

DRAMA

<p>Paper 0411/11 Written Examination</p>
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Key messages

- Candidates are urged to read the question thoroughly before answering. This session saw an increase in the number of answers where the candidate had misread or misinterpreted the question.
- Candidates are reminded that the syllabus demands a strong focus on the application of practical drama skills. All questions are designed to foster opportunities for discussion regarding the application of practical skills to dramatic problem solving. There was extensive evidence of candidates responding to questions in narrative/descriptive/logistical terms, thereby missing opportunities to score highly. The key to approaching the questions in this examination is to explore the use of dramatic skills and techniques both in rehearsal and in performance.

General comments

Overall, candidates engaged effectively with the paper and in the vast majority of cases were able to demonstrate good understanding of and engagement with both the repertoire and devised material.

It was noted that there was a higher than normal incidence of candidates mislabelling questions. Wherever it was possible to discern clearly the candidate's intention regarding question selection examiners annotated the script with the correct question number and marked accordingly.

A few candidates misread essay questions and scored low marks as a result.

Many candidates opted to answer the essay questions first, which enabled them to manage their time more effectively. A few opted to answer the paper in reverse order, thereby ensuring that the higher value questions were addressed early on, leaving the lowest value questions until last. For candidates who are concerned about their time management skills this may well prove to be a sensible strategy.

A significant number of candidates supplied the examiner with a 'FYI' synopsis of the devised piece. In some cases, this amounted to a page and a half of writing. Clearly, this is time not well spent. It was noted that in one or two cases where a long synopsis was included candidates had run out of time during an essay question.

The examiner does not require a synopsis; it is sufficient to specify the stimulus used, which is a requirement of the paper.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

A significant proportion of candidates seemed unclear about the nature of elegance as represented in the stage directions that refer to MRS SOLNESS' physical appearance. The description given is of how she looks and the question requires the candidate to describe how the actress could show elegance in performance.

A high number of candidates chose to focus on vocal qualities over physical ones with many opting to describe how the character should sound. The answer needs to include a credible physical reason in order to secure the first mark and a reason why, for the second. Consequently, a number of responses failed to score any marks.

Question 2

The vast majority of candidates were able to give an appropriate suggestion as to how the actor playing KNUT BROVIK could emphasise his physicality mostly focusing on his illness and frailty. Supportive comments were also appropriate.

Question 3

Candidates clearly understood the dramatic implications of the question and seemed comfortable giving valid reasons for varying the physical distance between characters. Justifications also were mostly viable.

Candidates disadvantaged themselves where they did not specify a line or precise moment in the text when the movement should take place. The question asks for this. A number of responses did not provide a specific point in the text for an action to occur and in other cases answers contained two or more line references from the text, thereby obscuring the dramatic intention. Where no moment in the text was specified, no marks could be awarded.

Question 4

This question appeared to cause significant difficulty for many candidates. The question requires a response that focusses on dramatic approaches to communicate a particular quality within a relationship.

In this case, the phrase 'power relationship' referred to the status, control and manipulation so evident within the relationship between SOLNESS and KAJA.

A high proportion of candidates understood the term 'power relationship' to mean *powerful* in an emotional or sexual sense and proceeded to answer accordingly. Such answers missed the point of the question and therefore could not score any marks. Wherever an examiner was able to perceive any sense of crossover in an interpretation of the influences impacting on the relationship some credit was given.

Question 5

The majority of candidates responded well to this question. They had a clear understanding of the emotional turmoil experienced by KAJA's character and the possibilities for expressing this in performance. There were several responses where justifications for each suggestion of a way to convey her feelings tended to merge into a single one (losing one mark) but overall, this question was approached effectively.

Question 6

Nearly every response to this question was clear about what the candidate, as director, wished to bring out from the relationship between BROVIK and RAGNAR and included at least some general comments about the nature of that relationship. Most candidates offered one or two specific examples of how to do this for three marks, which was the most common score for this question. Few candidates were able to score four or five marks because they tended to focus purely on the actors and omitted consideration of how a director could use methods other than acting skills to communicate the intention.

Question 7

Many candidates approached this question effectively. Most were able to identify one or two examples of posture and what effect it was able to create upon an audience. Where two or three specific examples were clearly cited and justified, candidates were able to score three marks and this was the most common mark awarded. For candidates to achieve four or five marks they would need to provide more detail and to demonstrate an ability to consider postural examples within a wider context of characterisation and narrative.

Question 8

This question proved problematic for candidates where they did not specify a particular sound or sounds. Where a response only referred to the use of 'sound' in a generic sense it was not possible for it to score above one mark. This was the case in a significant minority of responses with a few scoring two marks because they considered the effect which the 'sound', whatever it was, had achieved.

Many candidates were able to describe a range of effects based upon a number of different sounds, both live and recorded. Few responses achieved the level of detail required to score full marks but overall this question was reasonably well handled.

Section B

Question 9

The acting/characterisation question proved to be the most popular overall and led to a few of the best answers in the whole paper. In these cases, it was obvious that candidates had prepared well and often showed a methodical and effective consideration of a range of approaches to playing the role of DR HERDAL.

Despite this, there was also a significant number of responses that indicated a narrow view of a practical approach to characterisation and fell into the literary analysis trap of focussing on the character alone without exploring how the actor would use dramatic skills and techniques to bring the character alive in performance.

These responses focused upon the WHAT? whilst neglecting consideration of the HOW? and WHY? In some cases, there was an imbalance in the discussion in favour of costume with too much stress placed on appearance and extraneous aids.

The most successful answers identified key character traits and then proceeded to describe how drama skills could be used to communicate those traits whilst referring consistently to specific moments in the extract.

Question 10

On the whole, responses were very successful in highlighting the main themes of the extract but fell short in exploring how a director could bring these themes out in performance.

Many responses were narrative/descriptive in nature, reiterating aspects of the plot whilst neglecting to explore ways that themes would lend themselves to practical exploration.

Some candidates allowed themselves to become fixated on some aspects to the exclusion of others and it was not uncommon to find answers that relied too heavily on acting, character analysis, setting, music and lighting to the exclusion of how the director – the subject of the question – could use these aspects to communicate the main themes identified by the candidate.

Question 11

A small number of responses were seen and these achieved a varying degree of success.

The question invited candidates to consider how the stage directions in the extract could inform a set design. This was given context by the notion of a 'present-day production', which could be interpreted either as a modern production or a present-day production in a traditional style. Both options were equally viable.

Those candidates, who opted for the modern approach envisaged computers, steel and glass whilst those who went for the more traditional setting chose to focus on aspects of set that could enhance the action or elaborate on the themes inherent in the text.

A few responses forgot the imperative of set design and tended to reconsider performance aspects such as a re-blocking of the action in response to the stage directions.

The question allowed for the reinterpretation of or reimagining of the stage directions and the best answers never lost sight of the link between the stage directions as they were written, the dramatic intention of the dramatist and the realisation of a scenography to accommodate these.

Section C

Question 12

This question proved to be a very popular choice. The most favoured stimuli were: *The hare and the tortoise* and *Teenagers dancing at a concert*. *Mahatma Gandhi* was the choice of a few candidates.

Responses had a tendency to be overly descriptive. Sizable sections of answers were devoted to a description of what took place and of a reiteration of the narrative of the story. There was often a shortfall in the discussion of what skills were used and how they were brought to bear in a dramatic realisation of the storyline.

More sophisticated answers recognised that dramatic devices were used but explanation of what these were and how they were applied and how effectively, occurred sporadically and in general terms were not linked to creative process.

Question 13

The question was designed to focus on the rehearsal and how it can be used to explore performance processes and create solutions to production problems. The 'challenges' referred to in the question invited candidates to identify what their own particular thresholds had been and how they had overcome them.

Candidates were not always very clear about the actual rehearsal process and in many cases it was clear that they did not see rehearsal as much more than practising. A significant number of responses tended to focus on problems encountered in a generic sense, such as disagreements within the group or logistical issues that emerged at rehearsal such as absenteeism or lack of resources, for example.

Some good answers covered a range of disciplines over and above the practising of lines and movement; some, for example, showed insight into how the use of costume elements in rehearsal can help performers perfect their physicality.

For the main part there was a lack of understanding about what the rehearsal process is for and opportunities to discuss the creation of dramatic structure, staging issues, use of space and proxemics as well as the honing of acting skills such as projection and audience engagement were often overlooked.

Question 14

This proved challenging in the sense that candidates often could not see beyond the literal or concrete terms of the piece they had originally constructed. Opportunities for reimagining it for a younger audience were obscured by a determination not to lose sight of the original story as conceived, as was a willingness to let go of some ideas and either rework or transform them into a child-friendly format.

Solutions tended to focus on less imaginative and obvious courses of action based on censorship and redaction. Thus, toning down the language or simplifying the dialogue was considered more appropriate than changing styles and dramatic approaches.

DRAMA

Paper 0411/12
Written Examination

Key messages

- Many candidates write too much for questions in **Section A**. This means that they have less time to respond to the longer, essay style questions in **Section B** and **C**. Candidates should use the number of marks available as a guide when managing their time.
- Candidates should avoid long, narrative responses which rarely access the full range of marks available, and instead make sure they focus on the specifics of the question. Extended introductions which bear little relevance to the question waste valuable time for candidates.
- Responses to questions about the devised work are often superficial. Candidates need to show their understanding of the devising process, rather than rush to the scripting stage of the work.
- Candidates need to demonstrate evaluative skills in their responses to **Section C**, and should not be too reliant on comments from the audience. Candidates need to be able to demonstrate their intention and reflect on the techniques that were used to achieve it.

General comments

The extract from *Hedda Gabler* proved accessible for most candidates. Many candidates showed an excellent understanding of its historical context, as well as its style, themes and the subtleties of its characterisation and interaction. Most candidates understood that they must adopt a practical approach to the piece, rather than a literary appreciation. They considered, in detail and with close attention to the text, how the extract could be taken from page to stage to produce a final performance for a live audience. There were more candidates in this session who did not restrict their answers to the extract, but made references to other parts of the play, without acknowledging that they were doing so. While it is useful for candidates to be able to view the extract within the context of the whole play, they are expected to support their answers by reference to the extract set in the pre-release material. This point also applies to questions which specify reference to line numbers. Candidates should be able to use context to demonstrate understanding but must select their specific references from within the section indicated in the question.

Many candidates ignore the maximum number of marks available for each question by writing at great length in **Section A**, leaving themselves insufficient time to construct a strong response to **Sections B** and **C**. Candidates need to be precise and concise in order to write successful answers. Those who talked around the subject and gave long introductions to the extract or wrote narrative accounts of their devised work, including descriptions of the plot and characters, did not usually score in the higher bands as they did not offer detailed examples to illustrate their points. Some did not make relevant points and skirted around the question. The best answers kept their focus and made sure that they addressed the key parts of the questions. This is also true for **Questions 6, 7 and 8**, which require a detailed explanation and, in **7 and 8**, evaluation for the higher bands.

Many candidates referenced Brecht, Stanislavski, Artaud, Boal and British theatre companies like Frantic Assembly, but there were occasional responses where a disproportionate amount of time was spent citing practitioners without really focusing on the question. The strongest responses focused on the text or devised piece and the question, giving a personal response that demonstrated their practical knowledge and understanding of the process of preparing a piece for performance for an audience, rather than attempting to showcase their theatre studies knowledge.

The approach to the devised piece was mixed. Some candidates clearly worked in their groups to take their initial response to the stimulus through the research, decision-making and rehearsal process, reviewing, evaluating and improving it as they went along, before making a final performance for an audience. Some candidates do not appear to have completed their devised work and gave responses to an imagined scenario. The more imaginative the devising work, with a clear focus on putting on a polished performance

that will meet their dramatic intentions and have an impact on a real audience, the more likely the candidates are to be able to make responses that are relevant, detailed, evaluative and supported by specific references to their work, both in process and in performance.

Evaluation is a critical skill in the paper, but many candidates did not demonstrate a confident grasp of either the skill or the ability to frame it in their writing. All too often, simple, unsupported assertions of effectiveness were offered. Audience feedback can contribute to proper evaluation, but only when it is sufficiently detailed in terms of both elements of performance and its impact on the audience. Candidates aspiring to the higher mark bands need to produce a detailed explanation of intention, with a description of the techniques employed and a clear evaluation of the impact achieved.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates were able to make and justify appropriate suggestions. Some candidates cited evidence about George Tesman's personality in the text but did not give a practical suggestion as to how it could be shown by the actor. Some responses were detailed and long, easily scoring the marks in the first few sentences but then providing excessive material that was unnecessary. Such responses waste valuable time.

Question 2

Candidates responded well to this question, although there were some who did not understand the term 'physicality'. A broad interpretation was allowed, including facial expression and even eye-rolling if tied appropriately and specifically to a section of text. Explanations of effectiveness were generally good, although there were a few candidates who did not understand Juliana's character and made suggestions for her physicality that were not appropriate.

Question 3

The question asked candidates to state where in the specified section the physical distance could be changed, not how. Candidates needed to select two characters out of three and give two reasons. Most understood the importance of proxemics in drama, but some struggled to express their understanding in terms that were both practical and specific.

Question 4

Generally, candidates who picked out the key words of the question (i.e. power relationship) were able to give a greater focus to their response; several responses simply described actions and interactions within the relationship, which made it difficult to access the mark scheme. The section specified in the question was long enough for candidates to pick out two separate examples to show how the actors could communicate the power relationship between the characters. Again, some responses simply explained where in the text the power relationship was demonstrated, without any reference to what the actors needed to do to communicate it to the audience.

Question 5

This question evoked a wide range of responses. Some candidates were able to locate points in the specified section where the actor would demonstrate Thea's anxieties through the use of specific acting techniques. Some candidates were able to justify this in terms of the requirements of the text and the character and/or their impact on the audience, while others offered vague generalisations, such as 'have a sad facial expression' or 'sound scared'. A few candidates simply narrated aspects of Thea's story, without a focus on her anxieties.

Question 6

Many candidates were able to demonstrate a good understanding of the drama involved in the passage. However, only a few were able to offer the detailed explanation required for full marks. Understanding of the varied aspects of the relationship may be explained in the wider context of the play, but clear examples of how this could be shown need to be located in the section specified. Candidates who scored 1 or 2 marks usually did so because they explained the relationship without making any suggestions about how the director could ensure that aspects of the relationship could be brought out in performance.

Question 7

Many candidates confused 'tone' with volume or pitch. Lack of precision and grasp of technical terms hindered some candidates' responses. There were many vague comments, and evaluations of effectiveness were frequently superficial. Several candidates offered lengthy, narrative descriptions of their devised pieces.

Question 8

Some candidates did not understand pacing, simply identifying fast and slow moments. Stronger responses identified moments where they rehearsed at one pace and changed it purposefully for effect. Very few appreciated the impact of pace on dynamics. Some candidates interpreted pacing as structure, in which case marks could only be awarded where there were tangential references to pace. Only a minority were able to reflect upon changes in pacing in the preparation period and their impact on the final performance. Indeed, most reflective comments were quite simplistic. A minority of candidates wrote in the conditional tense; they spoke of what they 'would have' done, as if the piece had never been performed and remained a theoretical possibility.

Section B

Question 9

This question was very popular. Many candidates showed very good knowledge and understanding of the character of Judge Brack and produced some developed responses, although some only referred to the text and did not explain how the role would be performed from an actor's perspective. A few candidates focused on costume and appearance with a few vague references to demeanour and style of speech without tying their suggestions to any specific sections of the extract. Even when making such specific references, many candidates employed general comments in relation to application, which lacked understanding of how ideas are actually realised in performance.

Question 10

This question was another popular choice. Many candidates demonstrated secure knowledge of the themes of *Hedda Gabler* but quite a few veered towards more English Literature-based responses with analysis as opposed to application. Other candidates did not really understand what themes were, offering instead characterisations or events. Very few candidates were able to see themes as related to the given text as a whole, instead looking at themes through the lens of only one character, which made the theme itself appear somewhat shallow. As in other questions, candidates sometimes made generalised points or relied on retelling the *Hedda Gabler* story, without engaging with the need to show how a director could bring out the chosen themes.

Question 11

This was the least popular question in **Section B** and many candidates who attempted it found it challenging. Candidates struggled to address the present-day demand of the question, either ignoring it and describing their own stage design, irrespective of period demand, or simply describing a more modern setting with little

reference either to stage directions or the requirements of the text. Of course, a present-day production does not necessarily imply that the piece be updated to the present day. It simply means that it must take account of the needs and opportunities arising from producing the play in a modern theatre for a modern audience. A few candidates grasped this and came up with some highly imaginative and potentially effective ideas for set design.

Section C

Question 12

This was a popular question, but candidates found it quite difficult to reflect on their experience of preparing their devised piece in order to identify and explain what aspects could be improved and how an additional rehearsal period would help them to improve their performance. Many resorted to improving technical aspects, rather than evaluating the strength and weaknesses of the whole piece and coming up with a detailed and specific strategy for improvement. Somewhat indiscriminate suggestions about improvements were commonplace and some candidates simply produced pages of description, narrative and generic comment with no clear reference to performance and no clear focus on the question. Brief summaries of devised work are necessary but not at the expense of explicitly answering the question actually asked. This was equally true of other questions in **Section C**.

Question 13

Candidates generally made a good job of answering this question, but that was only the case if they had followed through a devising process that culminated in the staging of the piece for an audience. Acceptable ideas about staging included choosing a performance space, designing a set, using props, costumes, sound and lighting, as well as the movement of performers in the space, entrances, exits and transitions. To achieve higher marks candidates needed to evaluate how these aspects of staging suited and served their dramatic intentions and how they impacted on the audience.

Question 14

Candidates needed to focus on the two key requirements of the question – shortening the piece and making it more powerful. This was misinterpreted by many candidates. Although the scenario suggests that the devised piece would be shortened, the question only asked the candidate to justify how they would make their piece more powerful. Therefore, many responses did not mention cutting, selecting or rejecting ideas and, if they did, it was only in a reductive, generic way. Most made suggestions about how they would improve their work, with varying degrees of emphasis on making it more powerful.

DRAMA

Paper 0411/13
Written Examination

Key messages

- Candidates should read the questions carefully and ensure that they provide all that is required of a particular question. Equally, they should not use their time providing information that is not asked for in the question.
- Literary approaches to answering questions must be avoided. Where questions ask the candidate to provide advice on how a dramatic role should be performed, it is not enough to recount the story or to provide detail of the character's personality, attitudes and relationships without making clear how the character should be *heard* and *seen* on stage in order to convey those traits. The character does not have to be speaking – they may be reacting to the speech of others and this could be construed as non-verbal communication.
- In **Section A**, candidates should observe the number of marks available for each question. There has been improvement in that respect this year with students giving responses relevant in length to the number of marks available. Lengthy responses for 2 to 5 mark questions are not necessary and will result in less time to respond to the essay questions in **Sections B** and **C** which are worth 25 marks. Two sentences to answer a 2-mark question and up to 7 sentences to answer a 5-mark question should be regarded as a limit. The best responses are those that are well-considered and expressed succinctly – often in fewer sentences than the limit here indicated. Using bullet points to answer **Section A** questions is acceptable.
- Candidates need to consider carefully their choice of question in **Sections B** and **C**. Candidates are unlikely to perform well on a technical or design question if they do not have relevant understanding of the skills specified in the question, for example set design in this year's paper.
- In **Sections B** and **C** candidates should support their knowledge and understanding of dramatic concepts with *practical* examples of how these *ideas* can be *applied* in performance or detailed *evaluation* of the success and *effectiveness* of the piece, from conception through the developmental process and to performance. Purely narrative responses attract very few marks.
- Candidates who have engaged practically with their devised pieces to performance standard tend to show greater confidence with the questions in Section C.
- Centres should make sure pupils are clear on the difference between process/exploration and rehearsal through to performance. It is clearly sound policy for centres to advise pupils to make notes on the entire process.
- Candidates should be familiar with the dramatic and technical terms in current use. An extensive (but not exhaustive) glossary is provided in the syllabus to assist in the identification of key terms.

General comments

Candidates are generally showing greater knowledge of the technical aspects of performance with appropriate use of performing arts vocabulary. Fewer candidates are hampered by a lack of subject-specific knowledge, although it is not enough to reference this without giving precise explanation. For example, candidates may refer to 'body language', 'tone of voice' etc. as a means of showing how a character/role might be (or was) played but with no further description of what the actor might do in order to achieve the desired effect. Candidates should refer to particular points of action in the text or devised piece rather than making generalised comment.

The responses to the questions about the play extract displayed a wide range of ability although there were fewer candidates achieving marks in the lower mark bands than in previous years. It was clear in many instances that the recommendation that the text be performed, at least informally, had been heeded. As all the questions on the play extract were concerned with eliciting responses that demonstrated an

understanding of how to transfer 'from page to stage', candidates who had practical experience of *An Enemy of the People* were likely to be at a distinct advantage.

With the questions relating to devised work, while many candidates demonstrated the ability to link theory to practice, there was still a tendency to offer too much narrative content. There was a sense that, in some cases, practical work was insufficiently realised or inadequately developed. A few candidates appeared not to have completed all of the practical aspects of the syllabus and, in some cases there was evidence that they simply lacked an understanding of key dramatic ideas. As always, candidates who planned their time and strategy carefully produced confident responses with the strongest coming from those candidates who had explored ideas fully in performance. These were able to reflect critically on their own actual experience of creating drama – they were, in fact, able to write about the application of creative ideas and be able to evaluate their effectiveness in performance.

There was a marked improvement in the way candidates approached the discussion of technical issues and less evidence of inadequate understanding of costume, lighting, sound and set design in the theatre, all playing their part in the communication of dramatic meaning through sign and symbol.

In a few cases the quality of candidates' handwriting gave cause for concern. Candidates whose work is illegible are self-penalising, since credit cannot be awarded to ideas that cannot be deciphered.

A few candidates attempted to answer all the questions in **Sections B** and **C** and in such cases only the highest scoring answer in each Section could count towards the total mark. Centres are encouraged to advise candidates of the rubric requirements before they sit the examination.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This was mostly well answered with a variety of suggestions. Many responses were able to identify an aspect of the character, most including some reference to 'comic' or 'sarcastic', and then justify why this should be emphasised. Essay style responses were rare and many simply provided two clear, succinct bullet points but there were still some who used up half a page or more, going into great detail of character and delivery of lines.

Question 2

Many candidates answered successfully, taking their cue from the 'pump some guts' line. Most saw the possibilities of 'punching the air' or 'striding over'. Many were able to identify HOVSTAD's emotional state at that point and were able to direct it accordingly and offered the explanation as him being passionate or trying to convince DR STOCKMANN. Some candidates mistakenly discussed vocal quality or needed to be more precise in their response, for example, saying that they would use "gestures" without giving an indication of what the gesture was.

Question 3

There were many good responses, although a number of candidates looked at more than one pair of characters despite the instructions, normally DR STOCKMANN and PETER and MRS STOCKMANN. Some managed to also include PETRA in the general choreography of the scene. The requirement was to offer two reasons why the variation would be effective, rather than offer two examples of physical distance and a reason for each. Reasons were generally well articulated. Many students chose to discuss the relationship between DR and MRS STOCKMANN moving apart to express how distant they had become and how different their views were. In order to secure maximum marks, candidates also needed to identify 'where' in the extract the change would occur.

Question 4

The best responses recognised that the characters were engaged in a power struggle and considered how their relative status altered through the extract. The majority of candidates discussed the relationship between the two characters with advice and justification. Many answers to this question inferred examples of a 'power relationship', such as PETRA being angered by HOVSTAD; others discussed ways to communicate

power without direct reference and there were several responses that were able to discuss the relationship between PETRA and HOVSTAD without comment or recognition of the power aspect. Occasionally an element of narration crept in to some answers.

Question 5

Many candidates were able to write at length about the way in which an actor might portray ASLAKSEN's caution and were able to recognise different techniques that could communicate such characterisation with most using physical (hand gestures) and vocal (quiet, stuttering) to convey their view of the action. There was occasional confusion over what 'cautious' meant and some moved away from that element of the personality and started to focus on his anger and frustration.

Question 6

Candidates who identified an appropriate aspect of the relationship recognised the difference of opinions of DR STOCKMANN and HOVSTAD's approach to publishing the report were likely to achieve good marks. Many strong responses were able to make a point, give evidence from the extract and then explain. Many focused on the 'father/son' relationship and used this as an effective means of exploring the relationship between these two characters, although quite a number of candidates interpreted DR STOCKMANN and HOVSTAD as being close friends, which could lead to misplaced examples of how to bring out the significant aspects of the relationship.

Question 7

On the whole the term 'non-verbal communication' was understood. Candidates who discussed non-verbal communication in terms of placards, tableaux, physical theatre sequences or projections for example were often able to construct a more detailed response. Some candidates interpreted non-verbal to mean facial expressions or small gestures that would accompany verbal communication, and although this was credited, such focus did not offer candidates much to discuss, leading often to general answers. There were a number of students who turned to design elements, often including lighting and sound/music, to offer examples of non-verbal communication, or just described 'non-verbal' moments which ranged from facial expressions and movement to chair duets. Some felt that their piece did not contain any non-verbal communication and was full of 'talking' and therefore all communication was verbal. Most managed to 'paint a picture' of the scene being described.

Question 8

Many candidates did not read the question properly and discussed BOTH props AND costume. This limited the amount of marks that could be awarded as candidates split their time between the two. The discussion linked to costume often lacked creativity with the characters wearing all blacks, or school uniform, for example. There were also general comments relating to costumes rather than specific detail linking to moments within the devised piece of work. The term prop was also misunderstood with many students discussing doors, blocks, chairs, tables and staging as prop items. Marks could not be awarded unless students discussed their use of these items as props.

Section B

Question 9

This was the most popular of the questions with a large majority of candidates answering with moderate success. Candidates were able to pick out key moments from the extract and use their understanding of drama techniques to best bring out the character of PETER STOCKMANN through exploring his inter-relationship with a range of characters. There were some occasions where candidates wrote about the wrong character – DOCTOR STOCKMANN rather than PETER. On other occasions responses were overly narrative and focused more on the relationship PETER STOCKMANN has with other characters than on how the candidate would play the part as an actor. A number of candidates chose to include their costume choice for PETER STOCKMANN, and while this did add to the characterisation of the role, it rarely allowed candidates to make specific suggestions linked to the extract.

Question 10

This was the next most popular choice of question in Section B. Themes included power, morality, wealth, family disputes, corruption and loyalty. Candidates who fully understood the demands of this question did

very well. Many were able to identify the key themes of the text along with moments in the extract where these themes occurred with a wide range of suggestions as to how these themes may be brought out by a director. The most successful responses analysed performance – how the actors could be directed – AND setting – looking at staging, lighting, sound, and also, relevant costume and props. There were a number of ‘English Literature’ style responses, describing the themes and where these were evident in the script but with fewer answers going to on say how the candidate would, as a director, make the theme apparent in performance. Some candidates outlined the themes and these responses tended to be more narrative in style.

Question 11

This was the least popular question of **Section B**. Many of the candidates who did attempt this question did not take into account the requirement of the ‘present-day production’. Such responses were self-penalising. A number outlined their set design without referring to the stage directions at all or conversely, there were some responses that were little more than descriptions of the set as indicated in the stage directions.

Section C

Question 12

This was the most popular of the devising questions. Many successful responses looked at key decisions about setting and production as well as story, performance and structure. It was an open question allowing candidates to choose their route through the essay, picking out creative decisions that they could discuss in detail. This question encouraged students to evaluate rather than describe and many of the responses were clearly capable of doing this. Creative decisions referred to included structure, character choices, style of performance and developmental strategies. Quite a few candidates managed to offer detailed practical evaluation. There were a number of narrative responses that did not fulfil criteria for the higher levels, and some where candidates needed to evaluate their work more effectively. There was evidence of a number of students running out of time in this question and short responses struggled to meet the criteria for the higher marking bands.

Question 13

This was a popular question. Most candidates referred to structure as linear or non-linear, and also the strategies used to weave scenes together, such as transitions, flash-backs, tableaux etc. The best were able to use specific drama terminology to discuss their chosen structure. Many referred to Brecht as a practitioner and this allowed them to show a clear understanding of how an episodic structure could influence an audience. Exposition, rising action, climax and circular structures all featured strongly with some candidates showing an impressive understanding of these terms. Many answers were secure, offering some evaluative comments. Students who followed a linear structure sometimes struggled to avoid a narrative-style response albeit with instances of evaluation.

Question 14

This question was not as popular as the others, but when attempted, was tackled effectively by some. Those that did attempt this question were able to identify what was missing from their piece and how they could improve given more time. Candidates often referred to adding monologues, adding in projections and/or other technical aspects. Often candidates focused on changes they would make to the plot or focused on drama techniques and the impact on the audience. There was clear evaluative comment in these responses. In other responses, candidates explained what extra lines/moves/ sound effects/lighting displays they would add but did not say how this would improve the piece. Some other responses were short and lacked specific detail, again indicating candidates running out of time.

DRAMA

<p>Paper 0411/02 Coursework</p>

General comments

Administration

The administration for Paper 2 was generally well-handled by centres and the moderating panel reported relatively few errors in the completion of paperwork. The overwhelming majority of centres produced well-organised and complete packages of candidates' work for moderation, which enabled the process to run smoothly and without hindrance.

There were a few centres where Moderators reported administrative errors. The most common of these errors were:

- including only the ICMS forms for the candidates in the moderation sample whereas the forms are required for **all** candidates who are entered;
- not including a running order for the pieces on the DVD;
- not selecting a sample of six candidates but leaving the moderator to make the selection;
- selecting a sample that did not cover the mark range evenly;
- writing the same, or similar comments, on all of the ICMS forms **or** writing comments that simply reproduced the assessment criteria in the syllabus;
- inaccurate addition of marks on the ICMS forms **or** wrong transcription of marks from the ICMS forms onto form MS1.

Recordings

Most centres presented their candidates in a line up before the start of the piece, with each performer dressed in costume, and announcing clearly their name and candidate number. Moderators were appreciative of those centres who supplemented this by including photographs of candidates in costume and in some cases descriptions of clothes and other appropriate features on the ICMS sheets.

There were several instances where candidates did not introduce themselves in costume to camera, or where names were mumbled as the camera moved at high-speed along the line-up. This made it difficult for moderators to hear what had been said and required considerable additional time to work out the identity of each candidate. The situation was exacerbated in cases where the Centre had also omitted to include a running order for the DVD.

The quality of the video recordings was variable. A number of centres submitted material that was unfit for purpose, either because the format was not playable or because the sound or image quality was poor. Some centres produced recordings shot at unusual angles, or which contained camerawork that frequently zoomed in and out, thus producing an unrepresentative record of the performances. Some pieces were performed in low lighting conditions, which might have been effective in live performance but which did not translate well when filmed.

The most common issues with recordings of performances were as follows:

- files saved in a format not commonly used in the UK;
- recordings that contained image but no sound;
- poor audio quality, including background noise or just 'distant' voices;
- odd positioning of camera so that the viewer was left looking up or down on the performance;
- zooming in and out or panning, which gave a filmic quality to the recording and also made it difficult to get a sense of how the piece was staged;

- recordings that had been edited and which gave an unrepresentative picture of the original stage performance.

Assessment of practical work

The majority of assessments completed by teachers were accurate and consistent and therefore required no adjustment to marks. Where this was not the case, the following were the most frequent causes of scaling adjustments to centres' marks.

Assessment Objective 1

The most common reason for moderation adjustments was a misunderstanding of the nature of the role, as evidenced by the approach taken to the performance itself. This was often apparent where candidates had taken a one-dimensional approach to a role, or where defining features such as the age or accent or a character had proven to be an insuperable hurdle.

Assessment Objective 2

The most common reason for moderation adjustments was where a candidate's commitment to the process had been confused with the quality of their dramatic contribution. This assessment objective applies only to the original devised piece and there were many candidates who produced undeveloped roles that had been credited with high marks.

Assessment Objective 3

This assessment objective was the most frequently over-marked. The most common reason for this was where unrefined performance skills had been overlooked because of the candidate's emotional commitment to the performance. Whilst this sometimes produced emotionally truthful performances, it was more often the case that volume, physical presence, or loud speaking were being used to cover up a lack in performance technique.

Extracts from plays

Moderators reported that the choice of text was the single most important decision in helping candidates achieve an effective performance to showcase their performance skills. Centres are therefore reminded of the need to guide their candidates' choice so as to avoid them struggling needlessly with the social, historical or cultural contexts of the play's original settings, or even its characters, language or values. While the internet is a rich source of no-cost scripts, these may or may not be appropriate for the given candidates and their environment.

Moderators were pleased to report an eclectic mix of play texts as source material from which extracts had been taken. Characters were regularly developed from text and there were many effective interactions that made for compelling watching. It was gratifying to see candidates tackling roles effectively that stemmed from another time, place or culture: it was indeed a joy to see a challenge well met. It was almost always the case that 'the better the writing, the better the performance'. Similarly, age appropriateness gave candidates material that they could engage with.

Monologues varied considerably in length and the best ones were well within the length allowed; longer monologues often resulted in a weaker performance. Equally, some monologues were very short indeed and allowed little scope to demonstrate a range of skills. Static monologues performed whilst seated tended to limit a candidate's opportunity of displaying a range of skills.

There were cases where the vocal and physical skills evidenced did not bear out the mark awarded. Confidence in their own ability was often rewarded rather than ability, as were loud, excitable performances that tended not to develop. That said, there were few examples of candidates who were totally unprepared for the assessment process. Comedy was difficult for most candidates to handle on stage and only a few managed the challenging art of balancing verbal and physical, situational and observational humour in an effective way.

While elaborate costume and set are not essential, those candidates who went to the effort of creating an appropriate background and dressed themselves in relevant costumes tended to increase their sense of ownership of the text.

Devised pieces

Notwithstanding some very notable exceptions, devised work was often weaker with some candidates clearly uncomfortable without the safety of a script. Several groups had clearly struggled to create believable naturalistic dialogue and produced work that looked and sounded similar to a poorly-written screenplay, with thinly drawn characters and little sense of either story or direction.

Where devising was successfully accomplished, there was some strong work that included the use of physicality, movement, credible mime, choral speech, a variety of levels, purposeful use of proxemics, sometimes multi-rolling, more abstract approaches and all done with minimal entrances and exits.

It was pleasing to see that many candidates were prepared to explore difficult topics through their work, which showed a real maturity in performance.

Occasionally dramatic lighting and/or music was an effective support of the creativity onstage; sometimes it was a hindrance. Too many blackouts or almost completely dark scenes in a piece were invariably counter-productive and did not make for ease of moderation. The use of multi-media was sometimes effective in supporting a social or political message.

Whatever the style, the ingredients that went into the creation of a successful piece invariably consisted of a sense of camaraderie, mutual support and respect within the ensemble, which was in due course conveyed to the audience, and which enabled more effective, flowing performances to emerge.

Examples of Repertoire – 2019

Edward Albee	<i>Three Tall Women</i>
	<i>Zoo Story</i>
	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>
Davey Anderson	<i>Blackout</i>
Jean Anouih	<i>Antigone</i>
Alan Ayckbourn	<i>Between Mouthfuls</i>
	<i>Confusions</i>
	<i>Invisible Friends</i>
	<i>Snakes in the Grass</i>
Patrick Barlow	<i>The 39 Steps</i>
Richard Bean	<i>One Man, Two Guvnors</i>
Steven Berkoff	<i>Metamorphosis</i>
	<i>The Trial</i>
Edward Bond	<i>The Sea</i>
Andrew Bovell	<i>Things I Know to be True</i>
Bertolt Brecht	<i>Happy End</i>
	<i>The Life of Galileo</i>
Richard Cameron	<i>Can't Stand up for Falling Down</i>

David Campton	<i>The Cagebirds</i>
Pamela Carter	<i>What we Know</i>
Jim Cartwright	<i>Road</i>
	<i>The Mobile Phone Show</i>
	<i>Two</i>
Anton Chekhov	<i>The Cherry Orchard</i>
Caryl Churchill	<i>Top Girls</i>
	<i>Ding Dong the Wicked</i>
Noel Coward	<i>Blithe Spirit</i>
Sarah Daniels	<i>Taking Breath</i>
	<i>The Gut Girls</i>
Shelagh Delaney	<i>A Taste of Honey</i>
Richard Dresser	<i>Bed and Breakfast</i>
Carol Ann Duffy	<i>Grimm Tales</i>
Christopher Durang	<i>Baby with the Bathwater</i>
Lisa Evans	<i>Once we were Mothers</i>
Euripides	<i>Medea</i>
Tim Firth	<i>Neville's Island</i>
Dario Fo	<i>Accidental Death of an Anarchist</i>
	<i>The Virtuous Burglar</i>
David Foley	<i>Cressida Among Greeks</i>
Athol Fugard	<i>My Children, My Africa</i>
John Godber	<i>Bouncers</i>
	<i>Shakers</i>
	<i>Teechers</i>
Nikolai Gogol	<i>The Marriage</i>
D W Gregory	<i>Radium Girls</i>
David Greig	<i>Yellow Moon</i>
Tanika Gupta	<i>Inside Out</i>
Albert Hackett	<i>The Play of the Diary of Anne Frank</i>
Willis Hall	<i>The Long and the Short and the Tall</i>

James Hanson	<i>A Castle Broken Apart</i>
David Hare	<i>Skylight</i>
Henrik Ibsen	<i>A Doll's House</i>
	<i>Hedda Gabler</i>
Charlotte Keatley	<i>My Mother Said I Never Should</i>
Dennis Kelly	<i>DNA</i>
Paul King	<i>The Disappeared</i>
Tony Kushner	<i>Angels in America</i>
Bryony Lavery	<i>The Believers</i>
	<i>More Light</i>
	<i>Stockholm</i>
Federico Garcia Lorca	<i>Blood Wedding</i>
Sharman MacDonald	<i>After Juliet</i>
David Mamet	<i>Oleanna</i>
Lisa McGee	<i>Girls and Dolls</i>
Frank McGuinness	<i>Someone who'll watch over me</i>
Arthur Miller	<i>Death of a Salesman</i>
	<i>The Crucible</i>
Abi Morgan	<i>Love song</i>
Chris O'Connell	<i>Car</i>
Joe Penhall	<i>Love and Understanding</i>
John Pielmeier	<i>Agnes of God</i>
Harold Pinter	<i>A Slight Ache</i>
	<i>The Caretaker</i>
	<i>The Lover</i>
	<i>Mountain Language</i>
Evan Placey	<i>Girls Like That</i>
J B Priestly	<i>An Inspector Calls</i>
Yasmina Reza	<i>Art</i>
Alan Rickman	<i>My Name is Rachel Corrie</i>

Willy Russell	<i>Blood Brothers</i>
	<i>Educating Rita</i>
	<i>Our Day Out</i>
Diane Samuels	<i>Kinder Transport</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
	<i>Hamlet</i>
	<i>Julius Caesar</i>
	<i>Macbeth</i>
	<i>Richard III</i>
	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
	<i>The Tempest</i>
Peter Shaffer	<i>Amadeus</i>
Neil Simon	<i>Barefoot in the park</i>
	<i>The Dinner Party</i>
	<i>The Odd Couple</i>
	<i>Plaza Suite</i>
Sophocles	<i>Electra</i>
Wole Soyinka	<i>The Lion and the Jewel</i>
Simon Stephens	<i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time</i>
Shelagh Stephenson	<i>Five Kinds of Silence</i>
	<i>The Memory of Water</i>
Sophie Treadwell	<i>Machinal</i>
Sandy Toksvig	<i>Bully Boy</i>
Laura Wade	<i>Breathing Corpses</i>
	<i>Colder than Here</i>
Enda Walsh	<i>Chatroom</i>
Timberlake Wertenbaker	<i>Our Country's Good</i>
	<i>The Ash Girl</i>
Mark Wheeler	<i>Missing Dan Nolan</i>
Oscar Wilde	<i>An Ideal Husband</i>
	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>

Thornton Wilder	<i>Our Town</i>
Tennessee Williams	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>
	<i>The Glass Menagerie</i>
August Wilson	<i>Fences</i>
Brian Woolland	<i>The Flesh is mine</i>
Olwen Wymark	<i>Find Me</i>