

GCE

Drama and Theatre

H459/31: Analysing performance

A Level

Mark Scheme for June 2025

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This mark scheme is 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.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARATION FOR MARKING SCORIS

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training: OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.
2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor
3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone, email or via the RM Assessor messaging system.

5. **Crossed-Out Responses**

Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed-out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed-out response where legible.

Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions

Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM Assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.)*

Multiple-Choice Question Responses

When a multiple-choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate).

When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.

Contradictory Responses

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Short Answer Questions (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only one mark per response)

Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)*

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth two or more marks)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space).

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add the annotation 'SEEN' to confirm that the work has been seen and mark any responses using the annotations in section 11.

7. There is a NR (**No Response**) option. Award NR (No Response):

- if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
- OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g., 'can't do', 'don't know')
- OR if there is a mark (e.g., a dash, a question mark) which is not an attempt at the question.

Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your Team Leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**

9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.

10. For answers marked by levels of response: Not applicable in F501

To determine the level – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer

To determine the mark within the level, consider the following

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

11. Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Blank page
	Unclear
	Just/Justification
	Knowledge
	Knowledge and understanding
	Not answered question
	Poorly expressed
	Repetition
	Tick
	Relating to question
	Expandable vertical wavy line
	Odd or incorrect grammar
	Vague
	Effective evaluation
	Point being made

12. Subject Specific Marking Instructions

SECTION A – 15 mark question. The Assessment Objective for this section is AO3: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed.

AO4 Level 5: 13–15 Marks	Excellent and consistently detailed understanding of text and question; well structured, coherent and detailed argument consistently developed. Highly developed and consistently detailed discussion of how theatrical process and practices could be used to communicate with the audience. Highly developed examples of how creative and artistic choices influence actors and performers. Excellent understanding of how conventions, forms and techniques are used in drama and live theatre to create meaning.
AO4 Level 4: 10–12 marks	Confident understanding of text and question; well-structured argument with clear line of development. Confident and well-developed discussion of how theatrical process and practices could be used to communicate with the audience. Well-developed examples of how creative and artistic choices influence actors and performers. Confident understanding of how conventions, forms and techniques are used in drama and live theatre to create meaning. Well-developed understanding of how performance texts are constructed to be performed and convey meaning through performance.
AO4 Level 3: 7–9 marks	Competent understanding of text and question; argument has a clear line of development. Discussion of how theatrical process and practices could be used to communicate with the audience is clear. Competent examples of how creative and artistic choices influence actors and performers. Competent understanding of how conventions, forms and techniques are used in drama and live theatre to create meaning. Competent understanding of how performance texts are constructed to be performed and convey meaning through performance.

AO4 Level 2: 4–6 marks	Basic understanding of text and main elements of question; some structured argument evident, lacking development. Basic understanding of text and question; argument may be underdeveloped. Basic discussion of how theatrical process and practices could be used to communicate with the audience. Basic examples of how creative and artistic choices influence actors and performers. Basic understanding of how conventions, forms and techniques are used in drama and live theatre to create meaning. Basic understanding of how performance texts are constructed to be performed and convey meaning through performance.
AO4 Level 1: 1–3 marks	Limited understanding of text and question examples ineffective. Limited discussion of how theatrical process and practices could be used to communicate with the audience. Examples of how creative and artistic choices influence actors and performers are likely to be ineffective. Limited understanding of how conventions, forms and techniques are used in drama and live theatre to create meaning. Limited understanding of how performance texts are constructed to be performed and convey meaning through performance.
0 marks	No response or no response worthy of any credit.

Question	Guidance	Marks
1	Select a character from the play you have studied. As an actor, how would you vary your pacing to show conflicts in that character's mind? Refer to at least <u>three</u> scenes to support your answer. This question focuses on how an actor could physically demonstrate variation in pace on stage to show conflicts in the chosen character's mind. It offers opportunities for candidates to consider several aspects of character presentation and interaction. Responses should reference varied pacing, internal conflicts and external evidence of turmoil. Variety implies versatility, range, choice in interpreting the character and deploying a wide range of non-static physicality, movement, mime, gestures, facial expressions, vocal work (pitch, pace, emphases, pauses, accent), non-verbal communication, eye-lines, wearing costume, perhaps makeup and handling personal props. There may be reference to the collaborative role of the director in bringing out inner conflict, but the prime focus is the actor. Reference may be made to rehearsing. Responses must be well justified with examples from their chosen text and cover at least three scenes which show the conflict a character feels and displays. Excellent responses will demonstrate an explicit grasp of the actor's use of performance skills and pace to demonstrate conflict supported by perceptive examples and moments from the text. Confident responses will demonstrate a sustained understanding of the actor's use of performance skills and pace to demonstrate conflict, using appropriate examples and moments from the text. Competent responses will demonstrate secure understanding of the actor's use of performance skills and pace to demonstrate conflict, using generally adequate examples and moments from the text. Basic responses will demonstrate variable understanding of the actor's use of performance skills and pace to demonstrate conflict, using some relevant examples and moments from the text.	15 (AO3)

			<i>This indicative content is intended to indicate aspects of questions that may feature in candidates' answers. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers and implicit as well as explicit responses to questions. This guidance should be used in conjunction with the Level Descriptors.</i>	
2			As a set designer, how would you create opportunities for the actors to bring out conflicts in the play you have studied? Refer to the <u>opening</u> scenes to support our answer. The question focuses on how a set designer could create opportunities to help highlight and illuminate the conflicts in the drama, with particular reference to the opening scenes. The question asks about a set designer, but where lighting covers, adds to, heightens or draws attention to the set, then some discussion of lighting may be relevant. A discussion should be forthcoming on how design elements in general and the set in particular add to and support the work of the actors in bringing out the inherent conflicts within each drama. The response should deal with staging and spaces, levels, entrances and exits, proximity of the audience, semiotics on stage and off, use of stage furniture and relevant personal props and costumes if connected to the set design in some way. It may also concern diegetic and non-diegetic sound, if it is relevant to the set, for example, through a closed door or from a window. Some candidates may include full sketches or several thumbnails of a set in their response. While this may be helpful in explaining layout and actor use, there are no marks available for quality of sketches or illustrations. Excellent responses will demonstrate an explicit grasp of the set designer's use of a variety of staging and presentational skills, using perceptive examples from the opening of the play. Confident responses will demonstrate a sustained understanding of use of a variety of set designer's presentational skills, using appropriate examples from the opening scenes of the play. Competent responses will demonstrate secure understanding of the use of a variety of set designer's presentational skills, using generally adequate examples from the opening of the play. Basic responses will demonstrate variable understanding of a set designer's work, using some relevant examples from the play.	15 (AO3)

			<i>This indicative content is intended to indicate aspects of questions that may feature in candidates' answers. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers and implicit as well as explicit responses to questions. This guidance should be used in conjunction with the Level Descriptors.</i>	
3			As a director, how would you balance the tensions between characters in the <u>opening</u> scene or scenes of the play you have studied? This is a directorial question with a focus on how the tension between characters in the opening scenes can be brought out on stage. This might relate to the way a director guides actors in their speaking, body language, non-verbal communication, vocal use and use of space in order to create tension. Tensions arise from situation, class, past history, incompatibility, familial weariness and conflicting agendas. The director will be conscious of how to work to show those causes. The candidate will realise and discuss them, as relevant to the opening scenes. Excellent responses will demonstrate an explicit grasp of the director's skill in creating tensions between characters, using perceptive examples from the opening of the play. Confident responses will demonstrate a sustained understanding of the director's skill in creating tensions between characters, using appropriate examples from the opening of the play. Competent responses will demonstrate secure understanding of the director's methods in creating tensions between characters, using generally adequate examples from opening of the play the play. Basic responses will demonstrate variable understanding of the director's role in creating tension using some relevant examples from the play. <i>This indicative content is intended to indicate aspects of questions that may feature in candidates' answers. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers and implicit as well as explicit responses to questions. This guidance should be used in conjunction with the Level Descriptors.</i>	15 (AO3)

4		Select a character from the play you have studied. As an actor, how would you perform this role to help build dramatic tension within the family? Refer to at least three scenes to support your answer. This is an acting question with a focus on how a particular character being performed by an actor and how this character would create tension within the family. The response should focus on the theme of family dynamics and examples from the text must support a discussion about how an actor could approach situations where conflicting interests, desires and intentions need to be played. An awareness of the moral implications, comic moments, tragic events, dramatic climaxes and the depth (humanity) of the characters should be relevant. The response may cover rehearsal techniques and exercises, blocking, improvisation and hot-seating as well as using the skills of acting (movement, voice). It may also refer to how an actor uses design elements which have a big influence on how an audience reacts to what is conveyed on stage. Excellent responses will demonstrate an explicit grasp of the actor's techniques and performance skills in creating dramatic tension within the family, using perceptive examples from three scenes. Confident responses will demonstrate a sustained understanding of the actor's techniques and performance skills in creating dramatic tension within the family, using appropriate examples from three scenes. Competent responses will demonstrate secure understanding of the actor's techniques and some performance skills in creating dramatic tension within the family, using generally adequate examples from three scenes. Basic responses will demonstrate variable understanding of the actor's techniques and use of performance skills in creating one or two moments of dramatic tension within the family, using some relevant examples from some scenes. <i>This indicative content is intended to indicate aspects of questions that may feature in candidates' answers. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers and implicit as well as explicit responses to questions. This guidance should be used in conjunction with the Level Descriptors.</i>	15 (AO3)
5			15 (AO3)

		What design elements would you use to create a sinister atmosphere in the opening scenes of the play you have studied? This question focuses on stage design elements which would be used to create a specific atmosphere. Design elements normally include set, staging, all kinds of lighting, sound or sound effects, costumes and props. It may also include multi-media technology to achieve a particular atmospheric effect. The type and shape of the staging will be relevant, as is the proximity of the audience, entrances/exits and stage furniture, backdrops and props used on stage. Sketches may be considered as a means of exemplification of the written answer. No credit is available nor should be given for the quality of sketches as this is not within the scope of the question. Excellent responses will demonstrate an explicit grasp of how stage design elements may emphasise a sinister atmosphere and convey comprehensive meaning to an audience, using perceptive examples from the play. Confident responses will demonstrate a sustained understanding of how stage design elements may emphasise a sinister atmosphere and convey some meaning to an audience, using appropriate examples from the play. Competent responses will demonstrate secure understanding of how stage design elements may emphasise a sinister atmosphere and convey some meaning to an audience, using generally adequate examples from the play. Basic responses will demonstrate variable understanding of how stage design elements may show some understanding of how a sinister atmosphere is created and convey some meaning to an audience, using some examples from the play. <i>This indicative content is intended to indicate aspects of questions that may feature in candidates' answers. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers and implicit as well as explicit responses to questions. This guidance should be used in conjunction with the Level Descriptors</i>	

6		As an actor playing a character with villainous qualities, what acting skills would you use to make the character likeable or dislikeable to the audience? Refer to at least <u>three</u> scenes to support your answer. The question is focused the actor performing a character with villainous characteristics. There may be some discussion about the definition of that. In <i>Frankenstein</i> there is a legitimate debate to be had about whether the creature or Victor is the hero or villain. Some might also argue that in <i>Othello</i>, Iago is not such a cut and dried villain and Othello is not the absolute hero. In <i>Amadeus</i> and <i>Caligula</i> we have seen the same kind of discussions. Provided they are justified, all opinions are valid on this aspect. It therefore follows that what makes a character likeable or dislikeable is for candidates to decide; they should provide some evidence from the play. It may also be that the character can be at times both likeable and dislikeable. The choice of three scenes is for candidates to make. Candidates should reference all aspects of performance/acting skills, including movement, standing, sitting, walking, gait, posture, gesture, mime, non-verbal communication, pace, energy, pauses, proxemics, interactions, relationship with the audience, voice, accent and emphases. Excellent responses will demonstrate an explicit grasp of the actor's performance skills to bring out villainous qualities and to make the character likeable or dislikeable, using perceptive examples from the play. Confident responses will demonstrate a sustained understanding of the actor's performance skills to bring out villainous qualities and to make the character likeable or dislikeable, using appropriate example from the play. Competent responses will demonstrate secure understanding of the actor's ways of showing some villainous behaviour and to make the character likeable or dislikeable, using generally adequate examples from the play. Basic responses will demonstrate variable understanding of the actor's ways to show something of villainous behaviour and to make the character likeable or dislikeable, using some relevant examples from the play. <i>This indicative content is intended to indicate aspects of questions that may feature in candidates' answers. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers and implicit as well as explicit responses to questions. This guidance should be used in conjunction with the Level Descriptors.</i>	15 (AO3)
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SECTION B – 30 mark question.

The Assessment Objectives for this section are AO4 (30 marks).

AO4: Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

AO4 Level 5: 25–30 marks	Sophisticated interpretation of the performance style, and an excellent evaluation of how creative and artistic choices made by the director convey meaning to an audience. There is extensive use of examples to illustrate all points. Highly developed evaluation of the work of others in performance including how dramatic techniques and conventions, semiotics, and proxemics, and design contribute to the creation of a theatrical performance.
AO4 Level 4: 19–24marks	Accomplished interpretation of the performance style, and a skilful evaluation of how creative and artistic choices made by the director convey meaning to an audience. and with examples which support all points made. Confident evaluation of the work of others in performance including how dramatic techniques and conventions, semiotics, and proxemics, and design contribute to the creation of a theatrical performance.
AO4 Level 3: 13–18 marks	Secure interpretation of the performance style, and a clear evaluation of how creative and artistic choices made by the director convey meaning to an audience with and with examples which evidence most points made. Competent evaluation of the work of others in performance including how dramatic techniques and conventions, semiotics, and proxemics, and design contribute to the creation of a theatrical performance.
AO4 Level 2: 7–12 marks	Basic interpretation of the performance style, and an basic evaluation of how creative and artistic choices made by the director convey meaning to an audience. vocabulary with some examples to support points made.

	Basic evaluation of the work of others in performance including how dramatic techniques and conventions, semiotics, and proxemics, and design contribute to the creation of a theatrical performance.
AO4 Level 1: 1–6 marks	Limited interpretation of the performance style, and a limited evaluation of how creative and artistic choices made by the director convey meaning to an audience with few, if any examples. Little or no evaluation of the work of others in performance including how dramatic techniques and conventions, semiotics, and proxemics, and design contribute to the creation of a theatrical performance.
0 marks	No response or no response worthy of any credit.

Question			Guidance	Marks
7*			Consider the range of design elements in the live production you have seen. Explain how these created opportunities for the actors to bring out their character or characters to maximum dramatic effect. <i>Quality of extended response is assessed in this question.</i> The focus of the question is on the candidate's understanding of how design elements created opportunities for actors to bring out their character to maximum effect. It is mainly asking about designers, but there should be valid reference to the work of actors and directors, too. Design elements may include set, staging, all kinds of lighting, diegetic or non-diegetic sound or sound effects, costumes and props, as appropriate. It may also include multi-media technology to achieve a particular atmospheric effect. Some responses may attempt to include all elements, while some will concentrate on one or two. Neither is necessarily right nor wrong. Throughout, there should be specific examples from the production that support or illustrate the points made in the response. Candidates are entitled to find the piece effective, not effective or partially so, provided the views are justified by references/examples from the seen performance. In describing the performance, examiners should get a sense of what the atmosphere of the event was like.	30 (AO4)

Question			Guidance	Marks
			Responses are likely to include: * The professional context of the live performance that the candidate has seen, and the production values evident in the performance. * The impact the live performance had on the candidate as an audience member. * References to any practitioners they have studied who may have informed some of their views. <i>This indicative content is intended to indicate aspects of questions that may feature in candidates' answers. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers and implicit as well as explicit responses to questions. This guidance should be used in conjunction with the Level Descriptors.</i>	

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