

# Performing Arts

Advanced GCE A2 H546

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H146

## Report on the Units

---

**June 2007**

**H146/H546/MS/R/07**

OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations) is a unitary awarding body, established by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate and the RSA Examinations Board in January 1998. OCR provides a full range of GCSE, A level, GNVQ, Key Skills and other qualifications for schools and colleges in the United Kingdom, including those previously provided by MEG and OCEAC. It is also responsible for developing new syllabuses to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers.

This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this Report.

© OCR 2007

Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications  
PO Box 5050  
Annesley  
NOTTINGHAM  
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 870 6622  
Facsimile: 0870 870 6621  
E-mail: [publications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:publications@ocr.org.uk)

## CONTENTS

### Advanced GCE Performing Arts (H546)

### Advanced Subsidiary GCE Performing Arts (H146)

#### REPORT ON THE UNITS

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
G380	Investigating performing arts organisations	1
G381	Professional practice: skills development	3
G382	Professional practice: performance	5
G383	Professional practice: production	10
G384	Getting work	11
G385	Exploring repertoire	15
G386	Producing your showcase	17
G387	Production demonstration	21
*	Grade Thresholds	23



## **G380: Investigating performing arts organisations (externally moderated)**

### **General Comments**

This is the fourth session that this unit has run and it is clear that most centres are responding well to its requirements. Although most of the work arrived by the deadline and was complete with administration in order, it was noticeable that some centres were very late in their submissions, with the moderator having to contact them several times. Even then, some of the work arrived incomplete, without the necessary Centre Authentication Forms (CCS160) and with little annotation. It is vital that the dates given are adhered to, as moderators work to a tight schedule. It is suggested that new centres attend the training events provided by OCR, so that these issues can be resolved.

As usual, there was a wide-range of responses from candidates. Some of their portfolios were of a high standard and showed a considerable amount of research, which was often expressed clearly with good use of performing arts terminology. Some of the organisations selected were far too big (the BBC, for example) and it would have been better if candidates had concentrated on just one department in that sort of example. However, it was also evident that some of the tasks set were a little self-limiting. Candidates need to choose organisations that offer them an opportunity to cover all Assessment Objectives in some depth – for example, it is difficult to discuss job roles and how they relate to each other in a one-person company. It is useful to present a schematic representation of the job hierarchy in each organisation, which can then be used as the basis of comment and comparison.

Fewer portfolios were presented in tabular form this time. The expectation for this unit is that this work should be presented as an essay. Centres should also be aware that they should avoid overlapping material in the portfolio with the job role chosen for the presentation. For example, to focus on the role of stage manager in the portfolio and then to use the same person and material in the presentation as two sets of marks should not be awarded for what is essentially one piece of work.

Some centres used colour-coded systems or post-its to highlight where the Assessment Objectives were met – these were generally very useful. Internal standardisation was evident in almost all the centres moderated, with URS completed well, though some centres still did not provide enough information as to the location of evidence in the body of the text. It is not helpful for the moderator to know that the location of the evidence is 'in the Portfolio' as this is self-evident - a page number is essential.

There were instances where annotation was still quite minimal and this made moderation much more difficult. Some of the portfolio work showed evidence of a sound knowledge base and many candidates had researched both organisations in depth. However, in a few cases candidates were awarded too many marks for work that did not compare and contrast the two organisations in enough detail, specifically with regard to roles, purpose, effectiveness and structure. On the other hand, centres must remember to award marks for spelling, punctuation, grammar and communication under AO1.2 and AO4.1. Some candidates did not receive their full entitlement of marks because of this omission and it was necessary for the moderator occasionally to make adjustments for that reason.

It was pleasing that in general portfolios seemed less bulky this time - with fewer candidates sending unnecessary material, such as programmes, leaflets and menus. However, centres need to ensure that such peripheral evidence is kept to a minimum. Teachers need to make sure that all of the work is in the candidates' own words – still, occasionally, the same photocopied sheets were seen in just several portfolios. Please avoid including photocopies of job specifications unless they are to be used as the focus of comment, comparison or analysis by the candidate.

## *Report on the Units taken in June 2007*

The presentation of the job role was generally done less well and still, sometimes, a little over-marked. Centres need to ensure that they provide evidence for the moderator to show where marks have been awarded. It is helpful to see the work actually happening – a video or DVD of a talk or PowerPoint presentation is very useful, along with a paper copy of notes or slides. Please ensure that videos or DVDs are labelled with all relevant information (following the Portfolio Submission Instructions) and have a list of contents with timings. Try to ensure that the sound and picture quality is as good as possible – avoid filming in a room with lots of flickering computer screens, and be careful that shadow does not intrude.

Some presentations were knowledgeable and showed high levels of understanding of the chosen job role. However, some candidates gave only a very generalised talk on a type of job – ‘a stage manager’ was a favourite. Unfortunately this choice limits the amount of marks available. It is essential to set the role thoroughly within the context of one of the organisations. To access the highest marks in AO4 it is vital to discuss working practices, such as appraisal, progression, health and safety, contracts, unions etc. The presentation evidence needs to be separated from the Portfolio, not embedded in it for the moderator to find.

## **G381: Professional practice: skills development (externally moderated)**

### **General Comments**

Generally the moderation process went well with most centres clearly understanding the sampling process and what was expected of them in terms of the production of evidence and documentation, although moderators are still reporting failure to include the centre Authentication Form (CCS160) and a small number of centres with more than 10 candidates are still sending all candidates work rather than waiting for a sample to be chosen by moderators from the MS1.

The range of art-forms is wide, although Drama continues to be prominent with Dance and Musical Theatre also very strongly represented. Some centres are using the opportunity the specification provides at AS to work in two or more art forms.

The majority of centres understood the demands of the specification, although there continues to be a diminishing group of centres ignoring some aspects, such as the stipulation for repertoire rather than devised work. This did not however always result in corresponding adjustments of marks if the standard of the work met the appropriate grading criteria. However, moderators are clear that as the specification establishes itself adjustments will increasingly be made in response to misinterpretation of the unit, especially where this misinterpretation seems also to be symptomatic or reflective of a poor standard of work. In other words a mis-reading of the demands for repertoire rather than devised work would not necessarily result in an adjustment of marks at present, but this situation will be less likely to remain in subsequent years.

The **Skills Development Plan** provides the framework on which evidence is hung. It should include initial plans and target-setting, contemporaneous notes on workshops and taught sessions, 'milestone' reflections, records of repertoire, roles or techniques attained and skills achieved. It should be in the context of the candidate/artists personal and direct interaction with the skills and techniques. In other words they should *own* the evidence. There is a continuing development of this approach in this year's evidence with the vast majority of centres understanding that this is not a 'taught' course as such. Portfolios should therefore be unique to the candidate, art-form and level of ability and should not be full of notes on practitioners that have very little application to candidates' own work and practice.

Most centres had encouraged initial plans and target-setting that introduced the framework. Some of these plans were no more than basic CVs while stronger centres had candidates making initial statements responding to the years teaching agenda provided up-front by tutors. The art-form sometimes determined the nature of these plans with dance centres in particular highlighting actual techniques, skills and knowledge of health and safety as benchmarks, while drama centres generally took more holistic approaches. Both ways can be appropriate and these are a further illustration of the range of approaches moderators are confronted with. Most centres realise that looking back at the plan and milestone evaluations provide for a rigorous application of the assessment criteria and can be used to justify incremental movement up the mark bands.

The plan therefore needs to be complex enough to sustain this constant up-grading, adjusting and evaluation. Good centres and candidates are responding to this imperative. Some centres continue to over-produce pro-forma and documentation for candidates, going beyond guidance on how to record development. These centres gave very structured documents to candidates restricting their responses to single, prescriptive formulae and 'can-do' tick boxes. This limited the application of a useful balance between allowing the candidate to develop their own recording methods and individual perspective within the context of their chosen art-form and giving them leading and descriptive worksheets.

Most centres are producing **appropriate evidence** of two pieces of work in preparation and one complete. There are still centres, however, who continue to encourage candidates to submit devised work. This is not acceptable and moderators will increasingly penalise centres by ignoring this evidence in the moderation process. Conversely some centres are submitting evidence of three *finished* performances which makes moderation of AO3 (*acquisition* of skills and techniques) assessment problematic. Although videos and DVDs are mostly included as evidence, and it's clear that centres recognised the very strong indications in the specification that video/DVD evidence of work in progress and finished work is essential additional evidence for marks awarded and subsequent moderation, some centres continue to leave out this form of evidence.

Good centres realised that an ideal format for evidence would be a DVD, suitably chaptered showing samples of a range of practical sessions across the year, culminating in the finished piece. They also follow the Portfolio Submission Instructions sent out by OCR.

There are still too few centres encouraging candidates to write commentaries on their work. For most centres these remained an implicit part of the evidence, assumed to be there by the simple act of occasional reflection or in the case of weaker candidates the odd descriptive comment. The **commentary** should be more than an implicit underpinning of the portfolio; it should be an explicit, stand alone overview of how the examples of repertoire show skill development. A few accomplished candidates had annotations across all their previous notes and logs, commenting on their progress and development as well as a compilation of these notes in one or more substantial milestone commentaries. This process was then 'closed' with a final summative one.

Alongside the commentary the **observation report** provides additional evidence of work undertaken and skill level attained. It continues to be the case that these are not always written by an appropriately skilled observer, able to give technical and artistic judgements and with an understanding of the language, vocabulary and techniques of the skills being demonstrated. Some reports are still cursory and couched in general terms. In moderation processes it is important that observations are as full and comprehensive as possible, as they very often provide vital confirmation and underpinning evidence for marks given. Again, better centres provided formative, milestone observations and a final summative one.

### **Application of Assessment Criteria**

While in the specification's first year moderators placed considerable emphasis on the standard of the work, rather than assessment protocols and the demands of the 'banner', this will become increasingly less the case as the course develops. This year therefore has seen moderators less likely to indulge in the archaeological work needed to track criteria and evidence obscured by devised work, by lack of commentaries and observations and by other misinterpretations, and this shift in emphasis will continue next year. Centres are reminded therefore that not only should assessment criteria be rigorously applied but that the requirements of the specification in terms of what needs to be produced by candidates should be re-visited and robustly applied. Furthermore centres are reminded to complete the URS comprehensively and annotate work more fully.

Subsequent strengthening of the structures on which evidence is hung, clearer annotation and tracking procedures and a fuller understanding of the repertoire demands of the spec will ease the burden of future moderation.

**G382: Professional practice: performance**

**G383: Professional practice: production (Visiting examination)**

This June session saw a variety of work, covering a range of art forms and styles. Most centres were well organised and there was evidence of the use of the specification with examples of excellent professional practice. Centres were reporting to examiners a more knowledgeable understanding of the unit assessment criteria gained from useful INSET as well as from teacher guidelines.

Centres where good practice was evident saw candidates achieving well into the top of the marking criteria. Performance work showed professionalism and, in many cases, outstanding practice. There was a variety of performance types and more integration of the disciplines within them. Large groups coped very well, ensuring opportunity for all candidates across the performance pieces with some centres opting to split large candidate groups in order to provide adequate opportunity for all. It was pleasing to see more involvement from teachers with regard to the selection of the material. This enabled candidates really to focus on the performance aspects and to develop technically demanding performance work. Drama and Musical Theatre work were still the most popular option. However, there were still centres that were misinterpreting the specification and producing 'cabaret/variety style works alongside self-devised work. This does not allow the candidates to fulfil the unit objectives. Centres should use 'existing material' taken from repertoire. If in any doubt over the selection of material for future submissions centres are advised to contact OCR for further guidance or ensure that staff at the centre have access to training opportunities provided annually by OCR.

There was evidence of centres obtaining performance licences/rights as well as covering the full spectrum of putting on a performance, with candidates taking responsibility for various aspects of the production in terms of job roles/ structure and technical/production. This enabled candidates to experience the vocational aspects of staging a professional performance.

**Managing the external examination:**

Examiners commented on the organisation of those centres with well-structured timetables for the running of the examination. Centres where good practice was evident had ensured that all paperwork had been completed and sent in advance to the examiner with the candidates' production diaries. Examiners were seated in an appropriate place with tables and suitable table lights. Most centres had considered the examiner and ensured that the audience were also seated appropriately. Interview/discussion rooms were provided as required. Timings of the interview did however not always give the examiner the appropriate amount of time to discuss the performance with the candidates. Fewer candidates do not necessarily mean a shorter time is required for the discussion. Examiners would prefer up to one-hour pause between the interview and the performance in order to allow candidates adequate time to prepare themselves.

Centres were more aware of the suitability and timings of the piece. Most of the performances took place in the evening, which enabled an appropriate audience to be invited. This is of benefit to the candidates as it provides a performance that does have some relevance to professional practice and removes many of the problems that can occur during a school/college day. Performances were around 45 minutes to an hour long, which worked very well enabling the examiner to assess the development of the candidates' characters. At first glance this may pose a problem for certain art forms, small groups, large groups and single-sex groups, but with a library of works available there really are solutions and ways of interpreting existing pieces of work. Themed events and reviews have been discouraged as they only provide snap-shots of candidate skills and not areas for development, depth and continuity. Centres with large candidate numbers must ensure that performance time for each candidate is adequate. Just appearing in one scene may not be sufficient to enable the candidate to access the marking criteria. Centres must seek advice if they have a large entry to check that selected. A few

centres produced full scale works or extracts that approached 2 hours plus. This is really not necessary and examiners were finding some performances just too long. There is no upper limit for performance time but the recommendation is around an hour. Centres wishing to perform whole works should discuss this with their examiner before the examination day.

Centres must also discuss the performance arrangements with the examiner to ensure that there are no misunderstandings. Examiners may need to arrange overnight accommodation if the performance finishes late in the evening and centres must be mindful of this. Centres must agree the arrangements with the examiner as they have procedures to follow. Any particular requirement or special arrangement must be agreed prior to the examination.

## **The Performance**

There was evidence in this session of outstanding practice. It is very encouraging to see candidates attempting and succeeding with material that is demanding in terms of skills and technical ability. Works from repertoire were undoubtedly more successful than material that had been produced in-house to accommodate the skills of the candidates. Material written in these circumstances provides little or no opportunity for candidates to research and develop. It is often designed around the existing skills of the group and therefore provides limited opportunity to develop new or different skills. Some of these in 'house pieces' simply do not allow candidates to access the marking criteria. Cabaret and variety shows also offer limited opportunity for the candidate to develop their character's journey with many pieces selected because they are 'known' or 'easy' despite the fact that they may not have any relevance to the development of the piece or its themes, or the fact that they may be historically or socially incorrect or inappropriate. Existing material taken from repertoire is more likely to avoid these problems from occurring.

Centres that explored the selection process thoroughly and engaged in a professional approach were able to demonstrate good practice. Where teachers/tutors took an active part in the selection and production process candidates were clearly advantaged. However, there are still some issues with regard to the adequacy of exposure time for each candidate. Candidates need to be able to demonstrate a range of performance skills and development of character or of the piece. A few lines or a solo in a piece may not be enough for candidates to access the full marking criteria. Centres where there were fewer candidates did very well to make use of non-examined performing arts students to support the piece. This worked extremely well.

The recommended length of the performance in the last session was around 45 minutes to one hour. Most centres had adhered to this with adaptations of larger full-scale works. Dance performances may be staged in two or three acts for dancers to explore a range of performance technique. Music candidates may wish to follow a similar principle to ensure that they are meeting the required length. Many of the performance pieces seen during this session saw candidates involved on stage for a significant amount of time, showing development of both the piece and their role in it.

The use of lighting and sound during this session was extremely effective. Centres made every effort to use technical effects to create atmosphere and mood. Elaborate sets, props, costumes and sound amplification made a significant contribution to the performances giving candidates both a vocational opportunity to take on a production role as well as creating a professional feel. Entries for the G383 Production Unit were again extremely small during this session.

All centres had considered the professional aspects of performance and audiences were present for most of the performance work seen. This enabled candidates to communicate and engage with an audience. Audiences ranged from classes of school pupils to larger scale public audiences. Good practice was seen where centres had produced glossy programmes, displays of photographs and elaborate ticket designs. There was a professional feel to all aspects of the performance project.

## *Report on the Units taken in June 2007*

Performances tended to be in the evening with most starting around 7.00pm to 7.30pm. This enabled candidates to attend their interview and have time for preparation. Some centres had arranged a matinee performance starting at 2.00pm.

All centres met the requirement of recording the performance however; the examiners often had to chase centres for these. Centres are reminded that they have 3 days after the performance to send the video or DVD to the examiner if it is not given on the day of the performance. The quality of these recordings is in some cases poor, with the beginning of the first half or second half missing. Centres must ensure that they are able to produce a recording of the highest quality. This is a mandatory requirement of this unit and in the best interests of the candidates. Good practice saw excellent DVD recordings that were professionally done with chapters, index and candidate identification.

There was a range of performance material seen during this session including:

Musicals	Jesus Christ Superstar, A Slice of Saturday Night, Sweet Charity, Fame, Grease, Blood Brothers, Treasure Island, Victorian Music Hall, We Will Rock You, Chorus Line, Chicago, Moulin Rouge, Joseph
Plays	Too Much Punch For Judy, Twelfth Night, Steel Magnolias, Shut Up, Burn, Confusions, Metamorphosis, Shakers, Family Planning, Road, The Tempest,
Dance	[Works of Bob Fosse, Bruce, Graham and Cunningham] Memoria, Alvin Ailey, Elite Syncopations, Fit as a Fiddle, Changing Steps,
Music	Works of Beethoven, Bach, Handel, Abba, Tribute Bands, Rock Festivals, The Beatles, Robbie Williams, Swing

### **The Interview**

Centres reported a more positive feel to the interview. Examiners used the time to familiarise themselves with the candidates, taking on their views and opinions. The format was less formal and this gave the candidates the chance to develop avenues that they felt were important. Candidates felt that a less formal approach actually helped them to feel less nervous and more comfortable about the process. Interviews were held in separate rooms with the candidates and the examiner.

Candidates did vary in their approach to the interview. Some were knowledgeable and able to discuss various production aspects showing good understanding of the material. They were able to comment on the playwright/composer's intentions as well as the themes, historical, social and cultural aspects. All candidates were able to discuss personal and spatial health and safety. There was extensive evidence of warm-ups, exercises, mental preparation and relaxation techniques. Candidates were generally very well prepared.

### **The Diaries**

There was a significant improvement from the last session with regard to the importance of the diary. Centres are now more aware of the significance of marks lost when candidates have not produced a performance diary. In this session many of the candidates were not only submitting extensive works, but also really focussing on their characters journey and its development from the start of the project to the finishing post. Candidates were reaching the higher band with many scoring full marks. Centres had clearly provided candidates with support and guidance, which

## *Report on the Units taken in June 2007*

focused more on the rehearsal process. There were teacher observations, self-evaluations, peer comments and a range of feedback giving candidates opportunities to develop and improve. Assessment and re-assessment of how the candidate was progressing certainly helped the candidate to understand how they could achieve their aims.

Centres are advised to refer to the unit specification and teacher guidelines where the requirements for the diary are clearly outlined. A comprehensive checklist is as follows:

- Selection of material
- Audience intention
- Audition process
- Candidates own rehearsal plan
- Rehearsal planning and progress
- Target setting
- Skill development
- Health and Safety
- Production meetings, planning and team dynamics
- Performers responsibilities eg costumes
- Relevance of production aspects to performance
- Research and its application
- Teacher comments and feedback
- Individual interpretation
- Regular lesson logs/diaries outlining progress made
- License and contracts
- Use of technical aspects
- Working with others

Candidates are encouraged to write up sessions regularly and not in retrospect where knowledge may be lost during the process. Candidates must also note that Internet printouts with highlighted text are not acceptable in defining an understanding of the work. Candidates must acknowledge the source of their findings and not submit teacher notes or Internet findings as their own work. Candidates may work collaboratively but must be able to show who had been responsible for each aspect.

### **Administration**

Centres are still having some difficulty with aspects of the administration process. Examiners too often found it difficult to actually contact the person actually responsible for the unit in some centres. This is not acceptable. Teachers must respond to the examiner and keep the lines of communication open. Centres must realise that a key feature of the unit is the fact that it is examined. Too many centres see the examiner as an afterthought and this is a shame. The examiner has a wealth of experience that can support centres and candidates through the process. Centres who display good practice ensure that the examiner is well informed and adhere to all requests for paperwork, forms and deadlines.

Many centres claim not to have received the appropriate forms and paperwork. Teachers must check that they have the necessary administration and contact OCR if they need any further documents. It is worth noting that all the necessary documentation can be found on the OCR website ([www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)) OCR sends out the formal documents to centres via the Examination Officer prior to the examination period, together with instructions and details of the examiner apportioned to the centre. This dispatch runs off provisional entries, therefore it is extremely important that these are made on time. The examiner will make contact with the centre to arrange a suitable date for the performance. If centres are constrained by a school/college calendar and find that they are compromised they should contact OCR to discuss dates for their performance.

Diaries should be forwarded to the examiner 14 days in advance of the examination. Some centres were not compliant with this putting undue pressure on the examiner. Diaries should be clearly labelled – with the appropriate blue label - which is essential in identifying each script. Centres should also note that diaries are not returned to centres after the examination but retained by OCR like other examination scripts. Centres must apply for the diaries if they would like them returned through the 'Return of Scripts' procedure.

All candidates require a GCW212 Form that identifies them and gives information to the examiner on roles undertaken, details of scenes and appearances. Candidates are required to submit two photographs of themselves, one of which must be in costume. Centres should ensure that photographs are attached to the forms and are of a good quality.

### **Common Faults and Pitfalls**

- Inadequate preparation
- Work too long
- Too many short scenes
- Too little action
- Little variety of movement
- Unsuitable vocabulary/ offensive material
- Insufficient understanding
- Under-rehearsed moments
- Working with props
- Lack of dress rehearsal
- Poor visual
- Too much ad lib
- Everyone wearing black or the same costumes
- Not identifying candidates at the start of the video
- Lack of balance
- Lack of climax
- Not enough action/dance/movement
- Uninteresting dynamics
- Not rehearsing with technicians
- Unsuitable costumes, set, performance spaces
- Poor choice of material
- Not learning the words
- Difficulty keeping in character
- Poor links between scenes
- Too much time setting up
- Singing/playing over CDs
- Poor communication
- Material self devised
- Lack of stylistic features
- Lack of focus and concentration
- Volume/voice projection
- Unable to deal with mistakes in character
- Overuse of the prompt

**G383: Professional Practice: Production**

Entry levels were again extremely low during this session. Entries were seen for props, set design, lighting and sound. Candidates were fully involved in the production process and able to make a significant contribution to the process.

Work produced was varied, with many candidates working under their own steam. However, it was encouraging to see evidence of professional design being used by some candidates in both the planning and recording of their work. Documentation must be equivalent to industry practice and whilst there was more evidence of its use there was still too much of candidates' own drawings.

Written submissions were generally weak and did not support the candidates' production work. Diary entries were difficult to draw out from the production portfolio and made little or no relevance to the development of the project. Centres are advised to read the specification and seek guidance from training courses.

## G384: Getting Work (externally moderated)

### General Comments

Moderation was generally efficient and the administrative issues that arise are similar to those experienced in other units. Some centres with more than 10 candidates misunderstood the need to send the MS1 first to moderators, for them to select the sample, and also there were some missing Centre Authentication Forms (CCS160) and MS1s. Instances of these errors remain small but they can take up a disproportionate amount of moderators' time in pursuing documents and the correct sample. In a very few cases samples were still being chased up in mid-July and this is not acceptable practice.

Generally the URS was clearly annotated, especially where centres had a firm hold of the specification demands and context and could confidently refer to evidence and its realisation in the portfolio.

### Demands of the unit

Candidates need to produce:

- Self-promotion pack
- An outline of the range of work considered possible during the first year
- A written analysis of the plan and pack (SWOT) including a strategy for future professional development

There should be a sense of the need for the promotion pack to **persuade** both verbally and visually. Also necessary are a **credible** portfolio of experience and a **sustainable** work plan.

What will come through **effective self-promotion** will be a consideration of:

- An attitude and survival skills
- The management of practical resources.

Underpinning this are the **Assessment Objectives**:

AO1 Knowledge and understanding of the performing arts industry  
AO4 Analysis and evaluation

These are broken down in the assessment grid into:

**Strand 1: AO1.1** Knowledge and understanding of the nature of contract working and being freelance. Use of performing arts terminology. Grammar, punctuation and spelling. (10) (20%).

**Strand 2: AO1.2** Knowledge and understanding of how to construct a realistic projection of work for the first year. Income. Marketability. Contingency. (10) (20%).

**Strand 3: AO4.1** Analysis of the way in which the plan relates to the interview/research conducted with workers. Could be a working analysis, implicit in plan evaluation. Performing arts terminology. Grammar, punctuation and spelling. (15) (30%).

**Strand 4: AO4.2** SWOT analysis. Further evaluation bringing in further professional development.

There should evidence of 50% contract work and 50% freelance. Some of the above can be integrated and assessed synoptically. In the best portfolios there will a clear sense of this integration working to underpin the evidence.

Explicit should be the self-promotion pack, an outline of the range of work possible during the first year as a professional and the written analysis.

There should also be evidence of interviews, observations or research with arts professionals and a strategy for future professional development and work. However it's also possible for the evidence of these to be indicated and implicit throughout the portfolio.

### **Promotional pack**

There was a wide range of promotion packs. Some were well-produced and effective with a strong sense of what was needed to persuade and sell the candidate in a professional context. These candidates were clearly drawing on their research and experience to be able to speak directly and with focus to those potential employers working in a specific vocational area. Here there was a good underpinning knowledge and understanding. Weaker candidates had little of this underpinning knowledge and were obviously working in a very narrow context, one essentially provided for them by the centre and entirely focused on their own anecdotal or school-based knowledge and not on interviews conducted with freelance professionals. At this level it is essential that candidates talk to working professional and experience the vocational context both in replicated events and in real visits to professional venues and spaces.

The promotional pack needs to work with the work-plan and some candidates made good links between, for instance, a set of credible qualifications in a resume and what might reasonably be expected in the first year of work. Some candidates had very modest CVs based on what they had actually done and wildly ambitious plans for their first year. Candidates can have fictitious resumes and qualifications: they just need to be *credible* and *sustainable* and working in a well-informed professional context.

### **Plan of first year of work**

Again, there was a wide range of responses here with a variation in the number of years forming the basis of projections, some very ambitious earnings and some unrealistic ideas of what work might be available in the first year. Most candidates, however, kept to the prerequisite for 50% contract and 50% freelance although some didn't always understand that the contract work should be in a related area rather than any part-time casual work. Most candidates chose teaching or workshop leading in this area but there were also examples of coaching, therapy and event management.

Some centres had very detailed statistical projections over varying periods of time; these were useful when placed in context but pages and pages of them, however meticulously produced add little more to the evidence in terms of grading criteria.

The use of 'strands' of work proved mostly useful providing structure and focus to the material. As previously indicated, the best candidates linked the plan very closely to the promotional pack, giving the overall evidence credibility and coherence.

### **Analysis of the plan**

This section proved to be a very good differentiator of standards of work. Those candidates who provided coherent packs and plans knew clearly where the strengths and weaknesses of the market and professional area were and used this to contextualise their own personal analysis. Weaker candidates tended to restrict their analysis just to their strengths and weakness, but even here not very effectively.

Much of the weaker work was in response to a misunderstanding of the purposes and intention of a SWOT analysis. The best portfolios had very succinct analyses because they had looked at

### *Report on the Units taken in June 2007*

their overall plan and projections and done a focused SWOT analysis of the market and - where relevant and appropriate - of their own abilities and personal characteristics. For instance, 'not being able to get up in the morning' would not be a weakness in the context of a plan to be a jazz singer in a late night club.

### **Conclusion**

Generally there was a good response to the unit in this its first summer. The main conclusion is that centres may need to consider more specialist professional and technical input into the teaching of some of the more professional elements, especially to meet the assessment demands at this level.

## **G385: Exploring repertoire (externally moderated)**

### **General Comments**

This was the first session that this unit has run and it is clear that the assessment criteria is problematic with some of the assessment objectives being too difficult to discern and accredit from the evidence provided for moderation. This is particularly true of AO3.1 Stylistic Skills Application and AO3.2 General Performance Skills as the difference between these two are too fine, particularly from a moderator's point of view. OCR will therefore consider a solution to this problem and communicate this with centres as soon as possible.

The requirement for two essays of 1000 words each is very demanding in terms of sifting research, structure and means of expression. Whilst academic rigor is to be encouraged it has been noted that the word restriction does impose a kind of tyranny in the sense that only the very highest calibre candidate can benefit. All the rest tend to produce unintentionally generic essays, particularly where they are dealing with socio-historical contextual information since there is only so much available from the well-trodden source pathways. OCR will therefore investigate the possibility of extending the word count to 1500 words, so that there is an opportunity for less able candidates to achieve a higher level. Certainly those candidates who ignored the word limit did present more quantifiable evidence.

The 45-minute performance minimum has also caused unnecessary difficulties not just for dance-focussed centres, but also for many centres and moderators alike. Centres have felt obliged to 'empty' their candidates into a large text regardless of the number involved. Centres need to be more mindful about the reason for providing this evidence and need to ensure that they provide a full commentary on each candidate's performance that clearly identifies where marks have been allocated. Submission of such a commentary would therefore help the moderator to locate that element of the performance and avoid them drudging through the whole 45 minutes in an effort to judge the accuracy of the marking.

The main problems for moderators were as follows:

- Late submission of coursework
- No word count
- No bibliography/webography
- Quality of video material (camerawork/lighting etc.)
- Identification of candidates, in costume, on video
- Lack of a written running order and photographs of candidates
- DVDs that were incompatible with PC DVD players.
- Damaged Tapes/DVDs due to inadequate packing

Centres should read carefully and follow OCRs Portfolio Submission Instructions. They must be aware that the quality of the video/DVD is the only means of communicating the performance to the primary audience which is (as far as the examination is concerned) the moderator. Great care must be taken to ensure that the moderator can gain the maximum understanding of the performance. Otherwise, in the event of a results enquiry, no valid evidence will be available.

Centres have not always taken advantage of the possibility of citing assessment criteria in the margins of the work itself or on the URS sheet. It should be understood that in citing the specific criterion against the marks that have been awarded centres are in effect 'leading' the moderator to that evidence. Not only does this make the process easier, it also has the effect of breeding confidence in a centre's judgement and therefore creating a centre profile in which the moderator may come to trust. Also, centres need to give specific references to video or DVD material and the video running order sheet can detail this.

### *Report on the Units taken in June 2007*

A considerable number of centres marked their candidates very generously. A very high proportion of candidates were marked in the 40 plus range and yet the work did not match this. Centres need to take a more objective approach to A2 assessment, bearing in mind the key feature of the specification, that it is vocational. Many candidates seem to be blissfully unaware of the standard expected in the industry and centres need to make this very clear.

Other issues:

- Some centres submitted a single integrated essay over two productions rather than one essay for each production. The aims of each of the two essays are subtly different.
- Skills development was not always sufficiently related to practical work. The two often seemed to exist as separate entities in the teachers' minds.
- It is expected that evidence will be generated in the form of continuous prose. Teacher-produced grids (often heavily prescribed), to record what has been done, should not be seen as either a substitute for diversity on the recording of events, nor as a stand alone record of what has been done. Similarly any form of log or diary is unacceptable.
- Historical and social aspects require significant depth and evidence of reading and weighing-up of sources if they to be of any real value.
- Imagination needs to be encouraged in research - e.g. other productions seen, relevant movies watched and their respective approaches to historical accuracy or sociological relevance.
- Candidates need to be made aware of the professional approach to this vocational specification that is expected in an A2 unit.

**G386: Producing Your Showcase**  
**G387: Production Demonstration**  
**(Visiting examination)**

**General Comments**

For many centres this was the first time that this unit had run and there were problems, many of which stemmed from not using material from repertoire. Many centres, however, responded well to its requirements with examples of good practice evident. The best work was at the top end of the marking scale showing professionalism and outstanding practice. There was evidence of teacher guidance in both selection and performance of the material. Examiners observed examples in all the disciplines with drama and musical theatre works as the most popular options. Candidates are asked to produce a Showcase of three pieces of work containing two contrasting solo pieces and a duologue, duet or pas de deux and could choose to work in a single art form or choose a combination of art forms.

The candidates are assessed over five aspects concerned with preparation and the performance itself. These included selection and preparation of the materials; accuracy and expression; stylistic awareness; difficulty of material and communication. Candidates are also required to produce preparatory notes to demonstrate the preparation process of putting their Showcase together.

Examiners reports generally commented on a session of variable standards of performance work. Selected material was appropriate for most candidates and was well prepared and rehearsed in most centres. There were a number of candidates who scored high marks in this section. Examiners saw candidates tackle the challenge of 'live' performance with increasing enthusiasm and skill technique. Centres commented on how much the candidates had enjoyed meeting the challenges of the unit and the performance experience that it gave them confirmed this. Centres approached the work as 'process to performance' encouraging candidates to create 'The Showcase'- developing and improving skills and performance techniques whilst tackling material that was both challenging and effective.

Some candidates made selections only on the basis of 'challenge', when they should have considered 'strengths' and 'skills' more carefully. Some candidates were playing safe and recycling material which they had performed before - this is not in the spirit of the examination.

Administration in centres was generally good. Good practice was seen in centres that ensured the paperwork arrived in plenty of time, provided a running order and details of candidates' performances. Preparatory notes were labelled. Evidence of performances was on DVD or VHS; some centres produced excellent DVD material with clear chapter labelling and candidate identification. Poor practice was unfortunately evident where examiners received little or no preparatory notes, portfolios, details of running orders and no candidate identification.

Provision of a suitable performance space is important. Good centres are providing excellent facilities for both the examiner and the candidates, with centres opting for a studio or theatre space. Centres, however, should consider the placement of the examiner, ensuring that they can see and hear the performance.

Centres ensured that candidates fulfilled the specified time requirements of 15 minutes to cover all three-performance pieces, which included breaks/changing between pieces. Centres should be aware that some of the set studies in dance and audition materials often fall short of this requirement and standards, particularly in the set dances, are often different and do not meet the A2 criteria. Candidates must be equally prepared in all three pieces so as to not disadvantage themselves. Candidates who produce short performance pieces cannot access the higher marks. Candidates must also consider the difficulty of the material as higher marks are awarded for technically demanding pieces. Centres should also check on the level or grade of the chosen

pieces ensuring that they meet the assessment criteria. Centres are reminded that chosen pieces/selection of pieces cannot be changed after submission to the examiner and certainly not on the day of the examination. In exceptional circumstances such as illness or injury a change of piece may be considered, but this remains at the discretion of the examiner.

Centres that demonstrated good practice made every effort to engage fully with the examiner over all necessary details from pre-examination through to providing a video at the conclusion of the examination. Good practice included; details of candidates' showcases highlighting their chosen pieces and including copies of scripts, music, lyrics or synopsis of dances, named photographs, running order, travel arrangements. This process enables the session to run smoothly and allows candidates the opportunity to achieve their potential.

Provision of video/DVD-recorded evidence of the examination was good during this session. Some centres are now submitting work on CD and DVD. This is to be encouraged in terms of immediate availability and quality. However, centres should check carefully that this type of evidence could be played back on DVD players/ equipment, as some of the discs received are not always compatible with other equipment making it difficult for the examiners to view the work. Centres should also check that they submit a video/DVD/camera tape that actually has the session recorded on it as blank tapes have been received. All evidence should be clearly labelled/marked with centre name, unit number, and include candidate names, numbers and a running order, so that it is easier for the examiner to find the candidates required for sample or exemplar material.

### **The Discussion**

Centres and candidates were well prepared in this session. Although there were no marks available the candidate was able to discuss with the examiner the selected piece, detailing how they would be performed and personal interpretation. The discussion gave the candidate a chance to talk about their showcase and give the examiner an insight into what the candidate was trying to achieve. The informal discussions produced a relaxed and informative result. Candidates showed a good understanding of the creative process as well as Health and Safety and warm up procedures.

Good candidates are equally prepared in all three pieces so as not to disadvantage themselves. They were able to talk about each stage of the preparation for their Showcase, including evidence of supporting research. Candidates were able to clarify the nature of the work, which helped the examiner when awarding marks for the preparatory work.

Many candidates submitted substantial and interesting portfolio work to support their practical performance. Candidates were able to use these portfolios during the discussion to detail their research and understanding for the examiner. Those candidates who did not produce and submit any working notes were disadvantaged and unable to access the higher marks. The preparatory notes are worth 20% of the final grade and both centres and candidates should be aware of this.

### **Dance**

Dance candidates need to demonstrate an understanding of style, genre, musical awareness, motif and technical language. Good candidates had researched their pieces thoroughly and could talk about influences of dance practitioners and performances seen. They had an in-depth knowledge of both their choreography and performance. Good candidates successfully described the choreographic process employed to learn their work. They were aware of stylistic influences and able to put the dance into context, describing the purpose of the pieces, the intended audience and its impact.

### **Drama**

Drama candidates were well prepared. They displayed a good understanding of their chosen pieces as well as a thorough appreciation of the playwrights' intentions. They were able to discuss their ideas for performance of the pieces, influences, style and context as well as characterisation, period, mood and atmosphere. Good candidates had excellent knowledge about the style of their pieces. Good candidates had created their own imaginary context and profile for the characters as well as detailed character analyses. This enabled them to inform the examiner of their intended interpretation. Knowledge of the play and the period of history are fundamental to all aspects of preparation and development of the work.

## **Music**

Candidates were generally well prepared. They were able to discuss factual information regarding birth dates of composers, names of other pieces written or how successful the music had been in the charts, and gave an understanding of style, genre, musical awareness, how the composer communicated the work, technical language and influences. Good candidates were able to discuss their own interpretations of style and content and relate them to historical and social influences. Candidates need to be able to discuss technical competence and how they have achieved balance/contrast in their showcase. Many candidates were actually 'performing' the pieces and not relying on the sheet music - which often hid their faces. Candidates are awarded higher marks for learning the pieces, which also allows for audience interaction and communication; there was good evidence of this from some candidates. Centres should check that the selected pieces are appropriate for an advanced level examination as low graded pieces and set studies do not always fulfil the assessment requirements.

## **The Performance of the Showcase**

Performances were generally of a good standard. Many candidates were prepared and had rehearsed their pieces. There was a good variety of interesting performance work covering a range of genre and style. Successful candidates were able to perform in contrasting styles and showed a good range of skills and techniques. Selection of appropriate material is possibly an area for development. Successful centres are guiding candidates in their choice of performance material and selecting appropriate pieces in terms of technical competence/difficulty. Candidates need to beware of selecting Grade 2/3 music pieces or GCSE Set Studies in dance, which may not allow them to access the higher assessment criteria. This may also be a reason for falling short of the two-minute minimum requirement. Overall, however, performance material was varied and the diversity of material selected for the showcase was very encouraging.

Technical support was also generally good and enhanced many candidates' performances. Good centres had provided sound and lighting, as well as a suitable performance space that was well lit and appropriate. Many performance pieces were presented with full use of costume, stage and lighting which, although, not examined, does add to the spirit and realism of the candidates' work. It was disappointing to see candidates trying to perform in classrooms and working studios not set out for performance. Some centres had completely misjudged the unit and had not provided the facilities and resources required for candidates to perform their showcases. This was a real shame. Candidates working at this level deserve the opportunity to perform to a live audience, demonstrating the skills learnt and honed over the two-year course. Many centres had interpreted the unit as 'Work for Audition' from the AVCE specification, which has in fact been replaced by 'Producing Your Showcase'. The unit now focuses on the performance aspects of skill development and not the audition process.

## **Dance**

Candidates performed choreographed routines taken from repertoire. Good candidates showed the style through the appropriate movements and stylistic features achieving a good technical standard. Good practice saw the inclusion of the five basic actions, gesture and stillness, for example, steps, jumps, turns, lifts, falls, locomotion and balances. Dancers confidently used motif, development and variation. Spatial awareness was included with use of shape, size, pattern, line, direction, level and location. Well-choreographed routines taken from repertoire also included various dynamic elements such as tension, force, strength, speed, tempo and rhythm. The selected routines in contemporary, theatrical and street dance focused on form and structure. Good dance centres were able to provide the candidates with material from choreographers and a wealth of performance material. This gave the candidates the opportunity to perform works of a good standard. Centres that allowed candidates to devise their own dances were in fact in breach of the specification and disadvantaging the candidates. Many dancers at this level do not have the ability to choreograph works that match professional standards. There are plenty of professional works available and centres should employ these in order to provide the correct standard of dance and works from repertoire.

Dancers seen were able to show awareness of Health and Safety issues. They had discussed various aspects of footwear, jewellery, hair and costume in their preparatory notes. Spatial awareness and suitability of the performance space were also highlighted.

## **Drama**

All candidates choose pieces from repertoire during this session. Candidates were performing with imagination and at times prepared to take risks with challenging pieces. Successful candidates showed how effective research had been used in performances and were always aware of the whole play having read the text. Vocal skills were good with emphasis on effective voice projection and clear diction. Good Shakespeare was evident where candidates had an understanding of iambic pentameter, clear diction and clarity of voice. Centres must ensure that candidates performing Shakespeare pieces can discuss the structure of the language and how they have interpreted the work.

Good candidates were using costumes and props. This was effective and even simple costumes enabled candidates to really 'get inside the character' which added impact.

Staging of the pieces still needs some attention. Good performances considered the audience and engagement with them was enhanced through consideration of blocking and motivation behind movement. Credibility of character allowed for a more believable performance. Good candidates were using a range of skills, techniques and drama conventions. Material selected was challenging with examples of contemporary drama, Greek theatre, classical speeches and Shakespeare. There were good examples of duologues, e.g. Caryl Churchill's overlapping dialogue.

## **Music**

There were some outstanding performances of musical theatre with the emphasis on singing. Candidates showed considerable expertise and advanced technique in tackling some very difficult performance pieces. Many of the pieces were performed with a live band and good candidates had obviously rehearsed thoroughly as they were able to achieve fluency in performance.

Some music candidates used professional backing tracks. Good candidates had rehearsed with the backing tracks to ensure that they were familiar with the key and style of the song.

## *Report on the Units taken in June 2007*

Choice of material allowed more candidates to display a range of performance and vocal techniques. The Musical Theatre pieces allowed candidates to develop facial expressions and gesture, characterisation, and to capture the feeling of the piece, as well as demonstrating the candidates' technical ability. Candidates who played musical instruments were well rehearsed playing from memory. There were impressive solo pieces from musicians taken from the Rock School Syllabus at grade 7 and 8. This high standard of material enabled the musicians to access the higher marks.

Many candidates in the session were able to produce dynamic performances of their Showcase showing complete mastery of their selected material. Good candidates were able to shape and mould their material, displaying a sophisticated understanding of the interpretative skills required. Candidates at the highest level showed a committed personal style. It was extremely impressive to see candidates displaying such a high level of skills and a perceptive understanding of the professional context of the work.

Good practice saw a number of candidates producing authoritative and absorbing performances, which really engaged with the audience.

### **Preparatory Notes**

All preparatory notes submitted were of a good standard. Candidates had demonstrated a developed and applied awareness of their approach to performance preparation. Many candidates were able to demonstrate a highly detailed understanding of the processes required, with particular reference to social, historical and cultural influences. This was evident for many candidates in the performance of their pieces. Candidates showed the process for their selection of material focussing on breadth and depth. There was good evidence of developing skills and techniques through a fluent demand of technical vocabulary. Preparatory notes were extremely well done and this was evident in the Showcase performance. Many candidates were able to score full marks.

### **G387 Production Demonstration**

This session saw a small entry, giving very little evidence comment on. Candidates are required through their portfolio work and product presentation to demonstrate a detailed understanding of the processes required to realise their designs. There should be research undertaken and whichever creative process adopted by the candidate should show a depth of understanding. Candidates must consider the social, historical and cultural influences on their designs. Material selected particularly at the highest mark should be impressively sophisticated. Candidates must display a good command of technical language and conventions as well as complying with industry requirements.

The product demonstration should be authoritative and absorbing. Designs need to create highly effective engagement for the audience. There should be evidence of technical accuracy. The candidate should be able to demonstrate a personal style in shaping and moulding the designs. Work scoring at the higher end should contain a level of originality in both its conception and realisation.

Candidates must submit both their preparatory notes and their portfolio containing their designs as well as pictures, photographs, DVD, or video evidence of their product demonstration.

**Applied GCE Performing Arts (H146/H546)  
June 2007 Assessment Series**

**Coursework Unit Threshold Marks**

<b>Unit</b>		<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>a</b>	<b>b</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>d</b>	<b>e</b>	<b>u</b>
<b>G380</b>	Raw	50	41	36	31	26	22	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
<b>G381</b>	Raw	50	42	37	32	27	22	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
<b>G384</b>	Raw	50	42	36	31	26	21	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
<b>G385</b>	Raw	50	43	38	33	28	24	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0

**Examined Unit Threshold Marks**

<b>Unit</b>		<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>a</b>	<b>b</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>d</b>	<b>e</b>	<b>u</b>
<b>G382</b>	Raw	50	42	37	32	27	23	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
<b>G383</b>	Raw	50	43	39	35	31	28	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
<b>G386</b>	Raw	50	43	38	33	29	25	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
<b>G387</b>	Raw	50	41	37	33	30	27	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0

### Specification Aggregation Results

Uniform marks correspond to overall grades as follows.

Advanced Subsidiary GCE (H146):

Overall Grade	A	B	C	D	E
UMS (max 300)	240	210	180	150	120

### Cumulative Percentage in Grade

Advanced Subsidiary GCE (H146):

A	B	C	D	E	U
8.6	28.8	56.1	80.7	92.9	100
There were 696 candidates aggregating in June 2007.					

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;  
[http://www.ocr.org.uk/exam\\_system/understand\\_ums.html](http://www.ocr.org.uk/exam_system/understand_ums.html)

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

Advanced GCE (H546)

Overall Grade	A	B	C	D	E
UMS (max 600)	480	420	360	300	240

### Cumulative Percentage in Grade

Advanced GCE (H546):

A	B	C	D	E	U
11.3	39.7	70.2	89.8	98.7	100
There were 408 candidates aggregating in June 2007.					

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;  
[http://www.ocr.org.uk/exam\\_system/understand\\_ums.html](http://www.ocr.org.uk/exam_system/understand_ums.html)

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**1 Hills Road**  
**Cambridge**  
**CB1 2EU**

**OCR Customer Contact Centre**

**(General Qualifications)**

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

**[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)**

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored



**Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations**  
is a Company Limited by Guarantee  
**Registered in England**  
**Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU**  
**Registered Company Number: 3484466**  
**OCR is an exempt Charity**

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**Head office**  
**Telephone: 01223 552552**  
**Facsimile: 01223 552553**

© OCR 2007