- Ideas were supported by carefully drawn and annotated sketches suggesting forethought and practice.
- Offered designs to accommodate the various location and setting in the play.
- Candidates were generally able to reveal secure or perceptive understanding of a corrupt bureaucracy in mid-nineteenth century Russia or in a modernised/transposed equivalent.

Limited responses

- Were very brief.
- Did not offer a 'vision' as such.
- Had no sketches to support design ideas where they were offered.
- Suggested limited knowledge of the play and/or its design requirements.
- Offered no evidence of SGC awareness.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- The creation of comedy was at the foreground of these answers.
- Candidates assumed the perspective of a performer.
- Candidates focused on the Mayor's potential for creating comedy through his pomposity as he announces the potential arrival of a Government Inspector and his discussion of his 'dream'.
- Comedy was created through his bossiness over his colleagues, his various orders to his colleagues, his sycophantic treatment of Khlestakov and his gullibility as he swallows all Khlestakov's ridiculous lies.
- Many exploited his fraught relationship with Anna and with Marya.
- His pride in his future 'son-in-law'.
- His final humiliation as Khlestakov's letter is read aloud.
- The most common incident which was discussed was the beginning of the play when the Mayor heard the news of the Government Inspector and called all the Officials together.
- The practical sense of theatre was conveyed not only through his voice, his gestures and particularly through his extravagant hand waving his hands but also through the substance of his speeches.
- Most candidates were able to include direct textual references to illustrate his approach to the Inspector and to the Officials.
- Some candidates invented gesture and movements e.g. with the puppies.
- Two other moments were commonly cited: when he is boasting about Marya's engagement to the Government Inspector and the end of the play when he reads the letter. Both provided opportunities for comedy and were open to personal interpretation.

Question 8

(a) Comprehensive responses

- This question was the more popular option, although it still attracted a minority of responses.
- Candidates recognised the need for a performer's perspective and a focus on achieving specific audience responses to the role of Anya.
- Most offered a sympathetic presentation of Anya's character that recognised, even if only implicitly, the requirement to provide performance suggestions intended to elicit a specific audience response to the role.
- Candidates offered a range of separate appearances of Anya enabling them to show different aspects of her character and therefore to consider several valid potential audience responses.
- Occasionally, these responses took a somewhat unconventional view of Anya.
- By choosing sections where Anya first appears in the play as well as later, where she is interacting with family members, or with servants or with Trofimov, whom she admires and adores, these responses offered a varied and sometimes quite detailed presentation of Anya.
- Secure and occasionally perceptive understanding of the pivotal moment in Russian history and/or of Chekhov's signature style was often included.

Limited responses

- Were relatively brief and underdeveloped.
- Revealed limited understanding of Anya's relationships with other characters.
- Suggested limited knowledge of the play.
- Offered no evidence of SGC awareness.

- (b)** There were too few responses to this question option to allow for meaningful comment.

Question 9

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Recognised the need for a performer's perspective and a focus on highlighting the bitterness character of the Mother.
- Most explored the root of the Mother's bitterness, before beginning to address the details of her performance, and this approach worked well.
- By choosing sections where Mother is alone with her son as well as those where she is seen in the company of others, candidates were able to offer quite a nuanced reading of the Mother's bitterness.

- Secure and occasionally perceptive understanding of Lorca's Spain, the play's historical context and mixture of semi-naturalistic and surrealist acting styles was also evident.

Limited responses

- Were relatively brief and underdeveloped.
- Revealed limited understanding of the Mother's genuine reasons for expressing her bitterness.
- Presented Mother's 'bitterness' as her only characteristic.
- Suggested limited knowledge of the play.
- Offered no evidence of SGC awareness.

(b) Comprehensive responses

This question was a minority choice.

- Recognised the requirement of the question to adopt a director's perspective.
- Responded to the need to convey an interpretation of the relationship between the Bride and the Bridegroom.
- Identified the relationship as apparently one-sided, formal and distant in the betrothal scene.
- Offered sensitive directorial ideas to present the subtleties and contradictions in the Bride's feelings towards the Bridegroom and the forthcoming wedding.
- Discussed and illustrated the Bridegroom's naivety.
- Revealed secure, and at times perceptive, understanding of context, genre and style through appropriate directorial suggestions.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a director's perspective.
- Did not offer details that might contribute to an audience's understanding of the relationship between the Bride and the Bridegroom.
- Attributed some of the lines to the bridegroom when they were spoken by the Bride, resulting in some inappropriate direction of the characters.
- Did not use the text to support performance ideas.
- Included reference to SGC that was tangential to the question focus.

Question 10

Relatively few answers were seen on this text.

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Recognised the requirement of the question to adopt a director's perspective with a focus on the creation of comedy.
- Responded to the instruction to select sections of interaction between Boon and his mother that created comedy.
- Offered directorial ideas that effectively generated comedy.
- Chose suitable sections of interaction, for example their first appearance together, where Boon teases his mother and she responds in kind.
- Included close reference to the delivery of the text and the comic banter between mother and son, as well as moments of comedy created through physical and facial expression.
- Covered a range of moments that revealed the development of their relationship as they gradually came to understand each other better.
- Revealed secure, and at times perceptive, understanding of context, genre and style through appropriate directorial suggestions and explicit explanations.

Limited responses

- Adopted approaches that were not written from the perspective of a director.
- They were relatively brief and underdeveloped.
- Did not remain focused on the interactions between Mother and Boon. rather they included other extraneous sections such as Boon's interactions with the other Estate Agents.
- Dealt mainly with physical comedy such as the wall-licking section and/or the throwing of the statues.
- Suggested limited knowledge of the play.

- Offered limited evidence of SGC awareness or allowed theoretical knowledge of the ‘en-bloc sales’ drive in Singapore to dominate the answer.

(b) There were too few responses to this question option to allow for meaningful comment.

Some of the very few candidates, who chose the **(b)** option, wrote about ‘Mother’ rather than ‘Young Mother’.

DRAMA

Paper 9482/12 Open-Book Written Examination
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Key messages

What candidates did well

- Candidates addressed the question directly and referred in detail to either the prescribed extract (in **Section A**) or to appropriately selected moments from the set play (in **Section B**) to support well-structured responses to the precise focus of each question attempted.
- Candidates explained their directorial, performance or design choices and how these would achieve their theatrical intentions in relation to the demands of the question.
- Short, appropriate quotations from the texts were cited accurately to illustrate clear practical suggestions, creating a vivid realisation of specific moments of the play for the reader.
- Candidates' ideas were wholly consonant with the style, genre and context of their chosen play texts and their answers made explicit and pertinent reference to these aspects.
- Candidates offered well-developed and inventive suggestions for interpreting their selected texts, bringing the extract or text vividly to life for the reader.

What candidates needed to improve

- Candidates needed to develop their ability to focus their answers on the precise demands of the examination question. They also needed to avoid including pre-prepared material that may have been suitable for a similar but differently worded question.
- Some candidates referred to material not included in the prescribed extract (in **Section A**) or material that was not relevant to the question focus (in **Section B**). Greater attention to the wording of the Question Paper would have improved these responses.
- Some candidates approached questions requiring a directorial approach from the perspective of a designer.
- In these answers, references to design elements such as lighting, sound, set and costume appeared at the expense of thoughtful suggestions for directing the cast. Candidates needed a clearer understanding that the director's role lies principally in directing actors in the delivery of lines, use of space, vocal and physical interactions with other characters, and use of props or accessories.
- Some candidates' ideas were not fully consistent with the style, genre and context of their chosen play texts, or they did not refer to these aspects in their answers, either explicitly or implicitly.
- Some candidates referred to page numbers in their answers to questions in **Section B** to identify the sections that they had chosen to discuss. As most of these plays are 'in translation' and editions are not prescribed, this was not an effective reference tool.
- Some candidates offered truncated or elliptical quotations, which were unhelpful to readers.
- Some candidates restricted themselves to one or two very short moments from the extract in **Section A** or from the text in **Section B**.
- Some candidates restricted their performance suggestions to tone of voice with occasional reference to facial expressions.
- Some candidates adopted a disjointed approach in their answers, for example, they discussed how an actor might use their tone of voice throughout the chosen moment/section, and then they described how they might use their facial expressions, in the same moment/section and then they considered their gesture in the same moment/section. This approach was generally ineffective.
- A few candidates made suggestions for changing the playwright's text to achieve their own dramatic aims.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a performer's perspective.
- Were focused on interpreting Rosalind's feelings at the point in the play presented in the prescribed extract.
- Included practical suggestions for conveying a range of Rosalind's feelings, such as sympathy and love towards Orlando, empathy towards Celia and Oliver, confidence in her ability to resolve the various romantic entanglements, contempt for Phoebe's hard-heartedness, and optimism about the events of 'tomorrow'.
- Considered the delivery of key lines from selected moments in the extract to illustrate their answers.
- Included references to, or examples of, the Pastoral Comedy and/or Romance genre, naturalistic performance, as well as the conventions of disguise and cross-gender dressing in Elizabethan drama.

Limited responses

- Wrote a narrative of some of the events from the extract, without adopting a performer's perspective.
- Paid little, if any, attention to the requirement to convey Rosalind's feelings at this point in the play.
- Offered few strategies for conveying Rosalind's feelings to an audience, even when those feelings were identified.
- Were focused on a narrow range of moments, sometimes referring only to Rosalind's final promises as a 'magician'.
- Used a minimal amount of text from the extract to illustrate their answers.
- Offered no explicit reference, and only limited implicit reference, to SGC.

(b) There were too few responses to this question option to allow for meaningful comment.

Question 2

No answers were seen on *The Rivals* in this examination series.

Question 3

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a director's perspective and focused on the demands of the question by highlighting the developing friction between Eddie and Beatrice.
- Outlined the developing friction through reference to specific moments, including Eddie turning away from Beatrice when she smiles to greet him, Eddie's anger when Beatrice defends Rodolpho, and Eddie's refusal to engage with Beatrice when she expresses distress at their lack of intimacy.
- Offered clear performance ideas for conveying moments of friction, creating vivid realisations of their interaction.
- Offered pertinent references to the style, genre and context of the play that were relevant to the extract, including direction intended to create a naturalistic style.

Limited responses

- Missed the actual focus of the question and wrote about the creation of tension or suspense, rather than friction.
- Adopted a narrative approach, describing the unfolding events of the extract.
- Did not use the text to support directorial ideas.
- Offered a narrow range of generalised directions.
- Placed the action indoors, while the text indicates that it takes place on the street.

- Some candidates draw on ideas from Ivo Van Hove's recent production of the play, without acknowledging his influence or justifying these ideas in terms of the question set.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a performer's perspective.
- Understood the precise demands of the question, which focused on conveying Eddie's increasing jealousy of Rodolpho.
- Outlined key moments from the extract in which Eddie's jealousy is seen to build, including his anxious waiting for Catherine to return from the cinema and his disparagement of Rodolpho's appearance, mannerisms and motives for pursuing Catherine.
- Focused on Eddie's perception that Rodolpho is exploiting Catherine.
- Offered pertinent references to the style, genre and context of the play that were relevant to the extract.

Limited responses

- Adopted a narrative approach, describing the unfolding events of the extract, without focusing on a performance of Eddie.
- Did not appear to understand that, in the first part of the extract, the cousins have only just arrived at the Carbone home and that this represents the initial arousal of Eddie's jealousy.
- Did not appreciate that the second half of the extract takes place sometime later and that the action and dialogue take place on the street.
- Did not use the text to illustrate Eddie's expressions of jealousy.
- Offered a narrow range of generalised performance ideas.

Question 4

No responses were seen on this text in this series.

Question 5

(a) Comprehensive responses

- This was a popular question. Comprehensive responses focused on conveying Queenie's lively character.
- Were written from a performer's perspective and focused explicitly on conveying Queenie's lively character.
- Explored ways in which Queenie speaks directly and confidentially to the audience, establishing an immediate rapport through her lively colloquial expression in moments of direct address.
- Referred to specific performance ideas to convey Queenie's enthusiasm about Dorothy's offer and her eagerness to find solutions to her parents' objections.
- Suggested both facial and physical expressions to reveal her delight at her aunt's generosity in buying her new clothes.
- Referred to Queenie's ripostes to the overly familiar customer to convey her lively spirit.
- Included appropriate references to the social and political contexts of the play, particularly the role of women in the early twentieth century.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a performer's perspective.
- Did not focus on Queenie's 'liveliness'.
- Adopted a narrative approach, describing the unfolding events of the extract rather than focusing on performance.
- Did not use the text to support ideas about the performance of Queenie.
- Referred extensively to the National Theatre's production of the play without clarifying its relevance to the question or to their own interpretation of Queenie.
- Included references to SGC that were tangential to the extract and/or to the question focus.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Recognised that the question required a designer's perspective, with a focus on creating distinct locations and achieving effective transitions.
- Offered effective ideas for creating transitions using lighting and projections.
- Referred to two of the four possible settings: the farmhouse kitchen at Queenie's childhood home, the fitting room in the department store, Queenie's room above the shop, or the shop itself with its counters, jars and scales.
- Referred to the need to recreate an appropriate period setting through design.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a designer's perspective.
- Replicated design ideas associated with the National Theatre production without justification or acknowledgement.
- Included brief references to all four settings rather than developing ideas for the two settings required.
- Revealed limited design experience or understanding.
- Asked a great deal of the use of a 'revolve'.

Question 6

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Recognised that the question required a performer's perspective and adopted that perspective throughout their answers.
- Focused on contrasting aspects of Oedipus' character, including his intelligence and decisiveness, his egotism, his rashness in accusing both Creon and Tiresias of treachery, his self-loathing when confronted by the truth, and his humility at the end of the play.
- Used the text well to illustrate contrasting aspects of Oedipus' character.
- Showed secure, and occasionally perceptive, knowledge and understanding of relevant SGC issues.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a performer's perspective.
- Did not recognise that the question required consideration of Oedipus' contrasting characteristics, focusing instead on similar traits.
- Wrote about a narrow range of Oedipus' appearances.
- Focused more on Oedipus' physical appearance, costume and accessories than on his characterisation.
- Did not use the text to support ideas.
- Included extensive references to SGC that were not made relevant to the question focus.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Recognised that the question required a director's perspective.
- Focused on revealing Jocasta's devotion to Oedipus.
- Noted Jocasta's indulgent attitude towards Oedipus when she hears Oedipus and Creon arguing.
- Offered performance ideas suggesting that Jocasta adopts a protective mother-wife role towards Oedipus, emphasising her devotion to him.
- Discussed and illustrated Jocasta's devotion through her consistent concern for Oedipus' mental well-being.
- As Jocasta comes to understand Oedipus' part in the death of Laius, she shows her devotion by urging him to stop looking for answers.
- Revealed secure, and at times perceptive, understanding of context, genre and style through appropriate performance suggestions.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a performer's perspective.
- Did not offer performance suggestion likely to suggest Jocasta's devotion.
- Did not use the text to support performance ideas.
- Included reference to SGC that was tangential to the question focus.

Question 7

(a) There were too few responses to this question option to allow for meaningful comment.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- The creation of comedy was at the foreground of these answers.
- Candidates assumed the perspective of a director.
- Addressed the set task of creating comedy from the stupidity of the District Officials.
- Made practical suggestions for presenting the constant bickering and squabbling amongst the Officials and differentiated between them by name and role.
- Included practical ideas from different parts of the play, offering a range of potentially comic moments arising from the characters' stupidity.
- Used well-chosen textual references to support suggestions for comedy.
- Revealed secure, and at times perceptive, understanding of context, genre and style through appropriate performance suggestions.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a director's perspective.
- Offered some practical ideas, although these did not focus on creating comedy from the officials' stupidity.
- Did not use the text to support performance ideas.
- Included limited reference to SGC or made points that were not relevant to the question focus.

Question 8

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Recognised that the question was intended to be answered from a performer's perspective and adopted that perspective from the beginning of their answers.
- Focused on achieving specified audience responses to Madame Ranyevskaya, including sympathy for her situation, frustration at her inability to change it, and respect for her dignified acceptance of the loss of the cherry orchard.
- Included detailed performance ideas for the character, paying careful attention to her physical and vocal skills.
- Included examples of Madame Ranyevskaya's interactions with different characters, including her daughters, her brother and Lopakhin, and used the text well to support these examples.
- Ensured that performance suggestions were consistent with achieving the intended audience responses.
- Included relevant references to the historical context of the play, particularly Russia's changing social structure, while also respecting Chekhov's naturalistic style.

Limited responses

- Were relatively brief and underdeveloped.
- Did not identify an intended audience response to Madame Ranyevskaya.
- Offered no evidence of SGC awareness.

(b) Although there were too few responses to this question option to allow meaningful comment, a small number of responses included well-executed sketches supported by thoughtful commentary.

Question 9

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Recognised that the question required a director's perspective and focused on highlighting the differences between the Bride and Leonardo's Wife.
- Compared the two characters in terms of their differing acceptance of the role of women in Spain at the time of writing, as well as their respective relationships with Leonardo.
- Some referred to the two women's relationships with the key parent figures in their lives: the Bride with her father and Leonardo's Wife with her mother.
- Included a range of differences, each supported by textual references from the play.
- Provided evidence of secure, and occasionally perceptive, understanding of Lorca's Spain, the play's historical context, and its mixture of semi-naturalistic and surrealist acting styles.

Limited responses

- Were relatively brief and underdeveloped.
- Revealed only partial understanding of the differences between the two women characters.
- Suggested imperfect knowledge of the play.
- Offered limited or no evidence of SGC awareness.

(b)

Comprehensive responses

- Recognised that the question required a performer's perspective and the identification of specific intended effects to be achieved through the performance of the Beggar Woman.
- Nominated effects including, for example, creating fear in the audience through the suggestion that she is 'Death' personified.
- Suggested that the audience would be repulsed by her evident enjoyment as she anticipates the deaths of the two young people.
- Offered precise performance ideas to present a compelling interpretation of the Beggar Woman, consistent with the intended effects and the more surreal elements of Act Three.
- Revealed secure, and at times perceptive, understanding of context, genre and style through appropriate performance suggestions.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a performer's perspective.
- Did not identify intended effects for the audience.
- Did not offer details that might contribute to the achievement of specific effects, if these had been identified.
- Did not use the text to support performance ideas.
- Referred only to the appearance of the Beggar Woman in Act Three, Scene One.
- Included references to SGC that were tangential to the question focus.

Question 10

No responses were reported to have been seen on this text in this series.

DRAMA

Paper 9482/13 Open-Book Written Examination
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Key messages

What candidates did well

- Candidates addressed the question directly and referred in detail to either the prescribed extract (in **Section A**) or to appropriately selected moments from the set play (in **Section B**) to support well-structured responses to the precise focus of each question attempted.
- Candidates explained their directorial, performance or design choices and how these choices would achieve their theatrical intentions in relation to the demands of the question.
- Short, appropriate quotations from the texts were cited accurately to illustrate clear practical suggestions, creating a vivid realisation of specific moments of the play for the reader.
- Candidates' ideas were wholly consonant with the style, genre and context of their chosen play texts and their answers made explicit and pertinent reference to these aspects.
- Candidates offered developed and inventive suggestions for interpreting their selected texts, bringing the extract or text vividly to life for the reader.

What candidates needed to improve

- Candidates would benefit from focusing their entire answer on the precise demands of the examination question. They should avoid including pre-prepared material that may have been suitable for a similar but differently worded question.
- Some candidates referred to material not included in the prescribed extract (in **Section A**) or not relevant to the question focus (in **Section B**), indicating that greater care is required when reading the Question Paper.
- Some candidates approached questions requiring a directorial perspective from that of a designer instead.
- In these responses, discussion of design elements such as lighting, sound, set and costume sometimes came at the expense of suggestions for directing the cast. Candidates should be aware that the director's role lies principally in directing actors in the delivery of their lines, their use of space, their vocal and physical interactions with other characters, and their use of props or accessories.
- Some candidates' ideas were not consistent with the style, genre and context of their chosen play texts, or they did not refer to these aspects in their answers, either explicitly or implicitly.
- Some candidates referred to page numbers in their answers to questions in **Section B** to identify the sections that they had chosen to discuss. As most of these plays are 'in translation' and editions are not prescribed, this was not an effective reference tool.
- Some candidates offered truncated or elliptical quotations, which were unhelpful to readers.
- Some candidates restricted themselves to only one or two very short moments from the extract in **Section A** or to only one or two very short moments from the text in **Section B**.
- Some candidates restricted their performance suggestions to tone of voice with occasional reference to facial expressions.
- Some candidates adopted a disjointed approach in their answers. For example, they discussed tone of voice, facial expressions and gestures separately within the same moment or section. Responses would benefit from integrating these performance aspects more closely.
- A few candidates made suggestions for changing the playwright's text to achieve their own dramatic aims.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a performer's perspective focused on conveying an interpretation of Orlando's character.
- Noted that despite his aggressive appearance, Orlando reveals his mild and civilised nature once he realises that he is dealing with kind and generous men.
- Noted Orlando's embarrassment at having appeared to be violent and uncouth.
- Used Orlando's appeal to the Duke and his followers' common humanity to reveal his true nature.
- Showed Orlando's selflessness through his manner in putting Adam's needs before his own.
- Considered the delivery of key lines of text from selected moments to illustrate their answers.
- Included references to, or examples of, the Pastoral Comedy and/or 'Romance' genre; used a naturalistic performance style and/or referred to the convention of 'opposed brothers' in Elizabethan drama.

Limited responses

- Wrote a narrative of some of the events from the extract, without adopting a performer's perspective.
- Paid little attention to the requirement to convey an interpretation of Orlando.
- Offered few performance strategies to convey Orlando's character, even when the focus of the question was addressed.
- Focused on a narrow range of moments from the extract.
- Used a minimal amount of text from the extract to illustrate their answers.
- Offered no explicit, and only limited implicit, reference to SGC.

(b) There were too few responses to this question option to allow for meaningful comment.

Question 2

No answers were seen on *The Rivals* in this examination series.

Question 3

(a) There were too few responses to this question option to allow for meaningful comment.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Adopted a performer's perspective and focused on the demand of the question to convey Catherine's divided loyalties between Eddie and Rodolpho.
- Referred to Catherine's admission that she is afraid of Eddie and offered ideas for performing this moment.
- Suggested ideas for conveying her misery when Rodolpho accuses her of not trusting him.
- Showed Catherine's nostalgia for her childhood through her tender recollection of growing up under Eddie's protective wing.
- Showed the change in Catherine's loyalties when Eddie's arrival and actions alienate her completely.
- Explored Catherine's physical response to Eddie's assault, particularly his kissing of her and then Rodolpho, and how this changes her feelings towards Eddie permanently. Considered her assertions about how much she knows and cares for her uncle.
- Showed how Catherine's horror at Eddie's actions pushes her towards the realisation that her loyalty must lie with Rodolpho and her future.
- Offered clear performance ideas for each reference to the text.
- Offered pertinent and often perceptive references to the style, genre and/or context of the play.

Limited responses

- Missed the precise focus of the question and wrote generally about Catherine's feelings without referring to her 'divided loyalties'.
- Adopted a narrative approach, describing the unfolding events of the extract.
- Did not use the text to support performance ideas that were included.
- Offered a narrow range of generalised ideas.
- Revealed misunderstanding of where the action takes place; some candidates suggested that Eddie confronted the pair in Catherine's bedroom.
- Some candidates drew on ideas from Ivo Van Hove's production of the play without acknowledging the source of these ideas or justifying them in relation to the question.

Question 4

No responses were seen on this text in this series.

Question 5

(a) Comprehensive responses

This question attracted a substantial number of responses, many of which offered developed interpretations of the character of Michael.

- Responses were written from a performer's perspective and focused explicitly on interpreting Michael's character on his return home.
- Explored ways in which Michael enthusiastically greeted his family, Miss Jewel and Hortense on his immediate arrival.
- Referred to specific performance ideas to convey Michael as an educated yet still confident and mischievous young man.
- Commented upon Michael's urbane manners and his precocious self-confidence.
- Referred to his insolence towards his parents as he patronised his mother and disrespected his father.
- Considered a range of physical attitudes of complacency and self-confidence.
- Included appropriate references to the social and political contexts of the play, especially the Windrush generation and the relationship between Jamaica and the 'Mother Country'.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a performer's perspective.
- Did not focus on Michael's character in the extract. Instead, some responses interpreted the phrase 'on his return home' as a reference to the wider play and referred to the tricks he played on Hortense as a child or to his relationship with Mrs. Ryder.
- Adopted a narrative approach, describing the unfolding events of the extract.
- Did not use the text to support ideas about the performance of Michael.
- Spent a disproportionate amount of the response describing, and sometimes sketching, Michael's costume.
- Referred extensively, though not necessarily relevantly, to the National Theatre's production of the play.
- Included references to SGC that were tangential to the extract or to the question focus.

(b) No answers to this question were reportedly seen.

Question 6

(a) No answers to this question were reportedly seen.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Recognised the requirement to answer from a director's perspective.
- Clearly outlined the intended effects of their directorial ideas.
- Identified which of the two possible characters they would focus on; all responses discussed Oedipus' interaction with Jocasta.
- Concentrated on interaction rather than on individual speeches.
- Used the text to support ideas.

- Revealed secure, and at times perceptive, understanding of context, genre and style through appropriate performance suggestions.

Limited responses

- Did not adopt a director's perspective and instead described the unfolding events of the extract.
- Did not use the text to support performance ideas.
- Included generic references to SGC.

Question 7

There were too few responses on this play text option to allow for meaningful comment.

Question 8

There were too few responses on this play text option to allow for meaningful comment.

Question 9

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Responses were written from a performer's perspective and focused explicitly on interpreting Leonardo's character.
- Referred to Leonardo's resentment of his Wife's 'interrogation' and to evidence of his secretive nature in his exchanges with her.
- Referred to his bitterness and regret over the ending of his relationship with the Bride.
- Some candidates emphasised Leonardo's passion for the Bride and his recklessness regarding his own future, that of his family, and the Bride's loss of reputation following the elopement.

Limited responses

- Did not write from a performer's perspective or focus on interpreting the role.
- Offered limited textual support.
- Suggested incomplete knowledge of the character.
- Offered limited or no evidence of SGC awareness.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Understood the demand of the question to explain a design vision for the play and identify its intended effects.
- Many candidates outlined ideas for creating a surreal setting suited to the symbolic characters of Moon, the Woodcutters and the Beggar Woman.
- Identified specific moments at which their designs would be effective.
- Some intended to create a sensuous atmosphere for the lovers' 'elopement'.
- Some sought to heighten the atmosphere surrounding the 'hunt' and killing of the two young men.
- Some sought to suggest a dark and dangerous place, inimical to the lovers' flight.
- Revealed secure and at times perceptive understanding of context, genre and style through appropriate design suggestions.

Limited responses

- Did not identify intended effects for the audience or suggest a design vision.
- Did not offer design details that would contribute to the achievement of specific effects.
- Did not refer to the action of the scene.
- Included references to SGC that were tangential to the question focus.

Question 10

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Responses were written from a performer's perspective and focused explicitly on conveying Boon's character development over the course of the play.

- Charted Boon's development from a shallow and mercenary young man, as he joins the 'Chorus' of unscrupulous estate agents refining their sales patter, to a sympathetic and supportive son who has learned to appreciate his mother's attachment to her home.
- Concentrated on appropriate 'milestones' along Boon's journey of personal growth.
- Used the text to support ideas.
- Revealed secure, and at times perceptive, understanding of context, genre and style through appropriate performance suggestions and explicit reference to the social and historical context of the play.

Limited responses

- Did not write from a performer's perspective.
- Did not focus on revealing Boon's character development.
- Offered limited textual support.
- Suggested incomplete knowledge of the character.
- Offered limited or no evidence of SGC awareness.

(b) No answers to this question were reportedly seen.

DRAMA

Paper 9482/02 Practical Drama
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Key messages

What candidates did well

- There were many enthusiastic and committed performances – scripted and devised – that communicated well through disciplined, focused ensemble work. There was a burning passion to communicate to the audience through the roles the performers had learned and the pieces they had rehearsed.

What candidates needed to improve

- Some performances needed a greater sense of performance discipline of the ensemble to communicate effectively with a live audience. They needed to inhabit their roles well and to give the audience a clear sense that they were portraying characters distinct to their usual personality.

Comments on specific questions

Devised performance

Comprehensive responses

- There was some excellent devised work – highly inventive and clearly demonstrating a variety of acting techniques. Simple sets and effective costumes enhanced the performances. Physical theatre and seamless transitions contributed to successful productions, and there were some stunning powerful pieces that reflected the techniques and styles the candidates had studied, particularly in physical theatre practices such as those of Kneehigh and Frantic Assembly.
- Candidates often had little or no influence over the performance spaces available to them. The success of the performance depended on how effectively the available space was used, and there were some outstanding performances in relatively small spaces.
- The outstanding performances were performed in front of a live audience and benefited from the relationship with, and responses of, that audience. The presence of a live audience was a key factor in elevating performances, as it focused the performers' attention on what they wished to communicate.

Limited responses

- Devised pieces were frequently narrative-driven and often resembled soap operas in both structure and treatment. The choice of stimulus was often more significant than the acting techniques used to communicate the piece's message. The issues dealt with were often clichéd, such as plagues, pandemics, mental health, and drugs.
- Some pieces were performed in unsuitable locations, such as crowded canteens or hallways. A number were staged in classroom spaces that had not been cleared or arranged appropriately, meaning that candidates had to perform in a crowded and cramped rooms filled with tightly packed rows of desks and chairs with no clearly defined performance space. This did not create a sense of performance and limited the performers' capacity to engage effectively with their audience.
- Some candidates were clearly performing directly to camera, focusing their attention on the camera lens rather than on the reaction of the live audience. They approached their performances as though they were intended for screen, rather than the subtle demands, beauty, and possibilities of live theatre. This often resulted to static performances, overly reliant on facial expressions and other screen-based actions or gestures that had considerably less impact in a theatrical setting.

Self-evaluation

Comprehensive responses

- The outstanding responses were well thought out, often with a slide deck and/or other visual aids. There was a naturalness about the candidates' delivery, and it felt as though they were explaining something to someone, rather than just delivering lines. They had energy and a genuine sense of communicating their ideas and their creative journey to an audience.
- Such responses clearly identified the stylistic influences on the work and explained how practical workshops had informed the creative process. There was an effective balance between referring the plot when necessary and highlighting the significance of the ensemble's decisions.

Limited responses

- These responses demonstrated insufficient animation and commitment and were often read from a script in a manner that have limited engagement. The response was essentially a narrative of what the candidates had done, with little sense of the devising process and the stages that the group went through to deliver their performance. The least successful responses included lengthy accounts of personality clashes and internal group obstacles; others were delivered so quickly that it was an issue to follow as candidates attempted to cover every aspect of their work.
- There was very little reference to the stylistic influences on the piece, resulting in sustained, descriptive, and highly repetitive narrative of the storyline and plot of the devised piece.

Scripted performance

Comprehensive responses

- There were some excellent script choices using complex, cutting-edge texts which allowed candidates to fully explore the work and different performance styles. These performance texts offered challenge, variety and a good range of characters, and the extracts were chosen so that all members of the group had ample exposure. Some script extracts were chosen from a complete professionally performed script, candidates learned their lines and understood their intentions, and these gave a great opportunity to succeed.
- The most comprehensive responses explored the range of characterisation within the text and were demonstrated subtle nuances in the relationships between characters, showing that the performance had successfully made the vital transition from page to stage.
- There were some extremely powerful physical works, where the performance developed a compelling momentum through the strength of the physical interactions. This enhanced the vocal delivery and increased the overall impact of the performance.

Limited responses

- There were some questionable choices of play extracts for the scripted work, which offered limited demand for candidates. Some scripts selected were intended for classroom use or speech-and-drama examinations and therefore provided limited scope for character development, subtlety, and nuance.
- Some performances were displayed an imbalance in character exposure, with some candidates performing a lead role without allowing others to shine. In other instances, every group in the Centre offered the same extract, making it hard for groups to show originality or demonstrate unique approach.
- Some acting was one-dimensional and resulted in portrayals that were not believable, with a dialogue delivered in a functional manner and insufficient physical variety in performance. Articulation and projection proved to be a challenge, and some candidates delivered their lines in a subdued manner that would not have had limited impact in an audience. In many instances, lines were delivered without shape or emotional variation, resembling an initial classroom reading rather than a rehearsed and fully developed performance.

Indicative repertoire list – June 2026

David Lindsay Abair	<i>The Rabbit Hole</i>
Edward Albee	<i>Three Tall Women</i>
Edward Albee	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>
David Auburn	<i>Proof</i>
Tom Basden	<i>Joseph K</i>
Nina Beber	<i>Misreadings</i>
Deborah Brevoort	<i>The Women of Lockerbie</i>
Amelia Bullmore	<i>Di and Viv and Rose</i>
Jez Butterworth	<i>Mojo</i>
Anton Chekhov	<i>The Seagull</i>
Edward Crosby Wells	<i>Tough Cookies</i>

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Halley Feiffer	<i>How to Make Friends and Then Kill Them</i>
Charlotte Perkins Gilman	<i>Yellow Wallpaper</i>
David Ives	<i>Sure Thing</i>
Dom Jory	<i>Love, Death and Prom</i>
Charlotte Keatley	<i>My Mother Said I Never Should</i>
Anthony King & Scott Brown	<i>Gutenberg! The Musical!</i>
Kate Hamill	<i>Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson – Apt 2B</i>
Khaled Hussein	<i>Kite Runner</i>
Henry Lewis	<i>The Play That Goes Wrong</i>
Arthur Miller	<i>The Crucible</i>
Harold Pinter	<i>Old Times</i>
Yasmina Reza	<i>Art</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>Hamlet</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>King Lear</i>
Neil Simon	<i>The Odd Couple – female version</i>
Simon Stephens	<i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time</i>
Shelagh Stephenson	<i>The Memory of Water</i>
Milly Thomas	<i>Clickbait</i>
Timberlake Wertenbaker	<i>The Love of The Nightingale</i>
Oscar Wilde	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>
Thornton Wilder	<i>Our Town</i>
Ernest Zulia	<i>All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten</i>

DRAMA

Paper 9482/03 Theatre-Making and Performing
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Key messages

Style and performance production investigation should be given careful consideration in Group Devised Performance, including:

- The minimum and maximum lengths of performances and written material.
- The focus of written evaluations on process.
- Distinguishing between recognition of devised performance skills and role portrayal.
- The use of video technology.
- The inclusion of the audience.

Administration

Most centres submitted the necessary documentation for moderation to the online platform as required.

In moving this component online, the requirement to upload the Group Devised Cover Sheet (GDCS) was inadvertently omitted from the list of required documents initially communicated to centres for this component. The GDCS is a syllabus requirement. It is a necessary document that informs moderators about professionally performed theatrical production investigated and how it informed the devising process. The document provides an opportunity for centres to give an account of the research undertaken and the practical activities carried out in creating the final piece.

Some Centres completed the GDCS thoroughly, which aided moderation and enhanced moderators' understanding of how candidates had produced their devised work.

Centre and candidate issues

Moderators could not consider additional material regarding candidate qualities or personal circumstances provided by centres alongside the moderation submission, beyond the ICMS forms and Group Devised Cover Sheet.

In Individual Performance, the most successful performances identified the theme and first text at the outset and maintained a clear focus on the texts throughout. Subsequent linking material followed on and informed the audience clearly of the texts and how they related to one another.

Opinion expressed on the chosen theme and how the theme may relate to the candidate's personal circumstances sometimes detracted from the line of communication in the linking material.

Comments on specific questions

Group Devised Performance

To meet the time requirements are part of the discipline of devising both Group piece and in assembling and creating the individual programme of performed texts.

Many candidates were careful to keep to the time requirement of 15–20 minutes. Where Group Performances were significantly longer or shorter than the required duration, the assessment of **AO2B: Devise and Communicate a Role** were appropriately limited.

Group devised performance investigation

Most Centres were careful to apply the requirement that a single professionally performed production of a work in the chosen style or tradition (current or historic) should be investigated. Some Centres appeared unclear that this is more than selecting a text for study. It is a performance by one of the named practitioners, or in the style or tradition, that should be investigated. Often this was a filmed production of a stage performance. Film adaptations of a stage text were not generally a successful means to identify the distinctive traits of the practitioner or style.

Choice of practitioner, tradition or style

Some excellent and very closely focused work was seen that very precisely followed the practitioner or style intended.

Most of the list on page 17 were offered in this session. Some excellent and very closely focused work was seen that very precisely followed the practitioner or style intended.

Noh and Kabuki remain on the list for the 2027–9 syllabus with recognition that these present demands that may be beyond many centres to provide.

Mixing of several sources and mixing of styles was sometimes seen. Some centres drew from more than one work or practitioner. From this approach the distinctive traits to be applied showed a generalised understanding and excellence, and more often a partial or limited grasp of a style. Use of more than one practitioner source was particularly apparent in Absurdism. This is an area where different practitioners are known to take a variety of approaches. The most successful work had closely followed one practitioner. The devised outcome could be clearly distinguished as having investigated that method thoroughly. Through devising, candidates were able to confirm the effectiveness of those ways of working.

Most effective and commendable were Group Devised performances where it was evident that the candidates had undertaken further research. From this they were able to demonstrate a close understanding and knowledge of the distinctive traits of a practitioner or style. This was possible even where the contemporary production investigated may have diverged to some extent from the distinctive traits of the original. Further research had enabled this divergence to be recognised by the candidates. They were able to avoid being drawn into less relevant aspects. This was sometimes very helpfully evidenced in their written submissions regarding the devising. Candidates were able to trace a progression leading to a devised outcome that was more closely focused to the practitioner or style than the production investigated.

Some performance included mixing of elements of other performance styles not listed in the syllabus. In some instances, alternative artwork material was referenced as a stimulus to the work created within a chosen style or tradition. These both necessarily narrowed the qualities of the performance outcome demonstrated, as it related to a practitioner or style. Centres should be clear that this task is clearly different from Component 02 where a stimulus is used for a broader approach to devising.

Several Centres appeared to interpret Revenge Tragedy as essentially a style of interpersonal conflict resulting in a killing. The other qualities of the Revenge tradition as a theatrical style had not been identified and applied. Work of this kind showed at most partial or limited traits and roles.

Some work was seen which sought to focus on naturalism as a style of acting. The syllabus list does not include Naturalism as a specified style. Some of the practitioners listed use Naturalistic acting within a more specific performance context. Where Katie Mitchell's work was sometimes considered to be essentially Naturalism and the use cameras and screen images, this significantly limited the recognition available for devising the distinctive traits of the practitioner.

Non-theatrical performance elements

Some devised performances extended their chosen style into television genres and formats of entertainment. Television and screen-based styles can only be considered in assessment where they form part of the distinctive traits of the practitioner. This is only appropriate where the practitioner has demonstrably used a television or other media-based performance format.

Some Devised group work intended to be in the style of a named popular film/movie was clearly divergent from the work of any practitioner on the given list in the syllabus.

Video technology

The use of video technology on stage, including handheld recording and candidate appearances solely on screen, was evident in some work developed in the style of Katie Mitchell. Where appropriately applied, centres could recognise this as an aspect of **AO2A: Use of Tradition, Practice or Style**.

The Principal Examiner Report for June 2022 makes clear that off-stage or recorded acting that is viewable only on screen, as well as technological operation that does not involve the portrayal of a character, is not assessable under **AO2B** in relation to the communication of role in Group Devised Performance.

Design candidates

A small number of candidates offered Design as their contribution to Group Devised performance. The assessment criteria for role under AO2B require submission of a design portfolio. Where this was not submitted it was appropriate for only limited recognition of achievement for AO2B role in contributing to the devised performance. The performance itself is evidence only for 2A devising of the distinctive traits of the practitioner or style.

Some centres including a design entry recognised in their assessment that the assessment criteria require the designer to present a design proposal. Successful portfolio submissions showed the design contribution to lighting, sound, and the creation of artefacts were focused on realising the artistic intentions of the group, while clearly reflecting the distinctive traits of the practitioner or style.

The Written Evaluation

Most Centres effectively applied the assessment criteria for AO4 Analysis for the written evaluation. Candidates usually understood this must be an analytical account of the process of devising the group performance and of the individual candidate's contribution to the outcome. Disciplined writing avoided being sidetracked into discussion of audience responses and candidate post-performance reflections.

Understanding that these are not a part of the required analysis kept the responses focused to the analysis.

Most Centres were very careful to ensure that written evaluations were within the 800-word limit. Centres should be aware that material beyond the word limit should not be considered for assessment.

Individual Performance

Most Centres clearly understood the task and were careful to adhere to the requirements. The standard was generally high, with most performances showing assured or insightful understanding of the selected material.

The syllabus states that Individual Performances should be 6–8 minutes. Most candidates were careful to select and shape their introductions, texts and links to meet this requirement. Candidates should be informed by the Centre that material beyond the maximum length should not be considered for assessment.

Use of music

While the inclusion of music to accompany the performance is permissible, this is a Drama task, and candidates are expected to create mood and atmosphere through their performance. Work that relied on music for emotional effect was unlikely to achieve the higher levels for this part of the assessment. In some instances, accompanying atmospheric music detracted from the audience's focus on the performance. Music should not overwhelm the candidate's voice and, where this occurred, it had a limiting effect on the overall effectiveness of the performance.

The Individual Performance is a spoken task. where song was sometimes used it could only be recognised as evidence of the communication of character and theme.

Themes

Most candidates were careful to select a single clear theme as required in the syllabus. Almost all found extracts that were clearly linked to this single theme.

Family, personal relationships, gender issues, growing up, mental illness, politics, conflict, emotions, life experiences, roles in society, religion, deception, cultural identity, ecological concerns, and crime were among the many distinctive themes addressed.

Candidates were usually careful to identify the texts and explain briefly the relevance of the text to the theme. This enabled audience and moderation to follow the line of thought throughout where multiple themes were cited, this tended to diminish the coherence of the performance.

Almost all performances were of very serious content. Few light-hearted interpretations were presented.

Links

Linking material used to introduce the programme of texts from the beginning and between each performed text was usually very well integrated to the overall performance. Effective links were clearly distinct from the performed texts while closely maintaining the continuity of the performance. Some blackouts and long changeovers between extracts sometimes made the flow of the performance uneven.

Most centres were careful to fulfil the stated syllabus requirement stated on Page 35 that in Individual Performance candidates should create their own brief links between the texts.

Links are an assessed part of the performance under AO3 Communication. The syllabus is clear that Links are to introduce each piece, explain the relationship between pieces, for example identifying contrasts or similarities, and comment on how each piece relates to the theme. They are intended to guide the audience through the programme.

In some submissions, reference to theme or texts was sometimes limited to an introduction followed by three or more extracts in sequence to an end without linking material. This significantly limited recognition of achievement for links.

This was the case also where some opted for just an end statement. Most centres were careful to note that page 35 states also that there is no need for a concluding comment after the final piece.

Extreme language

Candidates in some centres were using texts which included some extreme language. There was no advantage in using texts which included verbal obscenities. The prominence given to expletives in delivery of the texts sometimes detracted from the performance qualities of the performance.

Visual aspects of presentation and setting

Candidates usually included at least plain performance blacks or appropriate simple costume for the individual performance. This included some simple costume changes to good effect between texts. This clearly contributes beneficially to the overall sense of performance for the candidate and audience while costume is not being an assessed aspect of performance. Candidates wearing very casual everyday clothes not related to sometimes very serious and formal text material to be presented sometimes gave the appearance of a rehearsal recital rather than as a stage performance.

An appropriate performance setting should be selected. Instances were submitted where performances were taking place in a classroom with background noise and sometimes intrusions to the space during the performance. This is clearly not appropriate. While Centres may have limited facilities, all candidates must be offered appropriate assessment conditions.

It is not necessary for there to be an elaborate set. Most performances were effective with minimal furniture and set, and sometimes simple costume changes.

Lecterns that could hold scripts or notes not visible to the camera were occasionally used. Where candidates were clearly referencing notes, this had a limiting effect on the demonstration of performance qualities.

Audience

It was sometimes apparent at the end of a solo performance that the only person present was the teacher recording the performance. In such cases, the work could appear more like a rehearsal than a live performance. As this is a performance component, there is an expectation that both the Group Devise Performance and the Individual Performance will be performed to an audience, as stated on page 17 of the syllabus. Where it was clear that candidates were performing to an audience, there was often a clear sense of performer–audience engagement. This greatly benefited the candidates.

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Candidates are to be reminded that they must not use extracts of any texts set for Component 1 written examination for Component 3 performance as stated on page 19 of syllabus subject content.

Theatre Traditions and Styles	
<i>Absurd Drama</i>	<i>Waiting for Godot, Rhinoceros, The Birthday Party, Happy Days, Desire Caught By The Tail</i>
<i>Commedia Dell'Arte</i>	<i>A Servant to Two Masters / One Man, Two Guvnors</i>
<i>Farce</i>	<i>The Play That Goes Wrong, The Importance of Being Earnest, Boeing Boeing</i>
<i>Revenge Tragedy</i>	<i>Hamlet, The Spanish Tragedy,</i>
Practitioners	
<i>Antonin Artaud</i>	<i>Jet of Blood</i>
<i>Steven Berkoff</i>	<i>East, Metamorphosis, The Trial,</i>
<i>Bertolt Brecht</i>	<i>Arturo Ui, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, , Mother Courage, The Threepenny Opera, The Good Person of Sechuan, Woyzeck</i>
<i>Finger Players</i>	<i>My Friend a Japanese Soldier</i>
<i>Theatre de Complicite</i>	<i>Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead, Things I know To Be True, Metamorphosis, Mnemonic</i>
<i>Frantic Assembly</i>	<i>Love Song, Things I Know To Be True, Pool No Water</i>
<i>Grotowski</i>	<i>Acropolis</i>
<i>Katie Mitchell</i>	<i>Ophelias Zimmer, The Cat In The Hat, Waves</i>
<i>Robert Wilson</i>	<i>Shakespeare's Sonnets, Einstein On The Beach, Woyzeck</i>

DRAMA

Paper 9482/04 Theatre in Context

Key messages

What candidates did well

- The most comprehensive work resulted from a genuine interest in or passion for the topic chosen which in turn promotes a well-chosen research question/title.
- Allied to this were highly relevant sources which were well referenced/cited. Well-balanced essays, referenced with footnotes, cited quotations to good effect which went on to define their own perspective on the research question.
- A thorough exploratory argument with clear examples of wider reading/viewing (noted in a comprehensive bibliography) also reflected good practice together with a clear conclusion.
- The most effective work consistently engaged with the question set and regularly returned to explicitly answer it whilst taking care to analyse cited examples and evaluate the work of practitioners.

What candidates needed to improve

- Less comprehensive essays required more explicit research question or provided a question that was too broad in scope to meaningfully explore within the word count given. Many candidates need to review their understanding of the rubric of the syllabus and their approach to their choice of research question. Time devoted to getting the parameters of the essay right (for instance, in accordance with the syllabus specification and good academic practice) is time well spent. One or two submissions missed a research question entirely.
- The research question should reflect the nature of the syllabus. A significant number of essays did not engage sufficiently with the practical aspects of theatre-making, instead concentrating primarily on cultural, social, or political perspectives, neglecting the actual business of creating the potential for, or 'doing' practical things, on stage, in performance.
- Similarly, essays that approached the task from a literary perspective, forgetting that the syllabus advises 'the focus of the research should be on the practicalities of theatre-making and performance' did not address the assessment objectives.
- Essays which rely completely on quotations to build an argument, without developing ideas.
- This is also true of essays which approached the task from either a socio-historical perspective or from a commercial theatre perspective.
- Candidates should ensure that they maintain a record of their research which can migrate into a correctly formatted bibliography and fully referenced/cited set of sources.

Comments by Assessment Objective

AO1 A

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Showed authoritative knowledge and understanding of the chosen area of study and its context with a precise focus on the chosen aspect(s).
- Provided a wide range of appropriate and relevant supporting evidence consistently applied to the chosen area of study.

(b) Limited responses

- Carried out limited exploration of the chosen area of study and its context with little secure focus on the chosen aspect(s).
- Made limited use of supporting evidence which may be largely inappropriate or irrelevant to the chosen area of study.

The assessment criterion of 'knowledge and understanding of the chosen area of drama and theatre' was most comprehensively met with plenty of candidates demonstrating very good, sometimes sophisticated levels. Conversely, candidates should pay particular attention to the syllabus requirement highlighted in the second assessment criterion which refers to 'application of supporting evidence'. There was a significant number of essays that did not include a bibliography and/or in-text citations, and some essays were missing both elements.

Candidates should ensure that they maintain a record of their research which can migrate into a correctly formatted bibliography and fully referenced/cited set of sources.

All borrowed work including visuals, which need to be titled as figs. (figures), is not just a requirement of compliance for academic convention, whilst a useful way for candidates to demonstrate their use of a 'good' or 'wide' range of supporting evidence.

AO1 B

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Demonstrated comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the practicalities of theatre making and performance in relation to the chosen area of study.
- Made consistently precise use of specific illustrative detail.

(b) Limited responses

- Demonstrated rudimentary knowledge and understanding of the practicalities of theatre making and performance in the chosen area of study.
- Provided little or no effective use of illustrative detail.

Many essays showed a good level of understanding of the practicalities of theatre-making. The most effective writing had carefully selected illustrative details that very clearly communicated and supported the points made. That said, work that strayed from the parameters of the task into other areas often strived to do well here. Some essays simply listed productions (and, in a few cases, films, which are not valid sources for this syllabus) and then did not give concrete examples of practice to support the points made. Candidates are reminded that this essay should be seen as a research task and not as a director's notebook: for example, more than one essay gave creative suggestions for how work 'could' be staged rather than offer researched practical examples taken from actual productions to support their answer to the research question.

AO4 C

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Offered sophisticated analysis of the artistic intentions of playwrights, performers and theatre-makers and their approaches to achieving these intentions.

(b) Limited responses

- Offered restricted analysis of the artistic intentions of playwrights, performers and theatre-makers with limited awareness of how these intentions were met. The analysis may display significant misunderstanding or confusion of ideas.

Comprehensive responses presented well-developed and original analysis of artistic intentions and the approaches adopted by different practitioners. The quality of this analysis was often influenced by the focus of the research question and the extent to which it aligned with the component requirements and guidelines set out in the syllabus.

Limited work offered inconsistent analysis in places, typically where candidates got lost in being overly descriptive and lost sight of the analysis to support the cited theatre-making practice. Sometimes analytical observations were only given 'second hand' via quoting from authorities.

AO4 D

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Applied perceptive critical evaluation of the work of playwrights, performers and theatre-makers.

(b) Limited responses

- Offered a limited review of the work of playwrights, performers and theatre-makers.

As with criterion AO4C, with comprehensive responses showing sustained and well-developed original evaluation whereas limited responses were typified by a discussion containing occasional and superficial evaluative comment. Sometimes evaluative observations were only given 'second hand' via quoting from authorities. In a small number of cases, candidates were clearly enthusiastic about a particular practitioner and repeatedly expressed their admiration for the work. Nevertheless, this enthusiasm was rarely developed into a sustained critical evaluation.