

National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2012 Assessment Report

Drama Level 2

- 91215 Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text**
- 91219 Discuss drama elements, techniques, conventions and technologies within live performance**

COMMENTARY

A total of 1795 candidates entered the examination for AS91215 (theatre form or period) and 3032 candidates entered the examination for AS91219 (live performance). Overall the performance was slightly higher in the 91219 examination; this is to be expected as this standard was similar in nature the second criterion of the former externally assessed standard. The level of achievement of the standards fell well towards the lower end of the PEP with 73.4% of candidates gaining credits for AS91215 and 76% for AS91219. The percentages of candidates achieving at merit and excellence was lower for AS91215 than it was for AS91219. Again, this is not unexpected as this is the first time that this standard has been examined externally. The publication of the examination paper, assessment schedule, exemplars and this report will help professionals to understand the requirement of the standard at these levels.

It is recommended candidates prepare for this examination by familiarising themselves with the likely language of the questions. The assessment specifications and the explanatory notes in the standard are useful guides to the terms that can be expected in questions.

Candidates are also advised to familiarise themselves with the language of drama so that they are able to understand questions and to explain and discuss ideas accurately and confidently.

At this level, understanding of the terms techniques, conventions, technologies and elements is expected and candidates should be able to select and name components of these as required without further explanation in the question.

STANDARD REPORTS

91215 Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- demonstrated accurate knowledge of the specified form or period
- provided clear references to a text to support their answers
- annotated sketches simply with accurate details such as colour and fabric
- understood how costume, acting style and plot structure were typical of the chosen form or period.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- demonstrated knowledge of a text but little knowledge of its form or period
- had limited understanding of how a feature of a text was typical of the chosen form or period

- gave inaccurate, contradictory or generalised information in answers
- wrote about interpretations of the text other than those of its original context and audience, for example developed a 21st century design for a Shakespearean costume
- misunderstood the language of the question and so were unclear about what was required. The terms acting style, plot, play text, form and period were the most commonly misunderstood terms
- failed to support answers with clear and specific examples from the chosen text
- gave fewer responses than were specified in the question.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- demonstrated a sound understanding of the chosen form or period and text
- referenced the chosen text with clear, specific examples and details
- annotated sketches with clear and specific detail
- used appropriate terminology when describing features of the form or period for example projection of voice rather than shouting
- demonstrated understanding of the context of the form or period and were able to make links between the text specifically and the form or period generally.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- used subject specific terminology accurately and confidently
- supported descriptions and explanations with succinct and accurate examples from the chosen text
- demonstrated a depth of understanding of the context of the form or period and were able to explain links between the text specifically and the form or period generally showing a depth of understanding of the social, political or historical context
- explained clearly the purpose of a feature and made connections to key influences on the form or period and its practitioners
- understood key themes and ideas relevant to the form or period as seen in the text studied.

OTHER COMMENTS

Some candidates confused theatrical and language or textual features of a form. Candidates should refer to the features of a text as they would be seen in performance. This was particularly evident where candidates discussed imagery or rhyme schemes in Elizabethan theatre without reference to how these might be manifested on stage.

A list of what constitutes 'features' of form or period is provided in explanatory note 3 of the standard.

There was evidence that candidates answers could have been improved by more specific and accurate use of vocabulary to describe the features of the form, particularly with reference to Question 2 which covered acting style. For example, Elizabethan acting style

was described as 'melodramatic' by some candidates, rather than giving specific examples of the typical use of voice, body movement or the space at this time.

Candidates need to have a sound understanding of the theatre form or period and its relevant social, historical context. It is insufficient for candidates to have knowledge of a text alone. This was seen by the marking panel particularly by candidates who write about Brecht's plays but had little understanding of Epic theatre.

91219 Discuss drama elements, techniques, conventions and technologies within live performance

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- wrote about a live theatre performance
- used the language of drama confidently to describe their own and viewed performance
- understood key terms used in questions and wrote simply and accurately about drama conventions, techniques and technologies used or seen in performance
- sketched to support their answers.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- were unable to accurately identify a convention used in their own work
- gave generalisations rather than specific detail
- showed a limited ability to use the language of drama accurately
- failed to link what was seen in performance to a particular effect
- did not provide a sketch of a technology used in performance.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- described the use of a convention, techniques and a technology with clear and specific detail
- used the language of drama accurately
- linked the use of a convention, techniques and a technology to a particular effect seen in performance
- supported their sketch with clear annotation.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- wrote concisely and confidently
- used the language of drama accurately
- gave detailed and apt examples from live performance

- explained the effect of the use of a convention, techniques and a technology with reference to key themes, intentions of the playwright and functions of the elements of the performance
- made references to ideas within the play that linked to the wider world.

OTHER COMMENTS

The marking panel found a pleasing number of excellence level responses to questions that showed insight and a depth of understanding of drama and theatre. There was evidence that many candidates had had rich opportunities to attend post-performance forums and to participate in high quality discussion in classrooms about what they had seen and used themselves.

More candidates had attempted all three questions than last year, which is useful especially to those less capable students who can still achieve the standard if they achieve an N1 or 2 on one question but would not if they score a N0.

There was clear evidence that the trend of increasing teacher confidence and skill in preparing candidates for writing about live performance continues. Candidates were generally well prepared for the examination.

The panel noted that while not a factor in the marking of this standard, candidates could generally improve their responses with more accurate spelling.