

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2010

GCE

GCE Drama and Theatre Studies (6DR02 01)

Theatre Text in Performance

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6DR02 Text in Performance

Introduction

This is the second year of examination of the new AS performance unit. Centres are reminded that in the writing of the new GCE2008 specification it was decided to continue with a performance examination in the AS year, as this had proved to be popular with centres and candidates. There was also the requirement as with all new GCE specifications to ensure that the same overall pattern of results was maintained from the legacy specification. This was achieved in 2009.

Section A

For the majority of centres and examiners this was the second time of preparing candidates for this section.

Examiners felt that that overall, centres had enabled candidates to do better in this section in 2010.

As in 2009, marks were awarded in all mark bands. The majority of candidates performed monologues again this year. There were very few design candidates in 2010. There was no evidence that candidates did better in any particular design option.

Again this year the centres which enabled the candidates to do well in this section clearly followed the requirements of this section.

Examiners report that there was clear evidence that many centres had responded to the advice given in last year's examiners report and ensured that the requirements in both the specification and the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination 2010 were put in place. However, it is disappointing to report again this year, that some centres did not meet the requirements of this section and this did disadvantage those candidates. Some examiners reported that they felt most centres did understand what was required.

This section is worth 30% of the AS marks, equal to Section B, but it was felt that fewer candidates were under prepared for this section. Where candidates produced work marked in the lower mark bands examiners felt this could be that insufficient time had been spent in preparation for this section.

Performance Candidates

Preparation and Choice of Text

Examiners felt that more candidates had been taught the skills needed for performance of the monologues or duologues at AS level in preparation for the chosen examination pieces. This should build on the work done in Unit 1 in exploring texts practically. Some candidates made reference to work done in Unit 1 in the Written Performance Concepts. This was felt to be good practice.

Again in 2010 some candidates chose texts that did not support their skill level. It was felt that centres had often not given enough guidance to candidates in choosing material. Again there was evidence that some candidates did not understand the text. This was often felt to apply to Shakespearean and other classical texts.

It is clear in the specification that all candidates must read and research the complete text. There was evidence again this year that candidates had made their choice by reference to one of the many monologue/duologue anthologies available both published and on the internet.

It is now a requirement that the complete text studied by each candidate is available at the examination. Not all centres provided these texts this year. Centres must ensure all texts are available in the 2011 examination series.

There were fewer candidates who presented the examiner with a photocopy of the pages from a monologue/duologue anthology and their rationale was in the main a straight copy of the introduction to the extract from the same book. These candidates were disadvantaged in meeting the requirements of this section.

The vast majority of candidates had clearly worked on the complete play text in preparing for this section.

Very few candidates presented work from film/television scripts or songs alone from musical theatre texts.

There was considerably more evidence that centres had given better guidance to ensure that the individual reading and research had been completed by candidates. Examiners felt that there were still some candidates who had little or no teacher guidance or support.

Centres are reminded that for both sections of this unit Edexcel has no issues with either accent or gender in performance. However, again this year, candidates tended to choose material that did not have cross gender playing and had worked on appropriate accents.

One significant change this year was the increase in centres selecting a single play text and all candidates choosing monologues or duologues from this text. This was felt to support design candidates and some performance candidates. However, there was evidence that this did not always support all performance candidates.

There was also an increase in centres choosing an author or genre and this did give greater choice to all candidates.

However, centres are reminded that all candidates must also undertake some individual research in preparation for the examination.

This needs to be reflected in the Written Performance Concepts.

Timings

The maximum time is stated in the specification and the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination 2010 document. Examiners report that there were still many candidates that did not meet this requirement, particularly in monologues. There was an increase in examples of almost 2 minutes having been used for introductory mime/movement work so little of the text was spoken in the time limit. There were again examples of monologues and duologues lasting in excess of 10 minutes.

It is part of the demands of this unit that candidates ensure the work presented for the examination meets the time requirements. It is disappointing to report again in 2010 many candidates chose monologues and performed them as written without adapting them for the examination.

Candidates can perform text taken from different parts of the play however examiners felt that this needed a great deal of skill in order to produce a coherent performance.

In 2010, there were centres which used music and/or projection to set the scene, this could be very effective but it must be included in the time allowed for examination. In general examiners felt that this was used thoughtfully by most centres.

All examiners are instructed to only mark work seen within the time limits for this section.

Examiners reported again this year that there were instances where the strongest work was outside the time allowed so could not be awarded any marks.

Examiners will start marking as soon as the candidate(s) performance begins. Most centres had put in place a system of clearly sign posting to the examiner when each performance began.

Introductions

The majority of candidates understood the requirements to state clearly and slowly their name, candidate number and details of the text and role immediately before the performance.

This could be followed by brief blackouts or dimming of the lights and examiners felt this worked well for candidates. Another method was for candidates to turn away from the examiner and turn to face the examiner to indicate the beginning of the performance. If the candidate pauses, needs a prompt or begins again, this will be included in the timing by the examiner.

There were examples of candidates losing focus and forgetting their lines completely. This was very stressful for those candidates. Centres are reminded that the examiner cannot intervene. It is acceptable for centre staff to stop the performance.

There were instances where the candidates introduced themselves to camera and the examiner and then spent some time organising the performance space or waiting for the camera operator to be ready. This was felt not to support the candidates in the examination process and must not be done in future. It did not enable examiners and centres to make accurate timings on the recordings of the performances.

Non-Examination Students

There were very few examples of centres having non examination students working with candidates in this section in 2010.

From 2011, if a non-examined student is present with any monologue candidate the examiner will inform the centre that the candidate must perform alone for the examination.

There was concern that some centres in 2009 had duologues with non examination candidates or candidates who were being examined in another duologue or monologue. There were fewer examples of this in 2010. From 2011, Edexcel will accept that in a centre there may be 1 candidate who wishes to perform a duologue but due to the numbers in the group has no-one to work with. In this case another student can be used; otherwise all duologues must be 2 examination candidates.

Centres must ensure that in duologues both candidates have equal opportunity within the time limit.

Candidates may well be disadvantaged if these requirements are not met from 2011 onwards.

Examination Conditions

Centres must ensure that all examiners are provided with the facilities and conditions to complete the examination of Section A professionally and with confidence.

The organisation and timing of Section A examination must be agreed with the examiner in advance of the examination sessions.

The vast majority of examiners were provided with the facilities as detailed in the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination document. Most exam sessions enabled examiners to remain in the exam space for an agreed number of candidates and then leave for a period of time to consider their marks in a private space.

Some examiners reported feeling put under pressure to view too many candidates in too short a time.

Examiners are required to detail on the DTS2 form the start and finish time of each performance. This is to provide information of the timings of the Section A examination.

The main concern from many examiners was candidates planning to involve the examiner in the performance. This was a definite change in approach in 2010. It was mainly a concern for monologue candidates.

Some candidates made the examiner another role in the performance and tried to directly engage them. This was felt to disadvantage candidates as examiners cannot respond in this way to the performance.

There was real concern where candidates used the examiner and/or the examiner's table as part of the performance. There were examples of positioning themselves both on and under the table, touching the examiner, striking the table or moving very close to the examiner and speaking close to them. This was most often seen in extracts of texts that expressed strong emotions.

From 2011, all Section A performances must be completed with at least the space of one chair/seat on either side and behind the examiner, and this same space between the performer and the examiner.

Vocal Skills

Centres must ensure that all candidates have the opportunity to meet the criteria as listed in the specification. In particular, this year, examiners reported that many candidates had not considered the importance of projection. There was often a lack of pace and pause seen in performance. Examiners reported they felt this could be due to nervousness as candidates may not have been well prepared by performing the pieces to others in preparation for the examination.

Movement Skills

Some examiners reported that very static performances did not support candidates in achieving the criteria as listed. Both gesture and facial expression are considered by examiners in awarding marks for movement. However, there were also many reports of candidate's ability to use stillness to great effect.

There was also concern that some candidates included abstract movement sequences either before or during the performance that did not support the interpretation of the role in performance. There was usually no reference to why this was done in the Written Performance Concept.

Characterisation

Examiners report that it is in this criteria that those candidates who have not studied the complete text are most disadvantaged. The performance must reflect an understanding of the role in the context of the complete text.

There was concern that some performances had almost become 'mini productions' that would not have been coherent in the context of the complete text.

Style and interpretation in performance need to be clearly indicated in the Written Performance Concept.

Written Performance Concept

There was a notable improvement in this element of Section A in 2010.

However, it continues again this year to be the area where candidates seem least well prepared.

Examiners again report that far too many centres ignored the 500 word limit. This year all candidates were required to confirm the word limit on the DTS2 examiner mark sheet. Many centres failed to complete this or completed it incorrectly.

Examiners only marked the first 500 words beginning with the rationale. If this met or exceeded the word limit, any annotation on the text could not be marked. This was often where candidates detailed their intended interpretation.

All 3 areas need to be covered equally in the rationale. Examiners reported again having to complete 'best fit' marking as at least one of the 3 requirements, as detailed in the criteria, was covered outside the word limit.

The challenge for candidates in the 500 word limit is to organise their knowledge and understanding succinctly and to cover all 3 areas. As the work sent to the examiner must be completed under controlled conditions, it must be a personal response that reflects each individual's response to their chosen role.

Centres must ensure that the Written Performance Concept and the text are clearly identified with candidate name, number and running order as these will be separated from the examiner mark sheets when materials are returned by examiners to Edexcel.

Social, Historical, Cultural and Political Context

Centres were advised in last year's report to ensure candidates did not include too much factual information regarding the play's social, historical, cultural and political context.

There was again a great deal of factual information that often came directly from the introductions to frequently used editions, Wikipedia or the introductory paragraphs in popular monologue/duologue anthologies. This information frequently did not enable candidates to show understanding of the text in context. Candidates who achieved in this section captured how their knowledge and understanding of these factors has impacted on their performance. Not all four need to be covered but candidates should make a choice of those that are most relevant to their individual performance.

Preparation Process

Overall this was stronger than in 2009. There was a clearer focus on what each individual candidate actually did rather than general statements such as 'We thought about gestus'. Choosing significant moments was most successful in communicating the preparation process. Where there had been group activities led by the teacher, candidates needed to detail their own contribution.

Intended Interpretation

In 2009 it was felt that where candidates had annotated the text to be performed this was an effective way of indicating intentions for performance rather than including it in the rationale. However, this year examiners reported that often annotation alone did not clarify the intended interpretation and some further detail was needed.

There was concern of an increase in candidates either detailing what they would be wearing and using as a set or what they would like to wear and have as a set. Within the constraints of the 500 word limit examiners did not feel this information supported the requirements of the criteria.

Centres are reminded that this final work submitted to the examiner must be completed under supervised conditions in line with Unit 1.

Duologue candidates must ensure that their rationale is individual with the focus on their character in the performance. Where duologue candidates have worked together, the centre is required to ensure that the response is personal and individual to each candidate.

The challenge of the rationale is for candidates to capture all of the above within the word limit, but again this needs to build on the work done in Unit 1 in selecting the most relevant material. Many examiners felt that some of this work had been poorly prepared and that centres had still not considered that it is worth 25% of the marks for this section.

The majority of rationales were received 7 working days in advance of the examination. Examiners are required to read and mark all the Written Performance Concepts before the examination sessions.

Audiences

Centres are reminded again this year that this is an examination worth 30% of the AS marks. It must take place under examination conditions. It has a different focus and demand on candidates from Section B, the group performance.

In some centres just the examiner and teacher plus a technician making the recording were present.

The majority of centres had the other Section A candidates present. Some also had other students, friends and family. The most common and supportive audience was felt to be other drama students and teachers.

The size and composition of the audience remains the centre's choice, and examiners reported that in the second year most centres ensured the examination process ran smoothly.

Examiners must mark and make notes after each performance.

Centres were advised last year to allow approximately 5 minutes per monologue and 10 minutes per duologue when planning the 2010 examination session. This was detailed in the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination 2010. It is pleasing to report that the vast majority of centres put this in place this year.

Design Candidates

There were fewer design candidates this year than in 2009. All skills were seen. It was felt again this year that both lighting and sound were the most challenging for candidates, however, some inventive and effective work was seen. There was in general a positive response to the 500 word design concept; examiners felt this may be due to the requirement to also have the documentation. It was clear that design candidates had engaged with the complete play text.

The 10 minute presentation should be the candidate talking about their Written Design Concept and documentation; not reading them to the examiner. Centres must ensure all the documentation can be seen clearly in the recording. This can be done outside the actual candidate presentation. This is to ensure it can be seen as part of the monitoring process and in the case of an Enquiry After Results (EAR).

It was clear that choosing this option had been a positive choice for the majority of candidates.

Section B

Overall it was felt that the standard of work seen in 2009 in Section B performances was maintained in 2010.

The examining team reported that overall, the choice of material used in 2009 was seen again this year. It is clear that the majority of centres entering candidates have teacher/directors who have prepared candidates for the group performance in previous series.

Examiners reported that there was a good level of understanding of the requirements of group performance, and the majority of candidates were very well prepared to both achieve in the examination and enjoy the experience of creating live theatre performance for an audience.

Examiners again felt that this year there were relatively few candidates being poorly prepared by centres for this unit, and producing work that did not meet AS standards. There was evidence of candidates not making the individual effort needed to achieve at a higher level. This was usually evidenced by lack of security with the text and the overall interpretation.

It is disappointing to report again that some centres continue to ignore the requirements of the specification in terms of group size and length of performance. These are clearly stated in both the specification and the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination 2010 document. Examiners reported again this year that centres had potentially disadvantaged their candidates by not ensuring that the specification was adhered to for group performances.

There was an increase in small group sizes, for example a group of 3 performing for around 45 minutes.

Examiners felt candidates could perform well towards the lower time limit for a group as it enabled performances to have more clear energy and focus.

Centres must understand that all examiners are instructed to stop examining at the maximum time limit as stated in the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination document. This is also true for any monitoring of performances and marks conducted by the senior team before marks are entered, and for any remarking in the EARs procedures.

Group Size and Performance Time

This is now clearly stated in the specification, ICE and on the group performance front sheets that must be signed by the teacher. Many examiners report that this was signed by the teacher but the estimated performance time given well exceeded this. If centres did not comply with this requirement it disadvantaged candidates. Examiners are clearly instructed to only award marks within the set time limits. Centres are reminded that examiners are not required to remain in the examination room after the maximum time for each performance.

The main concern was when performances were clearly overlong and some candidates had not appeared at all until some time after the maximum time limit, or strong performances could not be awarded marks for the final scenes.

Centres are reminded once again that this is an examination and that very short and overlong performances do not meet the requirements of Section B of Unit 2.

Examiners reported again this year of a few non-examination students taking part in examination performances. There is concern where centres do this for reasons other than to support candidates due to an unforeseen absence within the group. It clearly disadvantages candidates as these non-examination students take up time and examiner focus that must be for examination candidates.

The Text as Performed

It is also a requirement to provide a copy of the text as performed.

It is perfectly acceptable to send the published text with cuts clearly indicated. Some centres sent the text within a collection and this is also acceptable. A few centres requested the return

of the text from the examiner. This is not possible as the texts must be enclosed with all other material for this section to be sent to Edexcel to support any subsequent senior examiner who may need to view the work. In addition, with the wide range of texts being offered for this section it is important that examiners are well prepared by checking the text as performed in advance.

There was considerable concern this year that some performances did not meet the requirements of Section B. There were cases where a copy of the text as performed was sent in advance to the examiner but it was not the text as published, and included devised dialogue, scenes and roles that were not in the original text.

This created considerable extra work for examiners and members of the senior team in monitoring these performances to disregard this extraneous material.

There were also instances where the original text had been considerably rearranged so the narrative and form of the original were not seen in performance.

This must not be done in future series as it will disadvantage candidates.

Audiences

Centres must ensure that an audience who will support the group performance is present as all candidates are awarded 25% of the marks on communication with other cast and audience members.

Again this year, there were some examples of audience members using mobile phones, calling out inappropriate remarks, moving about the performance space or not understanding the nature of the performance. Some audience members were sat too close to examiners and when this occurred it was usually because the audience numbers were greater than expected.

Centres are reminded that this is an examination and that the candidates and examination process must be the focus of the Section B performance.

Some examiners reported that the needs of the audience took precedence over the examination and this did not support candidates.

Centres that wish to make a more social occasion, for example, with food and drink provided or sold, should not in future do this at the examination. Centres are reminded that any performance other than the examination performance will have copy right implications.

However, the majority of audiences engaged with the performances and their positive and focused response clearly enhanced the whole experience.

Choice of Texts

It is good to report again this year that many examiners reported very positively about the variety and suitability of texts. The choice of text to enable candidates to meet the requirements of the examination and their skills and interests is the foundation for achievement in this section. It is clear there are a number of texts that work very well and centres are using them again, but giving them new and unique interpretations. Examiners also reported again this year that much new and exciting contemporary work both written in English and in translation was seen.

Plays that have the episodic form worked particularly well giving the teacher/director the flexibility to choose episodes that supported all candidates.

Examiners reported that stylised and physical approaches to performance work was felt to advantage candidates at this level. More naturalistic performances often started well but could lack pace and dynamism. This may be due to candidates not rising to the challenge of this style of performance within a live theatre context.

In the 2009 report it was stated that ensemble work supported group performance and this remains true. However, many examiners reported that there are some texts, often those written with no designated roles, that did not support candidates in achieving in the examination.

They could be effective productions enjoyed and appreciated by the audiences but challenging for marking in terms of identifying each candidate's individual contribution.

There were also concerns that some directorial decisions did not support the awarding of marks. It was often difficult for examiners to identify multi-role playing candidates if similar costumes were used.

Centres are reminded that the choice of text is their responsibility. Centres must consider very carefully the suitability of the content or the language of the text.

Examiners had concerns that centres were choosing texts that presented too great a demand in subject matter and/or style and so were beyond the skill level or understanding of ideas or emotions of most 17 year olds.

Very few centres had split a full length play into 2 or more performance groups; as detailed in the 2009 report, this disadvantages candidates.

It is disappointing to repeat from the 2009 report that there were still a few centres that had candidates performing a full-length play but designated in which section candidates must be awarded marks. This does not meet the requirements of the specification. It presented an enormous challenge for examiners to have the correct focus on the examined candidates. Most of these performances greatly exceeded the time limit for the number of candidates. It also makes too great a demand on candidates to be involved in performance work for which they cannot be awarded marks. These performances often included non-examination candidates. Examiners marked only in the time limits as set by the number of examination candidates from the start of the performance, and this will have disadvantaged candidates.

The Teacher Director's Interpretation Notes

Most examiners reported that the majority of centres understand that along with the choice of text, this is an important aspect of success in this unit. However, it was felt that most centres understood that in the group piece performance candidates are no longer marked on their understanding of the director's concept but on their individual characterisation in performance.

Examiners found the most supportive notes had a focus on the individual roles.

Successful performances demonstrated that candidates had been engaged in the overall director's interpretation and their roles within it. Less successful performances often seemed not to go much beyond cutting the text and candidates learning the lines and delivering them.

The most useful notes were written by the candidates and director. In contrast, there were some notes that were far too long and gave information that had only limited relevance to the actual interpretation of the text. Often these suggest performance work and skills that are too demanding for candidates at AS level.

Centres should consider that the notes are used by the examiner to look for the key elements in each performance.

As referred to in detailing concerns on the texts in earlier sections of the report there is no doubt that the most supportive and successful approaches to the group performances were when a text that engaged and interested the candidates was chosen and that which supported their skill levels. It should then be edited if need be to meet the time requirements of section B but keep the narrative through line of the original published text. An extract does not meet the requirements of the unit.

There is no requirement of the text being at least 60 minutes in performance length that is a requirement of Section A. It must meet all other requirements of being professionally published, substantial and written for theatre performance.

Performance Candidates

This was the option taken by the majority of candidates. Work was seen across the complete mark range. There were again this year, candidates who worked with such skill, enthusiasm and commitment and performances were seen that fully deserved marks in the top bands.

It was clear centres have given the majority of candidates a well-structured preparation period and a final examination that had a real sense of both occasion and theatre.

The main concern for examiners in 2009 was that there appeared to be a lack of understanding of the new criteria and so at times not enough teaching of performance skills in preparation for the exam. Examiners reported this year that there was evidence of the acquisition of both movement and vocal skills that were demonstrated in performance.

There was evidence that the group performances had too strong an ensemble approach which made it difficult to award individual candidates marks for characterisation.

Centres are reminded that examiners can only award marks for the criteria printed in the specification. Performances that enabled examiners to concentrate on these were most suitable for examination success. The use of costume, make up and effects whether there were design candidates or not often enhanced the group performances. In other centres it was felt there was too high a reliance on these and it detracted from the candidates' focus on their performance.

There were again very few instances where candidates were not present at the examination performance due to ill health or personal circumstances. Other candidates, students from other year groups, ex-students and teachers all stood in to support candidates. Most centres contacted the examiner as soon as possible in advance to give details of the situation prior to the performance

Design Candidates

Design candidates' achievement this year was reported to be in line with that completed in 2009.

There were very few design candidates again this year. The majority of centres had none. In some centres there was only one. In larger centres often with Performing Arts status and/or the input of theatre technicians there were more candidates with the opportunity to work creatively with individual groups.

Examiners reported that it had clearly been a positive choice for these candidates. There was again this year some excellent work which clearly demonstrated that the candidates had been given opportunities to have a real creative input working with the director on realising the production ideas. Many took on more than one skill and showed an understanding of the whole production values of the performance.

There were again some candidates who had not understood the requirements of this option and produced poorly considered and executed work that failed to add anything to the overall performance. There was again some evidence that a very small number of candidates attempted to pass off as their own, work that had been produced by others in the performance group. This was often seen in both the written concept and presentation to the examiner. Centres are reminded it is their responsibility to ensure that all design work presented for examination is the candidate's own.

The performance groups that had one design candidate in general took on one or more design elements. Some design candidates concentrated on just one. It was felt that there was no advantage in either approach. Those performance groups with more than one design candidate usually demonstrated they had worked creatively together and with the director and performers.

There were few instances where examiners felt the candidates were the director's technicians rather than having the opportunity to design the work for their chosen skill[s].

The presentations to the examiner varied in quality. Some candidates gave poor presentations but their work was effective in performance. Some gave confident presentations but the ideas were not seen in performance

Centres had the option of pre-recording the presentations which the examiner must view prior to the performance. This may also advantage candidates who are actively involved with the performance e.g. lighting or costume. More centres took this option in 2010.

It must be noted that the vast majority of performance groups have no design candidates but worked with the teacher/director to ensure that the performance values enhance the work.

All options are fairly equally represented with the exception of masks/makeup. Many candidates used technology to provide often very impressive projection and sound work.

There were a few centres that did not understand that this is most importantly an examination, and that over elaborate staging, inappropriate ideas and or poor execution may actually disadvantage performance candidates.

Administration of 6DR02

Requirements

Centres must ensure they adhere to the requirements for this unit as detailed in the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination document. This essential document is only available on the Edexcel website for this specification. No hard copies will be sent. The ICE is revised each year in the light of both examiners' and teachers' suggestions to ensure that the administration of the unit is clear to all centres. It also includes all the documentation needed for this unit. The documentation for this unit was considerably revised for 2010 in the light of suggestions from both examiners and teachers.

Edexcel does not require visiting examiners or members of the senior team who may visit centres as part of the monitoring process to bring with them any identification or documentation. It is wholly the centre's responsibility to ensure that any Edexcel representatives are accompanied at all times when with candidates.

Timing of the Examination

The majority of examiners received their allocations and contacted centres at the beginning of the spring term. Most dates and times were swiftly and efficiently arranged. Some centres failed to respond to examiners contacting them and this often led to the first choice of date or time for the centre not being possible. Edexcel cannot give out examiner details to centres. There were several cases of centres losing examiner details and not arranging dates as soon as possible.

There was some difficulty again this year when centres did not fix Section A and B dates at the same time as this could result in either different examiners being present on the dates or no examiner being available so performance work was examined in the recorded format.

Centres must have some flexibility in arranging the examination date and time. Edexcel cannot find alternative examiners for centres who insist on rigid times and dates.

Centres must not contact Edexcel regarding examination dates as the examination date and time is arranged directly with the examiner.

The examination could take place between 1st February to the last Friday before the late May Bank Holiday Monday. No extensions can be granted.

There was considerable disruption this year to the smooth running of Unit 2 due to the volcanic ash situation. This meant that examiners, teachers and students were stranded abroad during the crucial examination and final preparation period.

Many performances of Section B and some of Section A had to be rearranged often at short notice.

It was not always possible to rearrange a new date with the original examiner or find another examiner who could make the dates that were available to centres.

The Principal Examiner would like to thank both teachers and students at the centres affected by the disruption for their understanding in rearranging new dates to the best of everyone's ability.

Again, this year many of the Section B performances took place in May with Section A being the first to be examined. Although it is to be hoped that there will not be in future the level of disruption experienced this year, centres should consider carefully their decision in future of having the performance exam in the final week of May, as it may not be possible to find another date or examiner.

Again the vast majority of performances took place in the evenings giving a sense of occasion and enabling an appropriate audience to attend. This is first and foremost an examination and as such it is the examination requirements that must be the focus. When arrangements are made with the examiner the timings of performances and sufficient time to identify candidates and consider marks must be agreed in advance and adhered to on the visit. Examiners reported being kept waiting due to late arrival of audience members or being rushed by centres between performances. This must be addressed by centres. The vast majority of centres ensured that both the examination was well run and performers and audience had a very positive experience.

Centre Administration

It is very disappointing to report that again this year the standard of administration of this paper before, during and after the examination visit was poorly done by many centres. The centres which completed the documentation were often exemplary and understood this cannot be done in a rush at the last minute.

Again a great deal of the required paperwork was incomplete, inaccurate, late or non-existent until the examiner's arrival in the centre. Examiners are required to come well prepared for the examination and cannot do so without this vital information. Again, this was particularly true for Section A.

Each Section A performance candidate must have completed the following; an examiner mark sheet completed with all the details required, the Written Performance Concept and a copy of the text as performed with any annotations. Centres were instructed to have available the complete text prior to the performances in the centre. Many centres did not have all the texts available.

Examiners are instructed to arrive 30 minutes prior to the first performance/presentation so texts can be looked at during this time.

Some centres did not send maps expecting examiners to find the centre directions on the Internet. This was unhelpful as particularly in the evening examiners could not easily locate the actual venue of the examination on the site. Several centres held the exam at another venue but had not informed the examiner. Again this year, examiners reported wandering around sites attempting to find someone who can direct them to the examination venue within the centre.

There was concern this year that the time management of the examination by the centres was poor at times. There is flexibility in how centres organise the sessions but the total number of sessions as detailed in the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination document must be adhered to and cannot be extended. Some examiners arrived at the centre at the agreed time and were waiting for a considerable time before meeting the candidates. Overlong performances meant that some examiners and candidates were completing an examination very late. There was equal concern that some examiners were given very little time to consider their marking between performances.

A private place to mark was provided by most centres in 2010.

Having agreed timings with the examiner prior to the visit these must be adhered to by both the centre and the examiner.

It is acknowledged that at times examiners are unable to do this by arriving late or taking longer than agreed between performances. Should centres have concerns in this respect they should inform Edexcel as soon as possible after the examination. Examiners should be provided with a contact number for the examination visit should they be unavoidably delayed. In this case the examination should not be delayed and the examiner will review the work in the recorded format.

Most centres completed all administration very well and the examination was run with professionalism throughout.

Again this year thanks must be given to the centres, which had an accompanied visit from members of the senior team. This is an important part of the ongoing monitoring of examiners for the practical performance units. This extra requirement was dealt with by most centres with understanding.

The Importance of the Recording of the Performances/Presentations

From 2011 for both sections of Unit 2, centres must ensure that a clear unobstructed recording of the performances both in Section A and Section B is made.

It is felt that some centres still do not understand the importance of the very best possible recording being made of all performances and presentations. In order to maintain the standards of the examination, many centre's work is viewed by the senior team alongside examiner's notes. Centres should be aware that the senior team will make checks on centre's work both during and after the examination period.

It is disappointing to report again this year that the quality of some the recorded work was in many cases poor.

Section A work was overall the best recorded this year. However, some centres tended to use too many close-up shots of candidates faces. Centres are reminded that the recording should capture as much as possible the experience of the examiner viewing the live performance.

For Section B work, all too often the camera was not placed close to the examiner and was frequently so far back from the performance that the candidates could not be identified. Another common mistake was the examiner and audience heads taking up most of the frame. If there is a large performance space and scenes are performed in different areas, the camera should pan in order to record the complete performance.

It is vital that the camera operator monitors the complete performances as there were examples where some of the performances were not captured in the recordings.

Design presentations must be made to the camera and the examiner will sit next to it. Some examiners felt that candidates expected them to ask them questions as they looked at the documentation. Examiners will look at this evidence after the presentation but will not question candidates. Design presentations can be pre-recorded and will be viewed by the examiner prior to the performance along with the documentation.

From 2011 centres must ensure that all the design documentation is also recorded. This can be done either during or after the candidate's presentation to the examiner.

Centres must keep a copy of the recorded examination work. The recording sent to Edexcel via the examiner is the basis of any Enquiries About Results and is used in the monitoring of all examiner's marking.

There was a considerable difference in the completion of the time sheets in 2010 by centres. Many had completed this task meticulously but there were others who had clearly not checked the recordings or completed a time sheet when sending the recordings to the examiner.

It is of importance that centres check the quality of the recordings and make comments on the quality of the recording. Examiners are not required to check the quality of the recording.

Centres must check all performances/presentations in their entirety for the correct timings and the quality of the recording. Missing or poor quality recordings of performances mean that work cannot be checked or remarked.

The majority of centres sent work on DVD in 2010. Examiners and centres welcomed this as when it is correctly presented the quality of the recordings can be excellent and is easily accessible. However, there were considerable problems again this year. Centres must ensure that the DVD can be played on a standard domestic player.

When DVDs would not play it was often due to the fact that the DVD had not been finalised.

Examiners will not use computers to view the work. Each presentation/performance must be given a chapter. This was frequently not done in 2010. However, the time sheet must also be completed to document the actual timings on the recordings.

It was a requirement in 2010 that all DVDs must be sent in a hard protective case. This was frequently not done so DVDs were damaged in transit.

Good practice was when centres sent each group performance on a separate DVD.

The main problem again this year was that many centres failed to send the recording to the visiting examiner within seven working days. Examiners are not required to chase up recordings but must send all documentation to Edexcel after each examination so that the breakdown of the total mark can be entered into the system for the ResultsPlus service.

Although this section concentrates on the difficulties with the recordings in 2010 it must be stated that many centres sent excellent recordings and these often were produced either by professional companies or highly skilled operators within centres, both staff and students.

All centres should consider the value of having a permanent record of this work and ensure that the best quality recording is made.

Identification of Candidates on the Recordings

Section A

This was completed very well by the majority of centres who clearly understood that it was the equivalent of completing the front sheet of an examination paper.

Immediately before each monologue/duologue the candidate(s) must give their name, candidate number, role, title of play text and author.

Design candidates must give their name, number, design skill, text and author.

A colour, full length photograph in costume of each candidate is particularly helpful. Both together for duologues.

There were still some centres that did all introductions in a line up before the first candidate performance. This was not helpful in identifying individuals in the recordings particularly when they were not recorded in what they wore in performance. This must not be done in future.

Some centres recorded the introductions in small groups of 4 and 5. Again this must not be done in the future.

The examiner will not need to speak with any Section A candidates, so the formal introduction to camera is also the identification for the examiner.

Section B

As in 2009 this was done well by virtually all centres.

Identification as in Section A plus description of any costume changes with the additional costumes being shown in the recording was the best way to complete the introductions. Without exception examiners commented on how less stressful it was for all involved if candidate identification was swift to complete. It also greatly aided the viewing of work later in the process when in the recorded format. Some candidates introduced themselves and posed in character for the final group identification long shot. This was seen as good practice.

Centres must ensure that all candidates introduce themselves immediately before their performance or presentation, as it will appear on the recording. This can be pre-recorded and edited by the centre ensuring candidates appear as they will in performance and seen from top to toe not head and shoulders.

Examiners for Section B may also wish to identify candidates informally just before the performance.

Design candidates must state clearly and slowly the centre name and number followed by their name, candidate number, chosen skill(s), and the performance title and group number. It can be helpful if they have the centre name and number, their name and candidate number written clearly on paper and held up to camera.

Performance candidates must line up in their performance group. It can be helpful if this is done in order of appearance. The first candidate must state clearly and slowly the centre name and number, the date of the performance followed by the performance title and group number.

All candidates must then state clearly and slowly their name and candidate number, role(s) played and give verbal description of all costumes worn in the performance. It is helpful if there are costume changes if any costumes worn later are shown to the camera. It can be helpful if their name and candidate number and role(s) played are written clearly on paper and held up to the camera.

The camera must then record them as a group in long shot. It can be helpful if they repeat their name and roles played. The group shot must be held for enough time for someone watching the recording to clearly identify them all. This is the equivalent of completing the front sheet of a written paper.

Centres are strongly encouraged to provide the visiting examiner with a group colour photograph for each performance on arrival to the centre prior to the examination.

On the examiner candidate mark sheets, candidates should give detailed written descriptions of how they will appear in the performance, both physical appearance and costume. Small head and shoulder shots must not be attached to the form as they have proved to be of limited use in aiding identification and can be time consuming and expensive for centres.

Consortium Centres

Again this year there were some difficulties with centres which had not completed the Consortium Information Forms available in the ICE document. The completed forms must be sent to Edexcel as early as possible in the academic year. For all candidates being examined not in their registered centre, the examiner must be informed beforehand and 2 copies of separate registers must be provided giving full details of 'home' centre name, number, candidate name and number.

This information must also be detailed on the DVD or videotape.

Conclusion

Centres will recognise that much of this report details concerns in relation to administration issues that were the same as 2009.

Centres are reminded of the importance of following the specification and also the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination document. Errors in the hard copy of the specification have been corrected in the e-spec and centres are strongly advised to use the e-spec in future. This is available on the Edexcel website.

Again following feedback from centres and examiners, the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination 2010 and the forms needed by centres will be revised for this unit. It will be on the website in the Autumn term.

There were Edexcel INSET courses provided to support the new Unit 2 in 2009. There will also be courses for Unit 2 next year. Details will be on the Edexcel website.

Edexcel can also provide individual support by the Senior Examining Team in centres. Details of this are available on the Edexcel website.

Again this year the Ask the Expert service has proven to be very popular with queries regarding the new AS units. Many asked for suggestions or approval for texts for both sections. It is Edexcel policy to neither recommend nor approve texts, although the choice of text is important so many other factors are involved in successful performance work.

2009 proved to be a challenging year for candidates, centres and examiners in making the adjustments needed for this new Unit 2.

There was an increase in the number of centres requesting a review of candidate's marks in the Post Results Service. As this has to be completed on the recorded performances and all written documentation there has been a focus again in this report on the importance of centre administration.

Centres are reminded that from 2010 the breakdown of marks for Unit 2 will be available on Results Plus.

Any copies of examiner mark sheets and requests for reviewing of marks, EARs, must be requested as detailed in the Edexcel Information Manual and completed through centre's examination officer.

It is very positive to report in 2010 that in this second year the work seen by examiners demonstrated a much clearer understanding by the majority of centres of the requirements of Unit 2. In particular Section A work was overall considerably more focussed and well prepared than in 2009.

Overall, it seems that the highly successful group performance standard in Section B has continued. Examiners felt it still achieved a great deal beyond its requirements as the AS Text in Performance.

Examiners felt this year there was clear evidence that centres had understood both sections had equal weighting in the mark scheme and had adjusted their teaching time to reflect this. This produced for most candidates a better balance in their achievement across the complete unit.

Examiners reported that again they have found the wide range of work presented for both sections of Unit 2 highly enjoyable.

Much of the credit for this is due to the continuing commitment and increased understanding of this unit by the teacher/directors who have worked with the wide range of candidates to not only achieve in gaining the examination marks but have a real sense of achievement engaging in the creative group process.

Grade Boundaries

6DR02 Theatre Text in Performance

	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	N	U
Raw Boundary Mark	80	61	53	45	37	29	21	0
UMS Boundary Mark	120	96	84	72	60	48	36	0

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