



Pearson  
Edexcel

Moderators' Report /  
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCSE  
Drama and Theatre (1DR0)  
Component 1: Devising

## **Introduction**

This is the second year of examination of the three component GCSE qualification 1DR0 and as such, the coursework component 1DR0/01 is still relatively new to centres; however it is well-supported by a myriad of online resources and training events that are available to access for free on the Pearson website. This report is designed to offer support to centres by highlighting positives from the 2019 series, as well as outlining key areas for improvement, when looking ahead to the 2020 series. The Principal Moderator's report is to be used in conjunction with the support materials available on the Pearson website, to best support centres for the 2020 series:

Link to Pearson website:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/drama-2016.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Category%2FSpecification-and-sample-assessments>

## **Content of Component 1**

This component is made up of portfolio evidence and a final devised performance/design realisation, covering three assessment objectives; AO1, AO4 (portfolio evidence) and AO2 (The final devised performance/design realisation). The focus of the component is the creation and development of a devised performance inspired by up to three, centre-chosen stimuli often linked to a theme, topic or issue.

### **Key elements of content**

- Students are provided with up to three stimuli, by the teacher assessor, to explore and use for the basis of their own devised performance. The stimuli MUST be selected and provided by the centre, not the students, to support the students in devising their work.
- The minimum group size is three performing students and the maximum group size is six performing students. In addition, each group may have one designer from each of the skills areas; lighting, sound, costume and set design. This means that the minimum group size will always be three students and the maximum group size can be up to 10 students, if each design option is utilised. It is not permitted to have two design students following the same skill in one group, or for one designer to be assessed for their design skills across more than one group or performance.
- Students are assessed on AO2; therefore, the teacher-assessor must provide evidence of the students' final Devised Performance on either DVD, USB or an external hard drive.
- The students must also produce portfolio evidence that is used to assess students' work against AO1 and AO4. The portfolio evidence details the initial response to the stimuli, exploration of ideas, refinements and rehearsals and final evaluation and analysis of the process and the students' skill demonstrated in the final devised performance/design realisation.
- The word count for the portfolio evidence is a maximum of 2,000 words and must be adhered to; however, students also have the option to provide a verbal portfolio of up to 10 minutes of audio or camera recorded evidence. In addition, students can chose to provide the evidence using a mix of written and verbal formats with a recommended word count of 700–1,000 words and a

maximum time limit of 4–5 minutes. The purpose of the maximum word counts and time limits is to ensure that there is parity for all centres and students nationally.

There is essential guidance for all centres about all GCSE Components in the Administrative Support Guide (ASG) document that is updated for each series. Centres must download this from the Pearson website as soon as it is available in the Autumn term. The Assessment forms for all three components are available as both PDF and editable Word documents on the Pearson website and these are also regularly updated and improved, as such amended authentication forms for the 2020 series will be available to download.

All centres, including those entirely new to Pearson GCSE Drama for entry in 2020, are advised to revisit the specification (issue 2) for further details of the requirements of the component. There are also other useful support documents available to download via the GCSE Drama home page including the GCSE Drama 9-1 Guidance for Component 1 Portfolio, the GCSE Drama Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and the Component 1 Exemplars, as well as past training materials with commentaries to support centres in their assessment.

The main link to the Drama home page is:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/drama-2016.html>

And the link to the teaching and learning materials:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/drama-2016.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=Pearson-UK:Category%2FTeaching-and-learning-materials>

### **Chosen stimuli and themes**

Popular themes for devising included, but were not limited to:

- eating disorders
- gender inequality
- impact of technology/social media
- madness
- mental health issues
- persecution/standing up for your rights
- post-traumatic stress disorder
- outsiders
- war/conflict

The stimuli meant that several centres selected a narrative approach to the devising work whilst others created work that was more surreal and episodic. Stimuli tended to be largely literary with a significant proportion of centres using music, video and/or printed/digital images. Poems were also a popular choice with students using lines and words from poems in their final performances. Some centres issued a single word as a stimulus, such as 'persecution', 'inequality' and 'terror', this supported some students in focusing on a theme and intention for the audience, but was also limiting for many students. Centres also used single word stimuli to supplement written stimuli; such as news reports. In 2019, there was an increase in centres selecting a theme for exploration and/or a topical event that directly impacted the local community and therefore, the students. Centres should ensure

that if issuing a theme that this is through a range of stimuli materials and is an area of interest to the students to ensure that they engage with the devising process.

Pearson does not recommend or approve any material issued as a stimulus, and there is no preferred stimuli format, content or theme. The choice of stimuli is the centre's responsibility, and as such it is important that centres issue materials that engage the interests of their students.

- Centres can issue up to three different stimuli materials; however, they must not exceed this maximum.
- Centres may wish to issue only one or two stimuli materials, this is permissible, but centres should consider if they have offered the students enough material to support their creative intentions.
- Centres may issue different stimuli materials to different groups or classes within their centre, or they may wish to issue all students the same stimuli materials; again this is the centre's responsibility and there is no preferred option.
- Centres must consider the suitability of any stimuli issued to students or of chosen themes. All materials **must be age appropriate**. Moderators in 2019 reported an increase in devised performances that explored topics such as sexual violence, rape and suicide often in graphic detail.
- A small number of centres had used a play-text as the stimulus for the Devised Performance which is not in line with the Specification requirements. Play-texts are explored in Component 2 and Component 3, and as such are not permitted in Component 1 and centres are advised that if a play text is issued as a stimulus for Component 1, it may have an impact on the moderation process. Further details are available in the FAQs and the specification.

The role of the teacher in facilitating the devising process was key in terms of student achievement, as was the choice of stimuli/theme/topic. Less effective choices included stimuli, topics and themes that students could not relate to, or felt uncomfortable with, such as violent acts and physical assaults – or where the students had moved away from their initial intention, meaning that the work produced lacked structure and direction. Positive choices showed the teacher as facilitator, enabling students the strategies to explore the stimuli effectively, allowing them to be clear on their intention for the audience and to make the needed refinements to communicate effectively with their audience.

## The Portfolio Evidence

The practical exploration of the stimuli, the devising, rehearsing and refining processes and the analysis and evaluation of the planned intention and the final performance are captured in the students' portfolio evidence. The portfolio evidence can be presented in the following ways, with no preferred format:

- handwritten/typed evidence between 1500 and 2000 words or
- recorded/verbal evidence between 8 and 10 minutes or
- a combination of handwritten/typed evidence (between 750 and 1000 words) and recorded/verbal evidence (between 4 and 5 minutes).

The majority of portfolio evidence sent for moderation in 2019 was typed evidence, with some examples of verbal portfolios and very few examples of a combination of both formats.

The portfolio evidence was most successful when the six questions, as set out in the Specification, were addressed across the work or used as headings/a structure for the portfolio evidence. Students must be given the opportunity to record the exploration, refinement and rehearsal processes over the course of the component. These notes may then be used to support the completion of the final

portfolio evidence. It was clear that a number of centres had completed the portfolio evidence in stages across the process, with the students completing question 1 and 2 immediately after they had responded to the stimuli materials and completed their initial exploration of the stimuli deciding on an intention for the audience. This was a supportive approach, allowing students to record their ideas as they occurred making for more analytical and reflective responses overall.

In many centres, students recorded accurate word counts or timings for their portfolio evidence on the Coursework Authentication Form; however, many centres failed to provide this information. The Student Authentication Form for Component 1 has been updated on the Pearson website to include word counts and timings and these must be accurately completed. It is important that the maximum timing or word counts for the portfolio evidence are adhered to, as any work beyond the maximum must not be assessed by the teacher-assessor and will not be moderated. In cases where the word limit was exceeded, some of the best work came after the 2,000 words, and often all of the responses for question 5 and question 6 could not be considered which had a significant impact on the assessment of AO4 analysis and evaluation. Furthermore, some students produced work that was significantly under the word count or timings, this did not allow the students the opportunity to write analytically and in depth and was therefore, self-penalising.

The majority of portfolio evidence was presented on A4 paper, word processed and structured using the six questions. Some centres provided additional questions and writing frames which were supportive to many less able students although this could be somewhat limiting for more able students. Some students chose to write in continuous prose and this was effective when the six questions were addressed and embedded in their work; however, some student responses lost focus or did not full address the demands of all of the six questions as outlined in the Specification.

Design students generally included the additional documentation that is a requirement of all design skills; however, some students had included the documentation into the portfolio evidence, thereby limiting the coverage of the six questions. Design students must answer or address the same six questions as performance students and all additional documentation that must be provided should be included as appendices to the portfolio evidence. In addition, all design students must ensure that they stay focused on their design skill and are not tempted to discuss the acting, the same is true of some performance students who spend large portions of their 'significant moments' or questions 5 and 6 addressing the inclusion of design aspects rather than focusing on moments that supported and developed their role as performer. Additional information and support in answering the portfolio questions is available on the Pearson website, this includes how the design students can respond to the questions.

Some centres had encouraged students to reflect upon practitioner theory which is not a specific focus for GCSE; however, on the whole, this enabled students to meet the demands of question 4 when addressing choices of structure, genre, form, language and character. In addition, students were particularly successful when the teacher-assessor had clearly taught the students discretely about genre, style, structure, language and characterisation to communicate intention to the audience. Those students that have been taught how to devise effectively, research, refine and rehearse their work achieved better outcomes, as did those who had an assured grasp and use of drama terminology.

In many centres, students included health and safety requirements in their portfolio evidence; however, this year a significant number of students and centres failed to cover this area which is one of the essential areas of coverage as outlined in the Specification. Centres are therefore, reminded that students must be taught discretely about health and safety issues and the inclusion of these considerations during their devising rehearsals, as well as in their portfolio evidence. More guidance

can be found in Guidance for Writing the Portfolio on the Pearson website. In addition, when discussing how the stimuli was initially explored, many students explained their research. Whilst research is pivotal to the process, and produced some very thought provoking devised work, the demands of this question mean that students should focus on how drama strategies were used to explore the stimuli and how students used drama to explore their initial ideas and intentions from the centre provided stimuli, rather than continuing to discuss their ideas generically.

Teacher-assessors tended to be lenient when awarding the mark for AO1 due to the larger range of marks available for this assessment objective. There was also evidence of centres awarding marks for what they had witnessed in the classroom in terms of the process, refinements and rehearsals, rather than assessing the portfolio evidence discreetly for AO1 and AO4. Students can only receive marks for AO1 based upon the evidence they provide in their portfolio evidence.

Some teacher-assessors only awarded AO4 marks for question 5 and 6 of the portfolio evidence rather than awarding evidence of AO4 analysis and evaluation across the whole portfolio evidence. Students should be taught to analyse and evaluate for each of the six questions of coverage. In addition, where there was evidence of verbal portfolios the teacher-assessor tended to be lenient in their application of AO1 and in particular AO4 as many of the verbal portfolios provided for moderation contained very little evaluation, with some isolated analysis. It is crucial that students adhere to the maximum word count of 2,000 words. In 2019, there was evidence of an increase number of students producing work beyond the maximum word count which had a direct impact on the students' achievement against the AO4 criteria as this work could not be assessed or moderated.

## General summative advice for centres, based on the 2019 series

### ***Students should ensure:***

- that they cover the six questions and essential areas of coverage as outlined in the specification
- they make full use of the word count/ timings to allow for the detail of analysis required and the comprehensive explanations needed to access marks at the higher level; however, ensure that they do not produce work beyond the maximum word count as this will not be considered in the final assessment
- they include health and safety considerations into their working practices and their Portfolio Evidence
- that they avoid general discussion and ensure that they analyse and evaluate across the whole of the portfolio evidence
- they use drama terminology to clearly explain and analyse the 'drama' that took place when devising, rehearsing and refining and in the final performance/design realisation
- that they stay focused on their performance/design skill throughout the portfolio evidence
- that in question 5 they stay focused on their skill in the final performance, rather than focusing on the process. Students should analyse and evaluate how their skill contributed to the final performance; the use of the first person is supportive in responding to this question.

### ***Teacher-assessors should:***

- offer opportunities for students to record clear examples for their notes (during the devising process), to support the completion of the portfolio evidence
- offer appropriate support materials such as writing frames, ensuring that these support without restricting, and that they cover the six questions and essential areas of coverage as outlined in the specification
- facilitate the devised work by offering engaging stimuli materials that are age appropriate and intervene if the students' chosen intention or theme is not appropriate for GCSE aged students
- support students by setting appropriate deadlines
- check notes carefully to guard against plagiarism and to ensure that sources have been acknowledged. There was an increase number of portfolio evidence that was very similar or the same in 2019. Students should be encouraged to write in the first person using 'I' to help guard against work from the same group being too similar
- support students in understanding and addressing health and safety issues
- ensure all students who select a design skill complete the additional documentation and that this is included in with their portfolio evidence.

## **The Final Performance/Design Realisation**

The requirement of the component is for each student to perform in, or design for, a final devised performance. This must be recorded from a **fixed camera** position onto a clearly labelled DVD, USB or external hard drive enclosed in a hard, protective case/ envelope, ensuring that the hardware is new and free of viruses. The file types must be compatible for both Windows and/or Mac devices, therefore file types that can be played on VLC Media Player, Windows Media Player or QuickTime Movie must be used. In 2019, a number of packages were damaged in the post due to the USB sticks piercing the envelopes; for this reason it is recommended that all USBs and DVDs are carefully wrapped and protected.

The quality of the recording is of paramount importance; centres must ensure that they are able to produce a clear, good quality recording for the moderator. It is important that the students are clearly visible on the recording and that there is good sound quality, lighting should also be carefully

considered when recording the work for moderation. Further details about the importance of the recording are available in the ASG document.

The majority of centres provided their recorded evidence on DVD or USB with very few centres submitting their work on external hard drives. In the vast majority of cases, recordings were clearly chapterised and clearly labelled with the group number and the title of the performance. Equally the majority of recordings were of good to reasonable quality, with some examples of excellent practice. The best practice was often seen where teacher-assessors had seemingly viewed the recording, although this is not a requirement of the qualification.

Students must identify themselves on the recording with clear statement of full name and student number. Teachers must also clearly identify students on the Student/Coursework Authentication Forms. In 2019, whilst many centres had ensured that students were easily identifiable, moderators reported that identification was still a problem with some work. It is paramount that identifications take place directly before the recording of the performance and ideally with no breaks in the recording so that the students' appearance in the identification is exactly the same as their appearance in the performance. It is also important that students wear costumes/clothing that makes them easily identifiable for moderation purposes. There was a large proportion of centres where students had chosen to wear 'blacks', whilst this is understandable in many ensemble style performances, it does not support the moderation process. In addition, centres must ensure that all design students also identify themselves as part of their group's introductions.

There were very few instances of recordings that would not play due to the new requirements; however, there were several cases where centres had to contact Pearson for 'lost coursework' due to the evidence of the final devised performances being lost or the files being corrupted. Centres must ensure that they backup all files on their centre's system.

There were also a few centres who had stated that students were absent on the day of the performance so had not provided AO2 evidence for these students, even though this is a coursework component and the work should have been filmed at a different time. Centres must ensure that all students' work is captured on film, even if this is not on the day assigned by the centre to complete the work. If a student does not perform in the final work then they must not receive a mark for AO2, and the lack of participation in the final performance will also impact their ability to answer question 5, 'their contribution to the final performance' in their portfolio evidence.

In 2019, there was work produced from a range of design students; with lighting, costume and sound being the most popular choices. There were some issues with the moderator not being able to see clearly some moments of the performance due to the lighting design; therefore, centres need to support students in considering their lighting design and the quality of the recording for moderation. 'Realism' as a chosen style was more challenging for students in a design role; in particular, lighting and sound. The design students tended to be more imaginative and creative when the work was episodic and contained elements of surrealism; however, this was not always the case.

On the whole the performances were creative and had clear intentions for the audience. A range of styles and genres were adopted, with a didactic and episodic approach being the most popular. It was reassuring to see so many students opting to take on a design role with many students really embracing this opportunity and creating work that was creative and incredibly supportive of the performers and their group's intention for the audience. In 2019, there was an increase in students taking on the role of lighting designer, who did not meet the demands of the specification and as a result their achievement was in the lower levels of the assessment criteria.



### ***Best practice for the recording included:***

- clear, well-paced, introductions with students stating both their full name and student number in **full length shot** – at the beginning of the performance with no break before the performance
- use of A4 sheets with name and number held up for the camera
- students dressed in the same way for the introduction as in the performance itself, with students explaining any costume changes
- clear written descriptions of students by the teacher-assessor on the Coursework Authentication Forms, with the centre identifying where in the student line up each student appears, and in addition giving timings of where the students demonstrate the skills in the assessment criteria
- the wearing of different, distinct costumes or clothes, with ensemble groups choosing different colour t-shirts rather than 'all blacks'
- the provision of photographs of the sampled students in performance groups (if these were in full costume)
- work that was labelled with the group number and the title of the performance chapterised so that this information matched the information on the coursework Authentication Forms.

### **General summative advice for centres, based on the 2019 series**

#### ***Students should:***

- ensure the work is carefully rehearsed and polished for performance with a focus on creativity and impact on the audience
- engage fully with their role, thinking about how their role impacts the work as a whole
- work collaboratively and contribute to the exploration, refinement and rehearsal process
- shape and develop ideas practically rather than repeating and polishing without progression
- share their work in progress with the class to receive feedback for improvement
- use their research skills to inform their performance and development of ideas
- make clear notes, including examples, throughout the process and reflect on their final performance straight after the performance takes place.

#### ***Teacher-assessors should:***

- devote 40% of teaching time to the devising process and the skills that students need to be taught in order to devise effectively
- select stimuli appropriate to the needs, abilities and interests of each individual group of students or cohort
- use verbal evaluation and discussion to support the students' development of their work, facilitating this process without directing or having creative input
- set deadlines to allow students to work to the final performance date or deadline
- ensure students have the opportunity to conduct technical and dress rehearsals and to consider any health and safety risks or hazards
- provide a supportive audience to allow students to be comfortable when performing
- record the performances and ensure that they are saved in the formats as set out in the ASG, as well as ensuring that the files are backed up on the Centre's network.
- ensure the recordings are made from a fixed position with good quality visuals and sound
- provide clear introductions by student name and number
- ensure that clear descriptions are provided on the Coursework Authentication Forms.

## **Teacher-assessors must ensure that students adhere to the group sizes and timings for the devised performances.**

A group must contain between three and six performance students. In addition, there can be up to one designer per role, per group – making a possible maximum group size of 10 students (six performers and four designers).

Where students (performance and design) do not meet the regulatory minimum performance requirement for AO2, marks awarded by the teacher-assessor must be capped at Level 2 of the assessment criteria, with a maximum of 6 marks to be awarded. There were no examples this year of students producing work below the regulatory timings and centres should be congratulated on how they have supported their lower achieving students in meeting the demands of the qualification.

The recommended minimum performance times have been provided to ensure that each student within the group has sufficient time to access all levels of the assessment criteria:

- 3–4 performance students (group) 10 to 15 minutes
- 5–6 performance students (group) 20 to 25 minutes.

Centres should be aware that performance times that are between the regulatory minimum (4 minutes) and the recommended minimum (10 minutes) may not allow students to evidence their skills fully in order to access all levels of the assessment criteria. In addition, teacher-assessors are required to stop marking after the maximum performance time has passed, this is to ensure that there is parity for all students nationally: the moderator will not consider any work after the maximum performance time.

## **Selection of sample for moderation**

There was still some confusion in 2019 with regards to the sampling of students' work. Centres that followed the guidance in the ASG sent the correct work; however, a number of centres sent the work of all of their students or they selected a sample that was not in line with the requirements. In the 2019 series, the pre-selected sample was removed from the EDI and centres were required to send the work of their highest- and lowest- achieving student and a further sample of work (usually a maximum of 10 students work in total – dependent on your cohort size) from a maximum of four performance groups.

The teacher-assessor must select the sample after the internal assessment has taken place to reflect the overall mark range of the cohort. Pearson will not select the sample, the reason for this decision is because Pearson and the moderators do not know how centres have grouped the students, how many students are in each group, or which groups the highest and lowest achieving students are in.

The sample that centres select must include the performance/design realisation and portfolio evidence of all sampled students. This should be selected from a maximum of four different performance groups (although this could be from as few as **one group** if there are six performance students and four designers in that group, containing the highest and achieving students).

The sample selected by the centre must include the:

- highest overall scoring student
- lowest overall scoring student

- work of at least eight further students with a range of marks between the highest- and the lowest-scoring students.

The sample size tends to be the work of 10 students; however, there are occasions when the sample is smaller or larger than 10 students' work.

- If there are fewer than 10 students in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must send the work of all students.
- If there are 10 students in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must send the work of all 10 students.
- If there are 11 to 99 students in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must select the work of 10 students, from no more than four performance groups to include the highest and lowest achieving students based on their total mark out of 60.
- If there are 100 to 199 students in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must send the work of 15 students, including the highest and lowest achieving students. The work should be from as fewer groups as possible, with a maximum of five groups sent if students are all working in groups of three.
- If there are 200+ students in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must send the work of 20 students, again to include the work of the highest and lowest achieving students. The work should be from as fewer groups as possible with a maximum of seven groups sent if students are all working in groups of three.

Moderators may contact a centre and request the work of additional students. This can be for a variety of reasons and centres must ensure that all work that is not sent in the original sample is in the centre, available for submission, with the Coursework Authentication Forms completed and signed by the students and the teacher-assessor. There are further details regarding these procedures in the JCQ instructions for conducting coursework:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/coursework/instructions-for-conducting-coursework-2018-2019>

## Administration

Most of the administration for Component 1 was completed accurately by centres. Centres do need to check the total mark accurately on the Coursework Authentication Forms and then transferred the total mark to the EDI correctly. There was an increased number of cases in 2019, where moderators had to contact centres to check the centre marks, as the mark on the Coursework Authentication Form did not match the marks on the EDI printout or on Edexcel online. Errors in imputing the centre's mark can impact the final mark that the centre's students receive and as such all arithmetic must be carefully checked and all marks must be transferred accurately. It is the centre's responsibility to contact Edexcel directly to make any amendments to the marks submitted, the moderator is not permitted to make these changes on the centre's behalf.

Centres that placed their work in attainment order, from the highest achieving student to the lowest achieving student, clearly supported the moderation process. In addition, some centres placed the students' work in group order, which supported the identification of students. Centres are reminded that the Coursework Authentication Form must be stapled onto the students' portfolio evidence, to ensure that they do not become detached from the work, and that **the inclusion of plastic wallets is not permitted**. The ASG details how the portfolio evidence should be presented for moderation.

The majority of centres did include the EDI printout or a printout of the marks online; however, it is paramount that this document is the official EDI printout that contains the centre declaration

statement. This statement must be signed by the teacher assessor before the document is sent to the moderator. In addition, centres must ensure that all Coursework Authentication Forms are signed by both the teacher-assessor and the student, otherwise the moderator will request an additional signed copy.

Centres are reminded that there is a coursework check sheet available on Pearson online that should be included in the pack sent to the moderators, this is provided to support centres in ensuring that they have met all of the requirements and included all of the materials required.

A number of teacher-assessors provided detailed comments on the Coursework Authentication Form and/or on the students' portfolio evidence. Some teacher-assessors sign-posted where students had covered each of the Assessment Objectives on the portfolio evidence – AO1 and AO4; this is not a requirement of the qualification. Centres must ensure that they justify the marks that they have awarded, as this is a JCQ requirement. As such, centres must either annotate the students' portfolio evidence or write comments to justify the marks awarded on the Coursework Authentication Form. Some Centres in 2019 did not complete the comments on the Coursework Authentication Form or annotate the portfolio evidence as required.

Many centres sent their stimuli materials to the moderator, either in the pack or by copying and pasting the images, poems etc. into the box provided on the Coursework Authentication Form, both of these methods supported the moderation process, in particular when different groups in the centre had used different stimuli material.

The Coursework Authentication Form has been updated on the website for 2019–2020 to include group titles as well as numbers, and in addition to enable students to record word counts and timings. This is intended to support centres and moderators, and as such this must be completed by all centres. For further guidance please see the ASG and the specification.

## **Pearson Feedback and Support to Centres**

### **Remark of Moderation (ROM)**

These are completed by members of the senior team using the original portfolio evidence and the final performance recordings, as well as the Assessment Forms. An enquiry can be requested for the whole centre as the original moderation process will be repeated by the ROM moderator and centres will be charged for re-moderation unless centre marks are re-instated. A detailed report will be produced for each centre, providing feedback for the centre, and explaining the findings of the re-moderation process.

### **Drama Subject Advisory Team**

Paul Webster, a full-time member of Pearson staff, has been available again throughout the 2019 series to respond to centre queries and to support centres via telephone and email contact as well as through social networking sites. This has proved successful, in particular with the introduction of the new specification and the 9-1 assessment processes.

He and his team are available to respond to centre queries on 0333 016 4141 and <https://support.pearson.com/uk/s/qualification-contactus>

Student queries can be addressed to [students@pearson.com](mailto:students@pearson.com).

It must be noted that the Subject Advisor has no access to centre data and cannot comment on the moderation process in terms of mark regression or on the content of E9 reports to centres. Where centres require more detailed information, a ROM must be requested for that paper.

Approval of material to be used or any administrative issues is beyond the remit of the subject advisory team.

### **Training from Pearson**

Pearson has a programme of national face-to-face, free coursework marker training meetings, as well as online training. All details are available on the Pearson website via the training home page.

## Conclusion

In the second year of the 9-1 GCSE qualification, it is pleasing to note how hard centres have worked to understand the requirements of the specification and the standard set by Pearson. It is clear that many centres have accessed and used the support materials available on the Pearson website, as well as attending training and purchasing some of the support materials and guides produced.

Centre marking in the vast majority of centres is accurate in terms of the rank order of marks for students sampled; however, many teacher-assessors have struggled to accurately judge the level at which their students are working. This was evident across all of the Assessment Objectives, but in particular AO1 (create and develop) where there is a larger spread of marks available. There was evidence of severe marking by centres at the lower end of the ability range, sometimes for example, where students have been able to explain their response to the stimuli, their intentions for the audience and some of their ideas and refinements in rehearsals.

Equally, at the top of the ability range, teacher-assessors did not always accurately assess their students' work, over-rewarding achievement when compared to the standard set by Pearson. It appeared that teacher-assessors tended to assume that their highest-achieving student was very often worthy of marks in the top level or full marks. Given the increased rigour of both assessment and content in the new 9-1 GCSE Drama, it is likely that for the first few years of the qualification, only the very highest achieving students nationwide will consistently meet the demands of Level 5 for Component 1, particularly with regards to AO1. The evidencing of students' practical ability to create and develop devised work through their portfolios is an entirely new skill at GCSE and as the qualification develops it is predicted that teachers and students will become more skilled at addressing this. In 2019, there was a definite increase in the calibre of work provided for moderation.

Teacher-assessors must consider carefully when making judgements about the quality of their students' work. Free marker training events and materials provided by Pearson will continue to be available to support all centres in making these judgements, enabling the committed work of all teachers to be applied most effectively to all aspects of assessment and learning within this component.

Students of Pearson Edexcel GCSE Drama represent a wide and varied range of abilities, cultures and backgrounds. Their devised work for Component 1 has reflected their personal interests and experiences. Students' work on this component allows them further to develop the skills needed for creating devised work for performance, as well as furthering their grasp of each individually selected theme, topic or issue. The shift of focus to not only exploration, but to process, rehearsal and the completion of a final performance appears to have been welcomed and embraced by students, teacher-assessors and moderators alike.

Moderators in 2019 commented that, in the vast majority of case, GCSE Drama students were exceptionally focused and committed to their work in Drama; for the entire team, there was a sense that it had been a highly positive experience and that students of all abilities had risen to the challenge of devising a performance, with very few students failing to complete something worthy of a mark against each of the assessment criteria.

### **Based on the 2019 series, centres should:**

- read/review both the specification (issue 2), the ASG and the GCSE Drama 9-1 Guidance for Writing the portfolio in preparation for delivering this component
- make the most positive choice of stimuli material for each individual group of students/ classes/cohort – up to a maximum of three stimuli

- ensure that the very best possible recordings are made and selected for moderation
- use this report as a reminder of best practice when making the recordings
- use the exemplar materials to refresh and refine teacher-assessors' grasp of the standard expected by Pearson
- refer closely to the ASG, the specification and this report when supporting students with their timings for the devised performance and their timings and word counts for the portfolio evidence.
- refer closely to the ASG when preparing materials for submission to the moderator and when selecting centre samples.