

GCSE (9-1)

Moderators' report

DRAMA

J316

For first teaching in 2016

J316/01/02 Summer 2023 series

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Introduction

Our moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

Online courses

We have created online courses to build your confidence in delivering, marking and administering internal assessment for our qualifications. Courses are available for Cambridge Nationals, GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016).

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All teachers delivering our redeveloped Cambridge Nationals suite from September 2022 are asked to complete the Essentials for the NEA course, which describes how to guide and support your students. You'll receive a certificate which you should retain.

Following this you can also complete a subject-specific Focus on Internal Assessment course for your individual Cambridge Nationals qualification, covering marking and delivery.

GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016)

We recommend all teachers complete the introductory module Building your Confidence in Internal Assessment, which covers key internal assessment and standardisation principles.

Following this you will find a subject-specific course for your individual qualification, covering marking criteria with examples and commentary, along with interactive marking practice.

Accessing our online courses

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General overview

Centres are again congratulated for their work in preparing candidates for this component. Some extremely powerful and interesting performances have been produced this year. Most centres have a good understanding of the requirements of this component and their marking is in line with the agreed standard. Centres who carry out robust internal moderation are congratulated for the accuracy of their submissions.

Administration

The submissions received from an increasing number of centres was exemplary – all relevant documentation was provided. These centres also tended to film the performances from a position which enabled all candidates to be seen and heard. However, there are still improvements to be made in some areas.

Some centres are still using the wrong entry code – J316/01 indicates that the centre will be submitting **all** of the requested sample through the OCR Repository – performances, portfolios, Centre Assessment Forms and Running Order. J316/02 indicates that the centre will be submitting all their sample as postal moderation. A small number of centres still appear to be confused about this with some centres uploading portfolios to the Repository and sending the performances on DVD/USB through the post. Centres are reminded that their moderator should receive the moderation sample within three working days of the request for the sample being made.

Fewer centres sent their moderation sample to their J316/03/05 examiner.

A Running Order is a vital tool in the moderation process as it allows the moderator to quickly identify in which group the moderation candidates are located. Centres who indicated on the Centre Assessment Forms the group numbers are to be thanked.

USBs submitted tended to be clearly labelled with each candidate in the sample identified in separate chapters. Some centres are still not chaptering the DVD, which creates problems with the tracking and identification of the candidates for moderation.

Best practice is for all candidates to identify themselves by name and candidate number at the start of their performance. An increasing number of centres also have that information on a sign which the candidate holds. Lighting for the introduction of candidates should be arranged so that the lighting does not wash out either the candidate's face or their sign. More centres this year provided photographs of candidates in costume with their submission. This was most helpful in identifying candidates for moderation.

Centres are reminded that the audience for this component is the moderator and therefore the camera should be placed in a central position face on to the performance, which captures all the action on stage. It is worth carrying out preliminary checks to make sure that the volume levels are good and that lighting is not washing out facial expressions.

Centres must check that once the recordings have been uploaded to USB/DVD that they are then able to be played on a laptop. Centres who password protect USBs must make sure that the correct password is sent to the moderator.

Teacher commentary on the Centre Assessment Form and, increasingly, within the body of the portfolio was often specific, insightful and pertinent. Where commentary was at its best, was when the centre highlighted why a mark had been given in conjunction with links to the assessment criteria in the portfolio. A small minority of centres continue to rewrite the descriptors from the assessment criteria.

Portfolios

Despite many requests not to do so, some centres are still allowing candidates to use bulky art books or folders for their portfolios. Portfolios should be completed on A4 paper with all pages secured together.

There were many examples of excellent portfolio work. Candidates who had organised their portfolio into three distinct sections and focused on meeting the assessment criteria for that section had the most successful outcomes. Candidates who evaluated and analysed their work from the initial idea through the planning and development of their performance and to their final performance had the most successful outcomes. Analysis and evaluation should be present throughout the whole portfolio.

The most positive outcomes came from candidates who had been allowed to choose their own stimulus from the ten provided, researched that stimulus, carried out further research raised by the initial research and then came up with a clear and defined idea of what they wanted to create. Candidates who used their research to inform the direction of the devising process often had very clear dramatic intentions.

The portfolio should only contain that which is pertinent to the piece being devised. Research of multiple stimuli and/or detailed research into practitioners should not be included in the portfolio. Trying to incorporate everything a candidate knows about drama into their portfolio takes the focus away from material which is relevant to the devising process. It is vital to only apply relevant subject knowledge and vocabulary to the task in hand. Portfolios should not contain pages of information taken from the internet without any indication of how that information will be used in the devising process.

The very best portfolios detailed throughout the choices that were being made and why. More candidates were thinking about the intended impact of the choices made for an audience. Clearly defined dramatic intentions often saw candidates with a sophisticated awareness of the impact of the piece on an audience.

There was an increase in candidates including scripting details in their portfolio and this led to pieces which met the dramatic intentions and enhanced the impact on the audience. For some candidates, the choice of language in dialogue, monologue and chorus was as important as the actual physical performance. These candidates also tended to analyse their use of language in their final evaluation. Candidates who thought about the structure of their piece and used appropriate language to explain this were often more successful in presenting their piece to an audience.

Many candidates are using still photographs from rehearsals, diagrams and sketches to show the development of ideas. Candidates who annotated these tended to respond in more depth.

Fewer candidates are using a diary style approach to Section 2 of the portfolio – Creating and developing drama. More candidates are using a reflective approach which details changes and adaptations made and why. Candidates using this approach often demonstrated how the play was evolving and provided specific detail about decisions made and plans to develop the piece further.

Increasing numbers of candidates are giving time and consideration to the evaluation of the final performance and analysis of how to improve for future performances.

Performances

Interestingly this year, there was a greater spread of engagement across all stimuli. A variety of styles of drama were created in response to the stimuli available. Some candidates choose to use historical time periods and applied their research very effectively.

It was clear that candidates relished the challenges of creating their drama. More centres are creating opportunities for candidates to receive feedback on their pieces leading to some focused adaptations. Fewer candidates exceeded the performance time frames – creative editing enabling ‘the story’ to be told succinctly. In a small number of centres, some candidates did not reach the absolute minimum performance time. Centres are advised to adhere to the time frames given in the specification.

The use of simple staging, costume, lighting and sound supported the candidates in delivering their pieces.

Candidates who had focused on the structure and scripting of their devised pieces, often created scenes in which characters were able to be developed. Several candidates explored ‘witchcraft’ in a very nuanced way leading to some exceptional theatre.

Fewer candidates used the work of Frantic Assembly to the exclusion of anything else – those who did use chair duets tended to integrate them appropriately and sparingly.

Design

Centres are reminded to acquaint themselves with the requirements for design options.

There were some design candidates this year and again the range of ability was wide. The best outcomes were seen when the designer worked closely with their group and ensured that the design responded to the needs of the performance piece and was well integrated. Candidates generally delivered lighting and sound cue sheets and ground plans for set design but there were some candidates who did not submit this supporting evidence.

The most successful design candidates had received technical guidance before embarking on their design brief.

Candidates who did well generally:	Candidates who did less well generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chose a stimulus which allowed the creation of interesting drama • had clear dramatic intentions • had a clearly defined structure • focused on developing the language being used and why • created a portfolio which clearly demonstrated the process of creating the devised piece • analysed and evaluated throughout the devising process • design candidates – created a fully integrated design which supported the performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • were given a stimulus with which they did not engage • had no clear dramatic intentions • did not have a defined structure • did not focus the language being used and why • created a portfolio which did not adequately chart the devising process • included little or no analysis and evaluation • design candidates – created designs which did not support the performance.

Assessment for learning



Design candidates should receive technical advice before embarking on their design brief. Candidates should focus on the script for their piece – think about the language being used and the potential impact for the audience.

Common misconceptions

Candidates do not need to research stimuli which they are not using.

Candidates do not need to choose a practitioner on whom to base their work.

Research should be relevant, and candidates should indicate how the research has informed the devising process.

Avoiding potential malpractice

Centres must NOT give candidates a framework i.e., question sheets to which candidates should refer.

Do NOT provide templates for the portfolio.

Check for common passages in a group's portfolios.

Make sure all sources are acknowledged.

Helpful resources

[Teaching Support Resources on Teach Cambridge](#)

Additional comments

Please make sure that each candidate is clearly identified and that it is clear where the moderator can find the filmed work for each candidate.

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