International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

THEATRE

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 22	23 - 36	37 - 50	51 - 62	63 - 75	76 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 9	10 - 18	19 - 29	30 - 42	43 - 56	57 - 69	70 - 100

Independent Project Portfolio

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 13	14 – 19	20 - 26	27 - 32	33 - 39	40 - 50

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 – 14	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 40

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The best work at HL and SL demonstrated that candidates had been given the opportunity to pursue an independently chosen task, stretching them considerably as individuals and as theatre practitioners. Less successful work often gave the impression that candidates had

been assigned a particular task with no real independent choice and sometimes little interest for the project. For some of the SL projects there appeared to be a desperate scramble to find something to do, and often, in support of an HL candidate. However, a sense of independence and self-determination was interlaced within the most successful portfolios.

The range of project areas was reasonable with many candidates predictably choosing either acting or directing. However, there was outstanding evidence of all three options (HL options A & B, and SL) from almost every area of theatre. At HL, far more candidates chose option A than B; in some instances there was confusion as to the differences between the two HL options. Teachers and candidates must understand that every area of theatre has the potential to work effectively for all three options. It was clear that successful work stemmed from a solid understanding of the demands of the project and specifically the particular option chosen.

Unfortunately, a number of candidates selected inappropriate projects and therefore did not meet the basic requirements of the task: in such instances all criteria were affected. At HL the most frequent and in fact damaging example was a lack of theoretical underpinning. Some form of theatrical research must underpin every project at HL. Supportive research (cultural, historical, sociological etc.) may certainly contribute to the project and its development but should not represent the only research. Too often, when present, the theoretical underpinning was superficial, undeveloped and not necessarily relevant to the development of the project. Further inability to meet the requirements was related to the particular options: where for example in the case of option A, the performance did not reach the point of actualization, and in the case of option B where projects did not represent a genuine practical study of theory/practice. At SL some candidates chose inappropriate projects in that there was no clear intent to increase knowledge and understanding in a specific area of theatre. Other candidates did not choose an area of theatre as the focus of the project (choosing instead, for example, film or poster design). In addition, some portfolios were not practical in nature, but instead a collection of information gathered together as a sort of research project. By contrast, though a theoretical underpinning was not a requirement of the project at SL, many students did opt to research their chosen role/area. These students were not only rewarded under criterion A for initiative, but examiners commented on the augmented knowledge base for the particular area, which frequently improved the quality of skill development, learning and development under reflection and the quality of sources. An equally damaging mistake at both HL and SL, though evident in considerably fewer portfolios, was an account of the work completed during the course rather than a portfolio based on an independent project.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A - Preparation

This criterion pertains to evidence of independent work: of what was actually done by the candidate before and during the course of the project. Evidence was presented in the form of research, notes, interviews, improvisations, workshops, planning, setting objectives, mind maps, drawings, text analysis, shaping material, negotiating, making changes etc. Some of the most effective evidence in this area was visual. An impressive number of candidates had no difficulty in demonstrating evidence of independent work despite working with others, in fact, this tended to represent the very best practice in schools. For "initiative" examiners looked for the ability to go beyond the predictable to explore areas that are relevant and illuminating and for "perseverance" the ability to work systematically and thoroughly. Evidence of independent work had to be contained within the portfolio and needed to be more substantial than the candidate merely mentioning he/she had showed initiative and perseverance. Within this criterion examiners were also determining the relevance of choices made in terms of independent work: for example, how relevant were the things done or choices made before and during the course of the project? So for example, the relevance of viewing *The Godfather* 22 times in preparation for the project might be considered. This differs from "relevant material" under Criterion D.

The strongest candidates provided clear introductions, with an overview of intentions, and systematic goals, establishing with clarity the necessary steps in meeting them. These candidates demonstrated evidence of initiative and perseverance throughout the project and as a result, a sense of independence was reflected throughout the portfolio.

Criterion B - Process

This criterion pertains to evidence of understanding production elements, theatre practices, as well as skill development and an understanding of the chosen area. Productions elements demonstrated in portfolios included: lighting, sound, costume, set, focus, space, rhythm, tension, ensemble, movement, voice, audience relationship etc., and theatre practices included a range of traditions, genres, movements, forms and styles. Evidence of skills acquired needed to be present within the portfolio; it was not enough for the candidate simply to indicate that a particular skill had been developed. To assess this, examiners were looking for how skills were applied practically. At HL understanding the demands of the chosen area was specific to option A or B and the requirements of the particular option. In addition, at HL, any project that did not have a theoretical underpinning failed to demonstrate a full understanding of the chosen area. At SL, any project that did not increase knowledge and skills in a specific area of theatre failed to demonstrate a full understanding of the chosen area.

The strongest candidates demonstrated understanding and skill development within the context of practice. They researched and experimented with the chosen area and applied such learning to something practical; in these instances, inventiveness and a perceptive understanding of the chosen area or role enlivened the portfolio. In the projects where candidates did not understand their area or role, the evidence seemed to suggest that this occurred from not having done any research (practical or otherwise). So for instance: what skill and knowledge base would a candidate need to have in order to take on the role of a costume designer? Understanding this approach was the basis of initiating a role for the independent project. Many candidates neglected this and failed to make explicit how they acquired skills and applied them practically. Candidates need to ensure the independent project is more than the opportunity to put on a production or the gathering of information about a particular area, but rather a context in which to explore and develop skills in a particular area of theatre. This concept is at the very foundation of the component "Theatre in the making" and it was obvious to examiners the schools that had instilled this type of learning throughout the course, as the candidates excelled in demonstrating such evidence.

Criterion C - Reflection

This criterion pertains to evidence of learning and development throughout the portfolio as well as sustained reflection on the project. In addition, it was important for candidates to reflect on the project and its place in the course as a whole. Evidence of this was found either in connections to learning or experiences from the course that may have inspired the project or could also be found in the candidate's approach to the project. Candidates that acknowledged the type of learning that took place from the course (the components: Theatre in the making, Theatre in performance and Theatre in the world) and applied such learning to structuring the project also met this aspect of the criterion. This does not mean that candidates need to include numerous journal entries or course descriptions in order to make connections to the core syllabus, but should provide the reader with how their explorations in theatre have influenced the project. This connection does not need to be in great detail or length but must be addressed.

The strongest candidates were able to relate projects to previous work, experiences, understanding, etc. and then make connections to the learning and development that took place throughout the project. However, in too many portfolios reflection was centred on purely emotional or descriptive accounts of the project rather than a more analytical or evaluative consideration of the learning and development during the process. Weaker candidates tended to focus primarily on feelings and often in a superficial manner. The candidates that approached reflection from the standpoint of their own development without any regard for those they had worked with, the ensemble or the audience, tended to produce limited evidence for this criterion. The candidates that chose to limit all reflection to one final section

in the portfolio, often failed to show adequate evidence as the section often read as a final summary or a cursory interpretation of the audience's reaction.

Criterion D - Presentation

This criterion pertains to an appropriate register in terms of subject matter and format. Appropriate subject matter should have been related to the development of an independent project, specifically the dynamic stages of a creative process: preparation, action and reflection. Other subject matter was not appropriate. Candidates generally had very little difficulty in constructing portfolios appropriate to the subject matter.

An appropriate format included: a table of contents, an introduction, clearly marked sections and a conclusion. The ability to meet the requirements of the format seemed to be indicative of the importance instilled by the school, as quite often all candidates from a particular school had met the appropriate format or had failed to.

For this criterion "relevant material" refers to the relevance of the materials chosen to be included in the portfolio (for example the relevance of including a programme from a play, an entire script, ticket stubs, photos etc.). Generally speaking the choice of materials submitted was relevant to the project, though in some instances, candidates included materials that showed minimal significance to the narrative or intentions of the portfolio. In addition, some candidates chose to include details of other assessment tasks. Details of the RI, PPP and TPPP should not be included in the portfolio; nor is it appropriate to use the same material or stimulus in more than one assessment task. These issues highlighted the need for candidates to select, edit, and organize what is relevant to demonstrating the development of the independent project.

Portfolios needed to be sourced in some manner, which means there had to be some outside influences that contributed to the development of the project (reading, experiences, research, class work, productions, workshops, music, art, texts etc.) and these sources had to be properly attributed either within the narrative of the portfolio or in the form of footnotes, endnotes or a bibliography. This aspect of the criterion requires more attention as some candidates failed to include any sources in the development of the project. Where sources were used to influence the project, examiners commented on the need for more rigour when attributing all types of sources (books, articles, quotations from peers, teachers, practitioners etc.). In the best portfolios an inventive range of sources was used and attributed properly.

The word count limit is 3000 words at HL and 2000 at SL; therefore, it was within examiner discretion to penalize for going over the word limit (which meant that a candidate could not get more than a 4 for this criterion). There was no penalty for submitting work under the word limit, though some candidates did so by a considerable margin, which ultimately was self-penalising in other criteria. All external references (textual, published interviews, articles etc.)

do not count towards the word count. All materials produced by the candidate (past writing, journal entries, quotations from class etc.) do count towards the word count.

Candidates needed to use visuals more consistently and effectively. Those that used visuals as evidence within the portfolio often succeeded in demonstrating initiative, skill development and further understanding. Considering the visual nature of areas of the syllabus, it was surprising that visuals were not used more consistently and effectively. Candidates needed to attribute more consistently all types of visuals (including personal photos, diagrams, mind maps etc.).

Appendices were used more frequently than were actually needed, and too often incorrectly. Appendices should not introduce new topics but rather extend upon points already made, they may form a supportive role, but the portfolio should not be dependent upon them. Appendices do not count towards the word count. There was no reason for visuals or quotes from outside sources to be placed in the appendix as these did not count towards the word count and in almost all cases would have more effectively contributed to the portfolio if part of the main narrative.

Criterion E – Application of Research and Practice (HL only)
This criterion pertains to an ability to integrate and apply research to the development of the project and whether such research was relevant to understanding the development of the project. For "integrate" examiners looked for evidence of a cognitive process of combining information, experiences or understanding and for "apply" evidence of its specific practical application to the development of the project. There needed to be evidence of the relevancy contained within the portfolio; it was not enough for the candidate simply to state that the research was relevant.

Candidates who failed to initiate the project with a theoretical underpinning and/or neglected to use sources of any kind had difficulty achieving marks under this criterion. However, when research was the foundation for setting objectives, choosing and shaping material, the evidence of integration, application and relevance was apparent. Many candidates did, in fact, do some sort of research, but failed then to apply it to the project. These students were rewarded under criterion A for showing initiative, but failed to receive credit under criterion E.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

• Ensure that the independent project is introduced early on in the course and as one of the course components.

• Candidates should experience a variety of methods of recording practical work in the journal. This concept also extends into the area of research. If candidates have experienced

research and its application to practical work during a range of projects throughout the course, then these skills will have developed sufficiently for the independent project.

• Details of other assessment tasks should not be found within the portfolio. However the type of learning and skills developed in each certainly has a place in the approach to the independent project. Finally, it cannot be stressed more emphatically, the importance of allocating a suitable amount of time in the latter stages of the course for the independent project.

• It would benefit candidates to have more experience in pursuing and applying dramaturgical research during the course, as well as how to annotate such research, in anticipation of the portfolio.

• Candidates should be encouraged, for their projects, to explore theories and practices that are independent interests rather than areas already studied during the course.

• Candidates need more experience with approaches to devising original theatre and more awareness of the range of possible projects. Many projects for example were focused on staging an existing play text, an acceptable but narrow choice given the content of the new syllabus. Moreover, at times it was somewhat questionable whether a candidate taking a role within, for instance, the annual school musical theatre production, directed in all respects by a member of staff, could be said to be engaged in a project that was truly "independent". Such projects contrasted significantly with others where the independence of the candidate was at the forefront in all respects, from selection and conception through to realization and reflection.

• The organisation and structure of the portfolio should be carefully considered, in particular the choice to divide the portfolio into three sections labelled: "Preparation" "Process" and "Reflection". There is no requirement to structure the portfolio in this way and portfolios presented in this manner often had difficulty demonstrating learning and development throughout the portfolio since reflection tended to be in a separate section. In addition, reflection placed only in a final section tended quite often to read as a final summary to the project or course. Similarly, HL portfolios sectioned in this way tended not to demonstrate an ability to integrate and apply research in the development of the project, since research was often included in the "Preparation" section at the beginning of the portfolio. The format indicates that clearly marked sections are required; however, it is recommended that the candidate determine the section titles based on whatever is appropriate to his/her individual portfolio.

Further comments

Teachers must be familiar with the assessment criteria in order to assess their students' work and should allocate marks according to the content of the portfolio only. In many cases the teacher moderated either the student or the actual project rather than the portfolio. Teachers should not make annotations throughout the portfolio and should relate comments on the cover sheet to the wording in the assessment criteria. Comments pertaining to the student or the project are not helpful in the moderation process. Teachers must ensure that the cover sheet is accurately completed. Teachers and students must sign the cover sheet and teachers are responsible for ensuring that all information is accurate (specifically the word count and whether the portfolio represents the student's own work). Every page must have the student's name and candidate number and pages should be bound together securely. Individual plastic covers should not be used on every page as examiners are expected to comment throughout and this makes the task very difficult and unnecessarily time consuming.

Practical Performance Proposal

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 – 4	5 - 8	9 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 19	20 - 25

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 1	2 – 2	3 - 4	5 – 8	9 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 25

The Practical Performance Proposal, at both HL and SL, was represented by a wide scope of work ranging from highly detailed proposals of imaginative pieces of theatre. These were developed from the stimulus, with a clear performance concept and thoughtfully considered artistic choices in all production and performance elements. We also saw the presentation of some general ideas of an intended theatre piece illustrated by some unrelated, un-annotated computer downloads with little discernible relevance to the proposal. In HL proposals, the Section 3 commentaries either offered evidence of another subtle layer of theatrical understanding involving research and praxis, or did little to show how research/theory led to 'practical effects' or to rationalize a conceptual approach to a piece of theatre.

At both HL and SL, the stimuli most often chosen by students were the Calvin and Hobbes cartoon followed by 'I Giorni', the Dylan Thomas poem and finally the Theosophical maps and finally the Indonesian Folk tale. At both levels, each stimulus produced work that fell across all the mark boundaries. Teachers must ensure that the student choose only **one** of the IB set stimuli**,** as instructed in the Subject guide (SG), and work on this **independently for a four week period.**

With regard to formal requirements, it must be stressed that students are not permitted to submit the same material for more than one assessment task. It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that all requisite detail on the cover sheet is accurate and that the work meets the specific requirements of the assessment task. There were occasions when no cover sheet was present or the information, such as word count, was clearly inaccurate. The instructions on sectioning of the work, as advised in the guide, were not followed at times or hard copies of the written sections were not attached. On the practical side, work was often not securely bound and each sheet did not contain the student's name and number thus making it difficult to identify separate pieces of work that had become unattached.

The areas of the programme which appeared difficult for candidates

The biggest difficulty, apparent at both levels, proved to be a lack of understanding of the task and how the component parts of this task could be developed to offer a coherent vision of a performance. Often, in poorer examples, students would simply describe a series of disjointed, unrelated ideas of a performance with little detail offered as evidence of understanding of the process or any justification of artistic choices. At HL, a weak commentary would often simply re-iterate what had already been said in the pitch. Some proposals would offer ideas and develop areas of work that were of particular interest to the student, e.g. costume designs, and thus present an imbalanced proposal with either no examples of onstage action or evidence of an holistic production vision. This type of proposal clearly fell into the lower middle mark bands.

Some students, at both levels, were inspired to use published scripts. These proposals did not do well unless they exhibited clear imaginative engagement in the staging and a link between stimulus and the script thus showing "a genuine response to the stimulus and its potential for dramatic interpretation in performance" as stated in the guide. This link to stimulus as described in the criteria was often overlooked in proposals thus limiting the mark attainable to band 3. The content of the HL commentaries proved of particular difficulty as in many proposals the Section 3 simply re-iterated what had been described in Section 1 and 2 without offering evidence of an understanding of 'practical effects' of any of the four stated

areas i.e. examples in the proposal of how theory/research led to a practical outcome in their proposed performance.

The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill

The levels of knowledge, understanding and skills tended to vary from school to school. The stronger proposals showed a clear understanding of the 'mise-en-scene' process and closely linked the sections of the work to display this. In these cases, each section added a new level of complexity to the proposal offering clear evidence of understanding. These proposals also often displayed practical knowledge of skills on the production side which clearly stemmed from the school program experiences. At HL, the Section 3 commentary, when well done, offered insight into a performance paradigm AND how this concept had been practically and coherently interpreted onstage. The weaker proposals, which often generally described a product, tended to be superficial in content and in the use of technical language suggesting limited practical exposure to the 'mise-en-scene' process. The commentaries of the weaker HL proposals, in particular, did not go beyond a predictable mention of a theory/theorist with no attempt to show how this contributed to a practical realization, if indeed that.

Strengths and weaknesses in the treatment of individual questions

In the more accomplished proposals all sections contributed to an overall vision as developed by a director with an awareness of the theatrical process. Sometimes a performance concept was clear and coherently applied; on other occasions a concept was introduced and partially applied e.g. to scenographic choices, and sometimes it was clear that the student did not understand the concept of a concept! However, when this lack of understanding did not inhibit the coherent justification of artistic choices the student was credited for this positive aspect of the work. Another area of weakness, already mentioned but in need of re-iteration, was that of the imbalanced proposal which dealt concisely with the production elements but failed to convey any vision of onstage action or vice versa.

Section 1 pitches varied greatly in quality at both levels. The better examples offered an enticing and exciting vision of a piece of theatre which took place in a particular space, had been thought through and was aimed directly at a specific audience. These images had life, energy and exhibited a clear understanding of the dramatic impact of theatre. Often the pitches raised questions and, in the better examples, these were responded to and developed in the following sections of work. On other occasions, the Section 1 pitch consisted of a general overview of a rough, vague performance idea rather than a justified vision of a performance where areas such as concept, action, space, and audience intent had been considered and presented in a dynamic manner. In these cases, any questions which

stemmed from the pitch were left unanswered in the other supporting sections of the work. The word count of the pitch was often ignored which sometimes meant an incoherent end to the pitch with the reader limited to 250 words.

Section 2 of the proposals proved to have a large discrepancy in quality of work, again seemingly dependent on the approach of the school. The stronger proposals expanded and developed the ideas initiated in the pitch. Then, with carefully considered use of visuals (a mixture of sketches, collages, flowcharts and internet downloads - all attributed and annotated) and short written passages, the student conveyed a deeper understanding of the process of artistic choice. The best examples contained finely selected material which gradually filled out and offered an explanation of a vision of performance and insight into how inspirations from the stimulus had become onstage realities. The better proposals also clearly showed and explained how combinations of the production elements and onstage action could be used to achieve dramatic effects

Section 2 work at the other end of the spectrum often consisted of a couple of downloaded internet images which suggested some idea of an inspiration but was largely undeveloped and offered no indication of understanding of the 'mise-en-scene' process or of the intricacies of the production elements.

The Section 2 proposals which fell into the middle bands did so for several reasons. The most common omission which limited the mark potential of the work was a lack of evidence of a 'genuine response to the stimulus and its potential for dramatic interpretation in performance". This aspect of the proposal could appear in any section but was most often found in the opening part of Section 2. A lack of annotations on visuals sometimes left the purpose of included illustrations unclear and seemed based on assumptions which were difficult for the examiner to discern or understand.

The HL Section 3 commentary was the part of the proposal that most students had difficulty with. On the stronger side, those commentaries, which showed clear research into the theories of a practitioner or practice, then integrated this into the entire proposal process and supported these considerations with clear practical examples of how the theory had been used in the performance, scored well. So also did those students who used either historical or cultural supporting research and clearly integrated and applied this information into practical choices in their performance to create effects. Those proposals which generally referred to theory or research, with no direct explanation of 'practical **effects',** did not score well in the criteria.   The students who discussed the intended impacts and resonances of their performance often did so without really explaining how they intended to make those impacts/resonances possible through their practical artistic choices.

There was also a great tendency for Section 3 commentaries to present material which was more appropriate for Section 2. These included justifications for specific artistic choices e.g. costume colour rather than explaining why and how a particular piece of research/theory had contributed to a broad concept for production and then supported this approach with practical examples.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

• The Practical Performance Proposal is a real and relevant theatre competence and so should be clearly taught, learned and rehearsed in class.

• The teacher must understand the task description and the marking criteria and share these with students so that the requirements of the task can be met. It is highly recommended that teachers attend workshop which offer the opportunity to 'unpick' the syllabus and, through sharing with other teachers, gain a deeper insight into the assessment tasks.

• Students, during Theatre in the Making, should have the opportunity to learn through experience the basics in performance (action/characterisation/voice/body/ rehearsals/etc), production elements (design/realisation), and, indeed, each stage in the entire mise-en-scene process. This skill and knowledge should then be applied, practised and recorded as growth in the Journal during Theatre in Performance sessions. This process of practical reflection as part of the program supports the process of theatre growth.

• Skills specific to the task should also be integrated into regular class work. The writing of pitches for proposals should be experienced as class activity as well as an opportunity to gain familiarity with brainstorming and other creative thinking techniques as a step in developing an original piece of theatre from different types of stimuli.

• Experience in the creation of an overall vision of a performance (a concept) and how the director can coherently use the different elements of production to produce desired effects needs to be an integral part of a core curriculum.

• Specifically, for this component, the HL student must have class activity experience in research and exploration into areas which can then be applied to construct practical effects in a piece of theatre.

Research Investigation

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 14	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 40

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 – 9	10 - 12	13 - 16	17 - 19	20 - 30

The areas of the programme in which the candidates appeared well prepared. Levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

Candidates generally engaged with a world theatre practice and were able to apply this to a play/piece of theatre from that practice, showing a widely diverse range of skills. The best were able to select a topic for research that engaged them fully and offered opportunities for them to explore and apply a theatre practice with care and insight. Students who clearly understood the task were able to provide focused research, set up a formal essay to answer the question, properly source their observations cross-referencing in order to provide illuminating discussion by realising that the answer to their research question was often multi-faceted. Students who consulted a range of sources were able to identify and discuss what are often subtle differences in the various elements of a theatre practice. The best Research Investigations focused on a narrow aspect of a play/piece of theatre and demonstrated powerfully that this component can provide students with a stimulating task which will lead them to research in depth an area of World Theatre which is unfamiliar. Writing skills that incorporated organized thinking and structured investigative thought were a pleasure to read.

Areas of the programme which proved difficult for candidates

The area which proved most difficult for candidates was the setting up of the task, the development of a question and the attribution of sources. It is essential that a lot of attention and care is given to setting up the Research Investigation and meeting the requirements. Candidates need to be adequately prepared and need to be given time to:

- choose a theatre practice and piece of theatre/play from that practice
- choose an aspect of the play/piece of theatre and of the theatre practice
- formulate a research question that will allow them to apply the practice to the play/piece of theatre

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

These three areas determine the focus of the Research Investigation which is a key element in fulfilling the requirements of the task. A clear, narrow focus which is established by the question is essential. The question guides the focus and scope of the Research Investigation. Many candidates chose a question that was too broad and which did not help the candidate to focus and provide information that was dramaturgically relevant and useful. With a prescribed word limit and quite often a wide range of sources, it is often challenging to know what is relevant and what should be included. The question should act as a filter that helps the candidate to make these decisions. Students at Standard Level, in particular, with a lower word limit should pay attention to developing a clearly focused question.

Students encountered problems with questions which focused on broad aspects such as 'How would a director/designer/performer present a traditional production/design/performance of…' These sorts of questions were too broad and did not give students the opportunity to engage fully with the practice. The specific aspect which a candidate is required to select does not refer to general production roles (directing, designing, performing) as these are very broad areas and not particular aspects of a play/piece of theatre. It also does not mean a section or excerpt of the play/piece of theatre.

The strengths and weaknesses of candidates in the treatment of individual areas

Criterion A - Research Skills

The attribution of sources is still an area that is not clear to some candidates. **Every** observation that is made regarding the practice should be attributed using an established academic format (footnotes, endnotes, brackets etc). The source of the ideas, observations, elements of practice etc should be clear to the reader. This also includes all visuals used as it was often unclear where the visual/illustration was from. It is not sufficient to provide a bibliography and assume that this satisfies attribution of sources. Some candidates referred to only one source in the essay despite having an extensive bibliography. Candidates should also clearly illustrate that they have consulted a range of sources *in the body of the work*, as it is good practice to cross reference and check information about the practice before it is presented as fact. Stating facts alone is not enough, as part of this criterion is about discussion of the findings.

Criterion B - Task Relevance

The task is an exercise in applied research and candidates sometimes found it difficult to apply the research into the practice to the particular play/piece of theatre. The play/piece of

theatre should be from the theatre practice selected otherwise the task becomes focused on how to adapt a play/piece of theatre in to fulfil the conventions of the practice. The focus then becomes *adaptation* rather than *application*.

In some cases candidates did not choose a recognised practice and struggled to find adequate sources. In some instances candidates simply described productions and identified aspects of the practice through an exploration of these productions. This is not the purpose of the task and ended up being based on assumption rather than research.

Some essays simply provided a descriptive blow by blow account of how a play/piece of theatre would be staged using the conventions of a particular practice. The candidate needs to select what is relevant for a particular aspect and discuss this aspect in light of the research as opposed to simply describing. The essays ended up sounding like 'guide book' entries addressed to a cultural tourist rather than to informed theatre practitioners.

The question should be organic and could be refined as the candidate researches and discovers more about the practice and the aspect selected. It was surprising the number of candidates who did not directly answer or refer back to the question. Answering the question is an important aspect of Criterion B.

Criterion C - Presentation
Some candidates struggled with the structure of their essay, so that it did not read fluidly. Register refers to:
- The use of language should be formal (e.g. names of practices or pieces of theatre/plays should not be abbreviated)
- Ideas should be clearly communicated and interconnected so that the answer to the question is coherent and easy to follow. While not prohibited, it is not advisable to break an essay of this word length into titled sections as often this makes the essay fragmented.
- The tone should not be colloquial or chatty. The appropriate tone was generally best achieved by candidates writing in the third person.

The Research Investigation should not be addressed to any one practitioner as the purpose of this dramaturgical research is to inform the **production** of a play/piece of theatre and not a specific practitioner as most aspects would be of interest and relevant to a variety of practitioners working on a production. Students do not need to address budget, suppliers, audience, publicity etc.

The quality of reproduced visuals was often poor, with visuals being grainy, unclear or too small. This counts as poor presentation of visuals. It was also unclear why some visuals were

included. It is important for candidates to indicate clearly why a visual has been included and what it is intended to illustrate. This should be relevant to the question rather than included in order to make the work appear more attractive. In some cases, where students chose an aspect of design or a practice that relies heavily on visuals, the Research Investigation would have benefited from a more extensive use of visuals. Visuals can be included within the body of the text or as part of an appendix as long as the reader is signposted to it. Candidates who included irrelevant work in the appendix which was not clearly referred to in the body of the work were penalised for not adequately selecting visual/textual material.

Keeping to the required word length is also significant and some candidates claimed many more words than were actually written. The word count **EXCLUDES** quotations. It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that all requisite details on the cover sheet are accurate and that the candidate meets the specific requirements of the assessment task.

Criterion D (HL only) - Critique of Sources

For HL candidates the Critique of Sources should be a **separate** section at the end of the Research Investigation and **NOT** part of footnotes or in the body of the essay. This worked best when it included both a subjective description of how it was used by the candidate and an objective evaluation of the source in general. Candidates should therefore include:

- Brief description of the source
- Reliability
- Usefulness of source to anyone working in the field
- Specific aspects/details regarding the source that would be of interest
- Relevance to students' own research and how it was used by the candidate

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

• Candidates need guidance regarding the academic systems that exist for the attribution of sources as well as what is required of a bibliography. All Research Investigations should include a bibliography and at Higher Level a Critique of Sources.

• Candidates found it difficult to formulate a good question and they should be given the opportunity to develop their questioning skills and look at ways to develop simple yet rich questions that will help them to focus their research and the application of that research. Some questions had a split focus and were very convoluted.

• Candidates should explore and come to an understanding of what is meant by 'an aspect' of a play/piece of theatre. They should be encouraged to look at plays/pieces of theatre and

identify aspects as well as looking at theatre practices and identifying aspects of these, particular to that practice.

• Candidates should be given the opportunity to develop general research skills- skimming, note taking, cross referencing, selecting etc.

• Candidates need to be taught essay writing skills paying particular attention to structure, the development of an argument, linguistic register and coherence.

• Higher Level candidates need guidance in critiquing a source.

• Candidates should have the chance to research a practice and apply that research to their practical work as this is the most powerful way for them to understand relevance and application.

• Please note that students are not permitted to submit the same material for more than one assessment task.

Theatre Performance & Production Presentation

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 -10	11 - 16	17 - 21	22 – 25	26 - 30	31 - 40

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 10	11 - 14	15 – 18	19 - 22	23 - 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The description of the assessment task in the Subject Guide and the Assessment Criteria which are applied to the work of the student are the two cornerstones of what follows. They also need to be studied and understood by teachers and students as they prepare for this component. It became clear to examiners as they moderated the work for the component that many students had clearly misunderstood the task. Conversely, those students who had thought about the task and understood the creative and critical possibilities it encouraged, presented work that was both exciting and challenging.

The task involves the marrying of the verbal, the words of the student, and the visual images which accompany the presentation. This relationship is implicit to the assessment task and needs to be regarded as fundamental by teachers and students alike. In that sense examiners will expect students to explicitly refer to the images they select to accompany the presentation as they speak. How this is done is up to the student as the Subject Guide outlines (page 29). Some students used the images as a structural device and this often worked, giving the presentation coherence and establishing a dynamic relationship between what was being said and what was being shown. One example of this approach might be to "frame" the presentation around an introductory image and a closing image; another example might be to reinforce thematic content by a careful choice of images. The most popular approach was to give the images an illustrative function, as in the image of a commedia mask introducing commentary on this tradition. A basic illustrative function for the images rarely moved beyond the banal. It was when the student took the initiative and verbally annotated the image, exploring it, bringing out its salient points and bringing it into the context of the discussion, that students were most successful. When this began the energy of the image was released into the presentation and the work immediately took on another dimension.

The use of the images as aids towards analysis, synthesis and reflection are obvious ways of enhancing the presentation. The students, who were mindful of how an image might stimulate analysis, or visually register a synthesis (there were many spiders webs!), were sometimes "kept on track" by the discipline of having to refer to the images. The use of images to enhance or supply focus points for reflection was also apparent in the more effective presentations. At Higher Level few students realised that an image may itself be a research focus if the context is appropriate, those who were able to use images dramaturgically often produced enriching work, this was especially apparent in areas of design and production.

Some students did not refer to the images at all and so did not fulfil the requirements of the task. It was a source of frustration for all examiners to receive the stipulated number of images and then listen to a presentation that made absolutely no reference to any of them. It should be understood that the component requires explicit reference to the requisite number of images in the presentation for the requirements of the task to be properly met. Where the reference to a particular image was implicit rather than explicit examiners gave the student the benefit of the doubt since this was the first session of the new guide, but in future this will not be the case.

The correct formatting of the images was often a problem and the images themselves were often inappropriate. Often students presented A4 sheets with a multiple series of images on each sheet, thereby multiplying the number of images beyond the statutory number. A montage of images on an A4 sheet is acceptable only if that montage is treated as a single

image by the student. The images need to be formatted as a single image per sheet and they need to be numbered in the order of their appearance in the presentation and their source needs to be attributed. These issues need to be taken seriously by teachers and students.

A small number of teachers felt the need to interrupt the student with inappropriate questions. Some of these questions were clearly designed to "lead" the student and as such are absolutely prohibited – information provided as a result of leading questions must be disregarded by the examiner. In extreme cases, if a student is genuinely in trouble due to nerves a teacher may intervene to help the student to carry on but should be careful not to lead the student in anyway while doing so.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A - Analysis

The importance of student focus here is a paramount concern. The criterion is entitled "analysis" for a reason. The examiner expects to listen to a student subjecting the chosen material to analysis. The temptation to turn the presentation into a narration of the course has to be resisted if the requirements of all the criteria are to be met. Criterion A distinguishes "analysis" as the dominant mode of discourse for the presentation and if this is ignored the student will inevitably struggle to synthesize, to reflect appropriately, or indeed to apply research in an insightful manner.

The focus for analysis is outlined in the achievement level descriptors. The student needs to "identify essential elements of the performance and production processes of theatrical traditions/practices for more than one culture". This was often well done with some students choosing to focus their presentation on a tradition and a practice. The application of the tradition and practice to their own work was clearly a primary concern and the choice gave them a field for research and much room for exploration. Another way of approaching this task was to choose a theatrical element like "Mask" and to show how this might be differently employed within different traditions or practices; again theoretical underpinning could be evoked by reference to a theorist/practitioner/teacher such as Lecoq.

Most students were able to demonstrate understanding of how the "essential elements" worked and many were justifiably proud of the skills they had learned. The stronger students did not list these skills or summarise the activities through which they were grasped but indicated carefully how research into skill and application to a tradition and to the work of the candidate provides a platform, not only for practical application but also deeper understanding.

International Baccalaureate
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

A surprising number of students did not make any attempt to evaluate a range of diverse performances. The question of diverse performances needs elucidation. The term "diverse performances" can be equally applied to work in house which the student sees as a spectator or, arguably more inspiring for the student, it can refer to the work the student sees in a theatre or performance space they visit. In any event the student is expected to bring back from these experiences a sense for the diversity of methods and approaches to theatre in performance. The student will also note aspects of the work that might connect to their own and so lessons are learned from viewing the work of others. Many students were able to use their visits to the theatre in a manner which incorporated the experience into different accounts of their own development, while others diminished the purpose of the experience by greeting the performance with an opinionated response which made no effort to connect the work to their own. Some students were so keenly focused on the potential of diverse performance pieces that they made them the focus of their presentation, at times this was overdone but it is a fact that much can be learned from viewing performance and that the role of the spectator simply must be assumed by the student in order to fulfil the requirements of this criterion. While visits to the theatre may be difficult in some geographical locations teachers should be reminded that the diverse performances can emerge from within the school itself. The student simply needs to adopt the role of the spectator in order to learn from diverse performances. Watching the work of peers or even stepping out of a rehearsal to observe work of their own gives students the critical tools they need to evaluate performance but, perhaps more importantly, to apply the lessons of the performance to aspects of their own work.

The production and performance skills were often enumerated but incisive analysis of them was rare, especially informed analysis which connected student skills to the conventional demands of theatrical traditions and practices. There is a difference between speaking about "lighting" and speaking about "lighting" in theatre of cruelty. The one speech is likely to lapse into generality while there is a chance that the other may be more focused and allied to a way of doing things in theatre that might be compared to a different way of doing the same thing. The better students talked about skills within the contexts of theatrical traditions (make up-Kathakali for example), the more challenged told stories about their adventures with make-up for a part in the school musical.

Criterion B - Synthesis

The need to "identify relationships" between work from different traditions and practices from more than one culture makes the selection of the work studied in the course important. The verbs "experiment" and "explore" are key terms to an active understanding of where this criterion is directed. A relationship can define a difference or a similarity, a significant change

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

in emphasis or direction can explain the difference between two theories of theatre or two performance traditions. Students appeared to be alive to the task of identifying relationships and spoke eloquently about links between theory, practice and tradition. It was uplifting too to see how many teachers encouraged their students to attempt to perform within the constraints of particular traditions. Noh and Bunraku were examples of traditions which were often selected for exploration; students learn by doing and the experience of grappling with performance conventions really helped the students to internalize the practical differences between traditions. If this experimentation was accompanied or reinforced by academic research the student began to bring Criterion D into play. The better students were able to respond to all four criteria as they presented on a unit of work, using analysis to point out relationships between distinct practices and researching those practices in a way that involved application and subsequent reflection, which often served as a bridge from one unit of work to another, or a verbal annotation of an image that captured the essence of that part of the presentation.

Criterion C - Reflection

The purpose of reflection is to establish a critical response to the work that has been selected for comment. It is also designed to ensure that the context within which the work is discussed is interesting and thought provoking. In its most diminished sense reflection can be reduced to a series of value judgements indicating approval or disapproval as: "I liked that, it was cool" or "I hated it, it was boring". Too many students were complacent enough to regard such opinions as reflection, they are not they are merely opinions. Others took a small step forward towards reflection by telling us "what they learned" from every activity they did. Again "what I learned" is a reduced kind of reflection since its tendency is to anatomize learning into discreet entities. An active reflection will continually look to widen rather than reduce the context of learning and "learning experience in theatre" demands of the student more than just a potted synopsis of "what I learned from this".

So there are different levels of reflection and the teacher needs to encourage students to understand that the term: "reflection" contains within it a creative and a critical response to the experience of the course. There is a lot of reflection built into the required response in this component since the student is dealing with a great deal of material and the examiner can soon become overwhelmed by the sheer volume of it if the reflective student does not attempt to mediate between experiences and the significance of those experiences.

Criterion D - Applied Research

It is presumed that students encountering radically different approaches to theatre making should need to engage in research of an academic and practical kind in order to establish a

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

relationship to the work they are exploring. Theory, practice, tradition are all, at the beginning of the course arguably quite foreign to the student. This criterion essentially asks students to use their own practice as a research tool in order to more fully understand the content of their work. It is about establishing an informed relationship to what they read, see and do. The term "applied research" is a form of advocacy for a particularly theatrical mode of research. It implies that whatever is explored needs practical application before it takes on an authenticity within the canon of the student's own work. This is a vitally important principle for without it words and theory would be enough and the essence of what makes theatre, theatre, would be ignored. (e.g. If a student practices the walk of a Noh practitioner he is engaging in active research, if he complements this with academic research on Zeami and the historical imperatives governing the work he will be widening the context of his understanding.) Students responded well to this criterion once they had been encouraged to engage with it, some ignored it completely. The enrichment to the work of students when they begin to come to terms with the process of making the unfamiliar, familiar cannot be underestimated. The spirit of the three foundation areas is really felt in all the criteria: theatre in the world, theatre in the making and theatre in performance all create the context for a successful response to the criteria governing this component.

Students need to beware of simply learning theory or aspects of a practice and applying this to their work in a superficial manner. They need to fully research theory in order to know exactly what it is designed to do, how it is meant to function in practice. It was too common to hear presentations where the specific aspect of theory or practice was carelessly applied to the work of the student with little forethought and less reflection, the levels of generalisation grew exponentially with the levels of carelessness. If a student is determined to reduce the work of Stanislavski to "emotional memory" then that is a pity but at least give that concept the respect it deserves by carefully researching and applying it as it was originally conceived.

Another common problem was to mistake approaches for application. Making a Bunraku puppet is an approach to understanding the tradition but the details of that process narrated over 10 minutes of a 30 minute presentation will not activate Criteria A/B/C or even D. The student must always be aware that what is being said needs style and direction so that the demands of the criteria are continually being answered. Consistency over 30 minutes duration is impossible to achieve without rehearsal, trial runs of this exercise are crucial so that the tendency to fall into narration instead of analysis or the lazy offering of value judgements or opinions instead of valid reflections can be avoided.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- It is important that teachers examine the work according to the assessment criteria. Teachers need to examine carefully and apply the criteria objectively to the work.
- The work must be sent in CD format. Neither DVD nor audio cassettes are acceptable.
- A significant number of students did not use the maximum time available to them in their presentations which certainly represented a missed opportunity and is self-penalising.
- A significant number of students made extensive reference to other components in the course, particularly the Independent Project. Students need to be careful that any reference to work in other components should be designed, not to talk exclusively about the content of that component, but to illustrate a point in an argument they might be outlining in their TPPP. A student cannot be assessed twice on the basis of the same material and so, as a working principle, students must avoid reference to work from other components unless these references are absolutely necessary to the points being outlined in the TPPP.
- It is quite clear that some students were reading from a prepared text which certainly detracted from the experience of the listener. While it is impossible to establish beyond all doubt that a student is reading from a prepared script (though some centres actually sent the scripts along with the presentation), it does depart from the spirit of the task, and it could be argued that students who use notes as a guideline sound more convincing and natural.
- Some students obviously performed as they presented, and at times the performance was more excessive than it needed to be.

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional