

Performing Arts

Advanced GCE **A2 H546**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H146**

Report on the Units

January 2007

H146/H546/MS/R/07J

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.

The mark schemes are published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by Examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

The reports on the Examinations provide 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.

Mark schemes and Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this mark scheme or 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

CONTENTS

Advanced GCE Performing Arts (H546)

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Performing Arts (H146)

REPORTS ON THE UNITS

Unit	Content	Page
*	Chief Examiner's Report	1
G380	Investigating performing arts organisations	4
G381	Professional practice: skills development	6
G382/G383	Professional practice	7
G384	Getting Work	11
G386	Producing your Showcase	14
*	Appendix 1 – Instructions for Portfolio Submissions	19
*	Grade Thresholds	21

NB:

There were no entries for G385 or G387 in the January session therefore there are no reports for these units.

**Chief Examiner's Report
GCE Performing Arts (H146/H546)**

General Comments

January 2007 proved to be a small session. There appears to be a preference to submit work in the June session, which is in line with the expectation of the specification. Despite a small cohort there was evidence of good practice in all units and varied work across the spectrum. Candidates are approaching the units with enthusiasm and centres are providing opportunities for candidates to develop greater knowledge and understanding of the Performing Arts industry. This is encouraging as these opportunities fulfil the vocational aspects of the course.

The impression from the examiners and moderators was that candidates were generally less prepared than in the previous session, but still displayed an awareness of the requirements of the specification. Good practice was evident; in G380 the case studies saw prepared and thorough answers, alongside research and good comparative skills in the study of organisations; in G381 portfolio work, some centres showed detailed analysis of skills development and its process; and in the examined units performance work in some centres was again recorded to be of a 'professional standard' with candidates tackling demanding and difficult performance pieces. Examiners and moderators felt that it was a pleasure to witness some of the work seen or produced in portfolios and felt that centres had really started to develop the type of performance tasks undertaken. Candidates were able to access the Assessment Criteria with confidence. They were able to use technical terms and appropriate terminology, which contributed to their increasing vocationality when tackling the tasks set for each unit.

G380: Investigating performing arts industries

This unit was designed to help candidates to understand how 'the business' works and the range of roles within the organisation. Many candidates were able to produce case studies that covered the scope of the Performing Arts industries and the way in which they operate. There were some portfolios of a high standard where candidates had researched how organisations relied on the effective deployment of people and resources. Good practice saw information extremely well presented using graphs, pie charts, data collection charted for comparative analyses and PowerPoint used to deliver the job presentation. The organisations were well researched and findings clearly presented. However, some of the tasks set were too self-limiting with candidates simply choosing organisations that were too small, which meant that they could not get the depth or detail needed to access the higher mark bands. Candidates must also comment on aspects such as pay and conditions, trade unions, the social and cultural dimensions of the organisations as well as the opportunities for progression and development.

G381: professional practice: skills development

This unit had a very small entry as expected. The limited evidence of work does make it difficult to comment generally, but despite this there was clearly some improvement in the structure of candidate portfolios. Centres are clearly starting to organise the evidence needed. The unit gives the candidates the opportunity to develop professional practice and explore new skills in specialist areas of the Performing Arts. Candidates need to evaluate the level and range of their technical skills and identify suitable activities and exercises through

practical exploration to develop and extend their abilities.

It was pleasing to see candidates able to take advantage of the range of expertise available and the level of resources that exist in centres. Candidates quite clearly had the freedom to choose appropriate contexts for their skills development. All centres need to concentrate on the process of acquiring skills through practical involvement in pieces taken from repertoire.

G383-G384 Professional practice: performance/production

There was a range of work seen for this unit. Some centres displayed a strong sense of professionalism in their work. The key factor was undoubtedly teamwork. Good centres demonstrated appropriate and effective interaction with everyone involved giving a feeling of unity and coherence.

This performance unit is about the skills and activities involved in a performance project from the initial planning to the development and ultimate performance of the piece. Some Candidates seen during this session had developed a real sense of 'belonging to' and 'ownership of' their work. The discussion saw candidates who were passionate about their performance work, what it meant to them and how they personally had developed.

Centres really tried to provide challenging projects where candidates could aspire to professional standards in front of a 'live' audience. Selection of material is probably the most important factor for centres and during the next session they may wish to ask for further guidance and clarification as to whether their chosen piece meets the requirements of the specification.

Performance

Good practice saw candidates performing with accuracy and control. They showed good performance technique, created as an appropriate approach to the type of audience selected. There was no doubt that for the majority of candidates the practical aspects of a performance piece were both exciting and challenging and definitely motivational. Centres must ensure that candidates are prepared as there were clearly candidates who needed further guidance with singing in the correct key and tonal qualities.

Performance Diaries

The recording of this process was not as thorough, although there was an improvement from the last session; there was still evidence of poorly produced diaries, done almost as an afterthought. Centres must pick up on this as candidates are losing vital marks that will affect their overall grade. Centres may not have realised the importance of the diary, but must be encouraged to bring them in line with the standards achieved for performance work. Good practice saw some very good diary/portfolio work where candidates had detailed and extensive work that showed the production process from start to finish.

Many of the recommendations made from the last session through reports and INSET have been taken on board by the centres. However, there was still evidence of self devised work or work that contained existing pieces, but had been compiled by the centre to suit the candidates' skills. This type of performance does not allow the candidates to get the depth and development that they need to achieve the higher grades. Centres must ask for clarification of their material choice if they are at all unsure. Recording the performances continues to be poor. Centres must take responsibility for video/DVD recordings and ensure that they are of a good quality.

Production

There were very few entries for this unit but work produced was generally good. Candidates took on some ambitious projects and good practice was evident. Many of the above

comments with regard to recording and portfolio work also apply to these candidates.

G384 Getting Work

This was the first session for this unit. Candidates were required to prepare a promotional pack that included their C.V, action plan and a prediction of their first year of work including income and expenditure. There was evidence of some outstanding work where candidates displayed a real sense of the income they could achieve alongside an understanding of the business and the professional aspects of getting employment.

Centres need to read the Principal Moderator's report for further guidance.

G386 Producing Your Showcase

There was a very small entry for this new unit. Candidates were required to perform three pieces of work – two solos and one duet/duologue/pas de deux. Nevertheless, there were some outstanding examples of accomplished and dynamic performances. Candidates were able to display complete mastery of their selected material. Good candidates were able to shape and mould their material to display a sophisticated understanding of the interpretative skills required. Performance work was impressive, candidates had made a real effort to perform their pieces using effective lighting, sound, live music, costume and make up. It was extremely impressive to see candidates achieving such high levels of skill as well as a perceptive understanding of the professional context of the work.

Centres do need to read the reports from the Principal Examiners/Moderators carefully, to ensure that they too are developing their understanding and subsequent application of the specification. Attendance at INSET is strongly recommended.

GCE Performing Arts
G380: Investigating Performing Arts Organisations (externally moderated)

General Comments

This is the third time that this unit has been offered and it is clear that many centres are responding increasingly well to its requirements. Most of the work arrived by the deadline, and with the administration in order. Just a few centres were late in submitting their MS1s and portfolios. It is vital that the dates given are adhered to, as the schedule for Moderators is tight, particularly in the January session.

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. However, it was 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.

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

In some centres teachers had annotated the work in detail, showing where Assessment Objectives had been met. However, there were instances where annotation was still quite minimal and this made moderation much more difficult. Internal standardisation was evident in all centres moderated, with URS forms completed well, though still some centres did not provide enough information as to the location of evidence in the body of the text. 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 depth, specifically with regard to roles, purpose, effectiveness and structure.

It was pleasing that in general portfolios seemed less bulky this time – with less candidates sending unnecessary material, such as programmes, leaflets and menus. Teachers need to ensure that all of the work is in candidates' own words: still, occasionally, the same photocopied sheets were seen in several portfolios – especially diagrams of the job hierarchy within an organisation. Please avoid including photocopies of job specifications unless they are to be used as the focus of comment, comparison or analysis by the candidate.

The presentation of the job role was generally done less well and was sometimes still 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/DVD of the talk or PowerPoint presentation is very useful, along with a paper copy of notes or slides. It is also good practice for candidates to write a running commentary on the paper copy evidence showing their detailed thoughts. However, centres should ensure that videos/DVDs are

labelled with all relevant information and have a list of contents with timings. The portfolio submission information is included in appendix 1 – centres are advised to read this document through carefully. It is envisaged that soon centres will be required to provide video/DVD evidence showing a range of marks in order for the moderation process to be effective – information regarding this change will be sent to centres in due course.

Some of the presentations were knowledgeable and showed high levels of understanding of the chosen job role. However, some candidates only gave 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. Also to access the highest marks at AO4 it is vital to discuss working practices, such as appraisal, progression, health and safety, contracts, unions etc.

GCE Performing Arts
G381: Professional Practice: skills development (externally moderated)

General Comments

The entry for this session was very small. Most centres running the specification regard the January session as too early to fully exploit the opportunities the unit provides for artistic development and exploration and for the generation of evidence that can place candidates in the higher mark bands. The limited samples moderated tend to confirm this since all centres had marks adjusted to a greater or lesser degree. This did not mean that some centres did not achieve some high marks or that the marks did not use the range available, but there was a general trend that suggested candidates may have achieved higher marks had their work been entered later in the year after further development.

Where re-submissions took place one centre added considerably to the portfolio, with additional performances and skills acquisition, while another submitted previously moderated portfolios with no further additions, consequently attracting the same reduction in marks.

There was some improvement in the structure of portfolios, with most centres providing development plans, good observations and feedback and evidence of three repertoire pieces. There remains some confusion over the nature of the third 'finished' piece and the need for good annotated DVD/video evidence. Moderators use relatively simple observations in the analysis of whether the third repertoire piece is complete. As well as judging any artistic considerations such as, for instance, a full embodiment of the part being played or the level of confidence and technical skills being credited by the teacher, moderators will also look for evidence of an audience (NB: the camera is not the audience), costume/design/props and an uninterrupted delivery. It is not usually enough for the candidate (or the teacher) simply to say "this is the finished piece" before the recording of the performance.

The ideal format for recorded work is an annotated or chaptered DVD. At the very minimum centres should provide a clear indication of which candidate is which. This session once again provided too many examples of very general performance recordings and poorly produced videos. The portfolio submission information is included in appendix 1 – centres are advised to read this document through carefully.

However the annotation by teachers, particularly on the URS, is becoming fuller and more useful in locating marks and evidence.

Generally, the work submitted continues to build on previous sessions and there is some evidence - albeit partial in this small sample - that centres are responding to previous reports.

GCE Performing Arts
G382: Professional practice: performance
G383: Professional practice: production
(Visiting examination)

General Comments:

As in the previous January session entries were relatively small. However, the centres were well organised and there was evidence of good use of the specification with examples of excellent professional practice. Centres were reporting to examiners a more knowledgeable understanding of the unit assessment criteria.

Centres where good practice was evident saw candidates achieving well into the top range of the marking criteria. Performance work showed professionalism and in many cases outstanding practice. Although a small cohort, there was still 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. It was pleasing to see more involvement from teachers in the selection of material. This enabled candidates to really focus on the performance aspects and develop technically demanding performance work. Drama and musical theatre work were still the most popular option. There were a few centres who were misinterpreting the specification and still producing 'cabaret/variety' style works alongside self-devised work. This does not allow the candidates to fulfil the unit objectives. Centres are advised to use existing material taken from repertoire. Centres are advised to contact OCR for further guidance if they are in any doubt over the selection of material for future submissions.

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.

External Examination - management

Examiners commented on the organisation of the 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' 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 however, did 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. Centres with large candidate numbers must ensure that performance time for each candidate is adequate, appearing in just 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.

Centres must 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 after 10.00 pm 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. Amendments cannot be made within 10 days of the examination.

The Performance

There was evidence of outstanding practice seen during this session. 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 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.

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 extremely small during this session.

All centres has considered the professional aspects of performance and audiences were present for all 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 sense of a professional feel to all aspects of the performance project.

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 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. The quality of these recordings was 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.

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

Musical Theatre	<i>Jesus Christ Superstar</i> <i>Grease</i>
Plays	<i>Dreaming</i> by Peter Barnes
Dance-	Works of Bob Fosse, Graham and Cunningham
Pantomime	<i>Cinderella</i>

The Company Meeting/Interview

Centres reported a more positive feel to the meeting/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 meeting/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. One centre that was using sword fighting showed an excellent knowledge of safety procedures and the importance of choreographic awareness. There was extensive evidence of warm-ups, exercises, mental preparation and relaxation techniques. Candidates were generally very well prepared.

The Working Diaries

There was a significant improvement from the last session. 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 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 candidates 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
- Candidate's own rehearsal plan
- Rehearsal planning and progress
- Target setting
- Skill development
- Health and Safety
- Production meetings, planning and team dynamics
- Performer's responsibilities e.g. 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 found it very difficult to actually contact the person responsible for the unit within some centres. This is not acceptable. Teachers must respond to the examiner and keep the lines of communication open. Centres must realise that the whole purpose of the unit is the fact that it is examined. Too many centres see the examiner as an afterthought. 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. 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. 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 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.

G383: Professional Practice: production

Entry levels were 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 of the 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 the candidates' own drawings. Diary entries were difficult to draw out from the production portfolio and had little or no relevance to the development of the project.

**GCE Performing Arts
G384: Getting Work (externally moderated)**

General Comments

Administration of the examination

This was the first examination session of this unit and candidate entries were modest, as anticipated. The process of submitting moderation samples for these centres ran smoothly and there were no instances of work arriving late or incomplete.

Advance documentation

There was some confusion as to the significance of the centre documentation, in particular the MS1 (centre mark sheets) and the CCS160 (Centre Authentication Form), both of which are required by the moderator in order for the centre's marks and work to be accepted as valid and without which results cannot be issued.

Professional Context

Just over half of the candidates entered demonstrated a real awareness of the professional context of the work. This included: a strong sense of the need for the promotion pack to persuade, both verbally and visually; a credible portfolio of experience; and a sustainable work plan based on this. The most noticeable hindrance to this was where candidates relied on their school or college experience to provide all of the details for their pack. There is a need for portfolios to be based on research into the demands of the industry, focused to a large extent by the interviews conducted with freelance professionals. Worryingly, there were some portfolios that contained no evidence of having undertaken any interviews whatsoever.

Promotional pack

The quality of the production of the packs varied significantly. At best, they were attractive, and professionally produced, with well-crafted text and imagery that drew the reader's attention. At worst, it was difficult to disentangle the promotional materials from the plethora of print-outs of internet pages, photocopied handouts and extraneous working notes, all of which severely reduced the impact of the work.

Résumés were often well thought out and demonstrated a good professional progression together with a strong sense of professional aspiration. These supported the proposed work in the plan. At the other extreme, only school qualifications were included and these were completely at variance with the contents of the work plan. Here, names of fictitious Higher Education Institutions, dubious amateur work, pictures dating back to primary school and references from inappropriate people undermined the credibility of the pack.

Sample letters were generally of an acceptable standard but there was considerable scope for adopting a more professional - and hence more persuasive - tone. The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar sometimes undermined the quality of what was being said. It is vital that candidates adopt high professional standards in their use of written English. Some letters were not addressed to anyone and therefore their power to influence was severely restricted. Similarly, testimonials did not always bear witness to the nature and range of skills required by the work in the candidates' outline.

Plan of first year of work

The specification allows candidates to build their first year of work around a maximum of 50% contract work. This recognises the reality of the professional situation in providing a

Report on the Units taken in January 2007

sustainable income during a period where getting work is difficult and where reputation is becoming established. It is a prerequisite, however, that such contract work should be in a related professional area. The majority of contracts were in teaching (either privately or in a College) and were appropriate in their scope and projected income. However, a minority of candidates identified work in supermarkets, restaurants and other retail centres which had virtually no link with their professional aspirations.

Most candidates related the range of freelance work identified to the research interviews they had conducted. It was refreshing to see the range of professionals interviewed and there was strong evidence that the interviews themselves had been inspiring, encouraging candidates to think about work they might not have considered before.

The most widespread problem with the plan of work was the failure to include figures for projected income. This was, in some cases, an area where the centre's marks were overly generous since the moderator was left to estimate what the candidate believed to be the case. In other cases, estimates of what constituted a level of income that would cover broad survival were hopelessly optimistic. At the other end, plans that indicated a likely income of over £30,000 in the first year were equally unlikely to be achievable in all but exceptional circumstances.

Analysis of the plan

This was often the weakest aspect of the portfolios and proved to be a good differentiator between standards of work. It was almost a truism that the weaker the plan, the weaker the analysis of it. Most candidates were good at identifying the strengths of their plan since this was often closely related to the skills outlined in the résumé. Weaknesses were more difficult for candidates to identify. Some thought they would need more holiday than they were likely to get, others worried about becoming too successful too quickly. In terms of opportunities, the most able candidates could see that the nature of their work could grow in relation to their professional development and this provided a good source of discussion. Threats were more difficult to identify, but the strongest candidates were able to locate the work in a context that did identify such threats.

Conclusion

There was a good range of work entered and this was generally on target in terms of assessment tasks. Moderators reported that the session had run smoothly and that this boded well for submissions in future sessions.

**GCE Performing Arts
G386: Producing Your Showcase
(Visiting examination)**

General Comments:

This was the first time that this unit has run and there was only a small entry. Centres 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. Despite a small entry there was a variety of performance pieces in all aspects of the arts. 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 were asked to produce a Showcase of three pieces of work containing two contrasting solo pieces and a duologue, duet or pas de deux. Candidates could choose to work in a single art form or choose a combination of art forms.

The candidates were 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 were also required to produce preparatory notes to demonstrate the preparation process of putting their Showcase together.

Examiners' reports generally commented on a session of good performance work. Selected material was appropriate for most candidates and was well prepared and rehearsed; this resulted in a good level of performances across the grades. 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 a '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.

Administration in centres was good. Centres ensured that paperwork arrived in plenty of time, providing a running order and details of candidates' performances. Preparatory notes were labelled.

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 liaise 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 candidate's showcases, highlighting their chosen pieces 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 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 pieces detailing how they would be performed and personal interpretation. Candidates showed a good understanding of the creative process as well as Health and Safety and warm up procedures.

Good candidates are equally prepared on 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.

All 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 to the Examiner.

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 devise 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. 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 very 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 on style and content and relate them to historic and social influences. Candidates need to be able to discuss technical competence and how they have achieved balance/contrast in their showcase. 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 the 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 very good standard. 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 and may also lead to falling short of the two-minute minimum requirement. Overall, performance material was varied and the diversity of material selected for the showcase was very encouraging.

Technical support was also 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.

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 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.

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 chose 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 work on 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 had considerable expertise and advanced technique, 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.

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

Report on the Units taken in January 2007

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.

APPENDIX 1



GCE

Performing Arts

OCR AS GCE H146

OCR A2 GCE H546

Centre Instructions for Portfolio Submissions

For the attention of the Examinations Officer and Head of Performing Arts

FOR THE MODERATION PROCESS TO RUN SMOOTHLY PLEASE READ THROUGH THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY

These instructions apply to units G380, G381, G384, G385

Portfolio presentation

To help moderators locate the necessary evidence please ensure consider adopting the following practices:

- Encourage candidates to lay out work with headings, subheadings, under-lining, indents, lists, bullet points
- Provide an index and number all pages.
- Only include candidate name where necessary – if identification of each page is needed please use the candidate number rather than their name.
- Do not bulk portfolios with unnecessary material.

When sending work into the moderator:

✗ DO NOT submit work in ring binder/lever-arch files or work that has each piece of paper in separate plastic A4 wallet. Ring binders/lever arch files and box files ARE NOT suitable for posting.

✓ Please put work into soft plastic folders or use treasury tags to hold it together and place in a manila wallet folder. Clear A4 plastic wallets should only be used for diaries, notebooks, discs etc.

Unit Recording Sheets/Location of evidence

These must be completed for every candidate and can be downloaded from the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk). This sheet needs to be at the front of the portfolio followed by the portfolio index.

In the location column teachers should be communicating to moderators, in a clear and organised fashion, precisely where the evidence for this part of the assessment criteria is within the portfolio. Centres should be encouraged to develop a thorough and organised way of referencing this information. This may be done many ways, but please consider using sticky tabs, highlighting of the relevant sections of text, or producing separate evidence

Report on the Units taken in January 2007

location indexes. Whatever system is adopted it needs to be clear and easy for the moderator to find the appropriate evidence.

Photocopied/printed material/class handouts

Please do not fill portfolios with unhelpful photocopied material. Such material provides no real insight into the candidate's achievements. Moderators are looking for evidence of candidates' own observations, writing and ideas and contributions. It would also be useful for candidates to acknowledge sources preferably in bibliography.

Photocopied/printed material that **is helpful**:

1. Material that sets the context in which the candidate is working.
2. Material the candidate is working with (scores, scripts, song sheets, stage plans, lighting plans, sound designs, diagrams etc.) All **MUST** be annotated to show how the individual will be using them. Excerpts may be preferable to whole scripts.
3. Shared material necessary for group tasks i.e. promotional material for performances, programmes, reviews, budget sheets, schedules, cast/role/responsibility lists. These are especially useful if the candidate is mentioned in the material.
4. Photographic material that would be difficult to reproduce any other way that have been annotated and personalised.

Photocopied/printed material that may be **used sparingly**:

1. Researched material from library or internet sources. The candidate must justify the inclusion of such material and this can be difficult. Collections with random highlighting with a few margin notes is **not enough**. It is preferable to summarise the material to support a point or opinion, quote from it and refer to the sources.

Photocopied/printed material that **does not help** the candidate:

1. Class hand outs (except briefs and commissions)
2. Policy documents (i.e. health and safety) when there is no reference to using them in the candidate's own portfolio.
3. 'Researched' library or internet material that is not used by candidates to support or develop their ideas and merely bulks a portfolio.
4. Pages from standard texts.

Recorded evidence

This provides essential and important evidence for some units. Please could you ensure that:

- DVD or video evidence **ONLY** is submitted.
- A full explanation of the evidence is included either within each portfolios or with the submission as a whole.
- Evidence is clearly signposted i.e. running order, times, signposts, index etc help the moderator locate relevant evidence.
- All evidence is clearly labelled with the centre number/unit number, and where appropriate, candidate number information.
- Candidates can be clearly identified i.e. introductions to camera, mug shots, cast lists etc.
- The evidence has been checked for appropriateness i.e. you can see the action/hear the candidates etc.

Please be aware that if the evidence is **not fit for purpose** then it will be disregarded.

Please ensure that if sent to the moderator the recorded evidence is packaged appropriately so that it will be safe in transit.

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

Coursework Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	a	b	c	d	e	u
G380	Raw	50	40	35	30	25	20	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
G381	Raw	50	40	35	30	25	20	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
G384	Raw	50	40	35	30	26	22	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0

Examined Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	a	b	c	d	e	u
G382	Raw	50	40	35	31	27	23	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
G383	Raw	50	40	36	32	28	25	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
G386	Raw	50	40	35	30	25	20	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
0	50.0	83.3	100	100	100

There were 6 candidates aggregating in Jan 2007.

There were 0 candidates aggregating for Advanced GCE (H546) in January 2007

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;
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: helpdesk@ocr.org.uk

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

