

October 2009

Dear Head of Drama,

Welcome back to the A2 year of the GCE Drama and Theatre Studies specification.

I'm sure you are settling into the term and have possibly begun preparatory work for Units 3 and 4 of the A2 year. It is obviously up to each centre to decide how best to structure the year but the deadlines you are working towards are set in May for Unit 3, the coursework deadline, and the June date to be announced for Unit 4.

Unit 3: Your requested sample must be with your moderator by the date specified in May.

Unit 4: The date of the Unit 4 examination will be in June.

We have put together a range of items to support you with Unit 3. The FAQ for Units 3 and 4 and the ICE document are available on the Edexcel website. We have also worked on some example materials, which should prove useful. These materials were developed from old Unit 4 and Unit 5 pieces and adapted to produce new Unit 3 (6DR03) pieces. Many of you have told us how much you loved one or other of these units from the legacy specification and so you will see how readily they transfer to the new specification.

The first performance on the DVD was based on a text, in this case, A Midsummer Nights Dream, the performance was renamed 'Painted Blind' and we cajoled 3 of the young people involved to write up a SWED afterwards. Obviously a retrospective document is never ideal but as these students were already at university, we were glad of their help. The second piece called 'Thirty Two' was entirely devised although the students involved did make good use of 'Kindertransport' as a stimulus text. Again, they wrote the SWEDs as example materials.

We have provided a commentary from the Principal Moderator for Unit 3 on each of the 6 candidates and this should give you many pointers for developing the work of your own candidates. The joy of a content free unit is that within the guidelines of the unit, you will be able to tailor your own teaching and learning to your centre and your candidates.

Unit 4 is worth 60% of the A2 year and we know that many of you are choosing to teach it alongside Unit 3. There is a range of Edexcel Inset days specifically geared to Unit 4 and we hope to see many of you on these courses. We have also published a booklet of Sample Assessment Materials that sets out very clearly what Unit 4 is going to look like for students and we have included a sample mark scheme in the booklet. This material is available to download from the Edexcel website. It is worth having a look at the mark scheme and the assessment descriptors as these will indicate to

you those areas of experience students will need to have in order to access the range of marks available.

Probably the most important thing to reiterate at this point is that Unit 4 is not a study of the chosen text for Sections A and B, or of the play seen in performance for Section C, it is an exploration of performance potential, recognising the work of the director in bringing the page to life for audience.

We hope the A2 year will be enjoyable and successful for you and your students and we look forward to meeting you either at an Inset event or via our Ask the Expert service.

Yours faithfully,

Jacqueline Porteous, Principal Moderator - Unit 3
Alan Perks - Principal Examiner - Unit 4 and Chief Examiner.