

## THEATRE

### Overall grade boundaries

#### Higher level

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

#### Standard level

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

### Independent Project Portfolio

#### Component grade boundaries

#### Higher level

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

#### Standard level

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

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

Generally speaking, there was a strong sense of independence as part of the projects at both Higher and Standard levels. Candidates, to a greater extent than in past sessions, seemed to initiate a topic of interest and pursue their chosen area with clear goals and a better understanding of the demands of the task or role. Many projects represented influences from the course but were clearly motivated from an independent interest and quite often had a theoretical underpinning. Though a theoretical underpinning is not a requirement at SL, it was encouraging again to see the number of candidates that chose to base and develop a project on a sound theoretical and/or practical research base. This

not only contributed to increased levels under Criterion A for initiative, but also an ability to demonstrate and further develop knowledge and skills. At HL, there were more and better quality projects for Option B, indicating a strong sense of exploration and creative discovery.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Criterion A - Preparation

The portfolio must demonstrate evidence of initiative and perseverance; an implicit reference is not sufficient nor is a statement indicating that initiative or perseverance has taken place. Initiative can be defined as going beyond the predictable to examine areas that are relevant and illuminating. Perseverance can be defined as working systematically and thoroughly in the achievement of goals. The issue of relevance is worth mentioning under this criterion as it differs to “relevance” under Criterion D. Relevance under this criterion refers to the relevancy of choices made in the development of the project.

### Criterion B - Process

This criterion addresses specifically the evidence found within the portfolio of skills in theatre practice. The candidate must demonstrate the skills he/she acquired during the course of the project. Evidence of skills related to production/performance elements and theatre practices within the portfolio are required for success in this criterion. The most glaring difficulty in this area was in candidates’ inability to even identify the skills relative to a particular area; for example, what are the specific skills necessary in being a designer, director or playwright? This difficulty was often connected to poor or even no sources influencing the project.

### Criterion C – Reflection

Candidates need to approach reflection with a more evaluative and analytical consideration of learning and development. It was encouraging to see again this session the number of candidates that made connections to the course in terms of inspiration or even simply a starting point that led to an independent interest. Once again, it is worth noting that the choice to section the portfolio into headings based on the dynamic stages of the creative process (Preparation, Action and Reflection) although not directly penalised, tended to limit candidates’ ability to reach the upper bands in some criteria, specifically Criterion C and in HL Criterion E. It is recommended that candidates section and title their headings based on whatever is appropriate to the particular project/portfolio.

### Criterion D – Presentation

There were some, though relatively few, concerns with the relevance of materials submitted within the portfolios, in many instances, representing a final outcome of the project (DVDs of productions or workshops, final scripts etc). It is worth noting once again that the focus of the portfolio is to demonstrate evidence of the learning and development that took place during the project and therefore the final product will rarely represent the evidence required, though images and excerpts may. The Subject Guide indicates that the word limit is 2000 words at SL and 3000 words for HL. If candidates exceed the word limit they cannot achieve a mark higher than a 4 for this criterion. There is no leeway in the application of the word limit requirement. In addition, there must be some evidence of sources used to inform the project or the candidate will also not receive higher than a 4.

### Criterion E (HL Only) – Application of Research and Practice

The project at HL must be underpinned by theatrically-based research; social/cultural/historical/political research is certainly valid for contribution to the project but should not represent the only theoretical underpinning. Moreover, candidates need to understand that there is more to this aspect of the task than simply doing research; there must be evidence of both integration and application of research throughout the project/portfolio. It is also important to note that using research gained from the course does not represent the sense of independence required for the project.

### Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

The most important recommendation for future teaching is to acknowledge and incorporate other areas of the course into the planning and the development of the project: the core components, skill areas, specific tasks and the influence of other assessment criteria. For example, the use of action plans, visual materials and application of research, as well as reflection that incorporates analysis and synthesis in ongoing journal work with connections to prior learning. Teachers should also consider more opportunities for practical application of theory. The structure and development of the projects should be heavily influenced by planning, exploration and discovery, and students should be given an opportunity to take part in similar “mock” projects and portfolios earlier in the course. Also, at various stages throughout the course, it is worthwhile involving students in the assessment of their own work using the assessment criteria and wording in the descriptors.

### Further comments

Teachers must objectively assess each candidate’s work based on the evidence found within the portfolio. It was clear from the comments and the marks awarded that some teachers are still assessing the project rather than the portfolio.

## Practical Performance Proposal

### Component grade boundaries

#### Higher level

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

#### Standard level

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

### Recommendations for IB procedures, instructions and forms

At both the SL and HL level, Practical performance proposals presented for this session reflected an improvement in understanding of the task and requirements. However, there are still some cases when it is clear that the student had not been introduced to the instructions and requirements of the task. There are also still some schools using older versions of the cover sheet - 6/Proposal (HL) + (SL) - which suggests that updates have not been distributed or made available to the teacher. Much of the content of this report reiterates what has been said in previous subject reports which, on one side is understandable as this is the nature of the task, but from another viewpoint hints that perhaps some teachers are either not reading the feedback or the feedback is not being relayed to teachers. In either case, it is the grades of the students that suffer from any misunderstanding of the task.

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

The work submitted at both SL and HL during this session was wide ranging from exciting visions of an innovative theatre performance; to half-communicated theatre pieces which hinted at some basic theatre skill understandings; to odd collections of downloaded internet material with little or no evidence of an understanding of the processes or outcomes of dramatic miss-en-scene. However, the general level, as already intimated, was towards the former with mostly informed attempts at following a process that led the student to the creation of a credible piece of theatre. This outcome could well be due to more exposure to practical drama studio experiences that allow the students to engage with the complete process of play making from starting point to realization. It was clear from the work in the lower bands that a holistic understanding of the process and demands of the performance proposal was lacking in these students.

At SL, the most popular stimulus was the 'Japanese Proverbs: The mouth is the cause of calamity'. The least chosen stimulus was the music 'African Sanctus by David Fanshawe' with the 'Map of the Underworld', the short story 'Saki: The Image of the Lost Soul' and the artifact the 'The Totem Pole situated in Windsor Great Park' sharing the second degree of favour. The five different stimuli inspired work spread generally across the mark bands.

At HL, again the Japanese proverb proved the most popular and, indeed, inspired much work of high quality. The map, short story and artefact formed a second band of choice and stimulated a diverse range of work. The music, as with SL, did not prove a popular selection but did draw some examples of high quality work.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Section 1: The Pitch

The better pitches, as usual, drew the reader into the work with descriptions of clear stage action, intended performing space and details of design choices. Top end work, at both SL and HL, generated a sense of anticipation by their descriptions and conveyed a clear vision of a practical performance. Pitches towards the lower end of the marking scheme tended to focus on either a storyline or the creation process thus leaving the reader with no real vision of a piece of theatre. Although the pitch is not marked as a separate component, a Section 1 that clearly exposes the action, space and design of a performance allows the reader access to a clear envisioned outcome.

### Section 2: Supporting materials

The second section of the work is generally the component that reveals the creative process and the justified choices for the miss-en-scene of the created piece. This process must begin from the chosen prescribed stimulus.

Top band work at SL and HL explored the stimulus through a variety of approaches including, initial/personal reactions, brainstorm, research and justified links to secondary stimuli. Work that fell in the middle band tended to partially explore the stimulus then quickly move on to ideas developing narrative and/or staging. There are still proposals presented that either do not mention a prescribed stimulus or choose a loosely-linked secondary stimulus (or play text) to develop. These proposals do not do well according to the criteria that clearly refer to 'an imaginative interpretation of the stimulus' SG p37.

HL and SL proposals at the upper band of the rubric set out a process of development from stimulus to product that clearly explained and justified choices. This high band work showed the development of a piece of theatre and always conveyed what actually happened on stage using storylines, play descriptions and storyboards to communicate space, blocking, movement and design. Middle rubric proposals tended to suggest action and give ideas of a development process but often lacked the depth and balance in explanations necessary to move into the upper bands. Lower band work was usually a collection of loosely related ideas.

A similar comment applies to middle band work with reference to use and application of production elements. It is clear through the language and terminology used by the student if there is an understanding of theatre production elements. Top band work at both SL and HL clearly described an intended effect and suggested how this may be brought about through the use of multiple production elements. Lower rubric proposals often presented a collection of undeveloped ideas suggesting a limited understanding of this area.

This area of the proposal is where downloaded internet images are most often used. In the upper band work, these downloads are correctly sourced and attributed then displayed as a developmental stage moving towards the transmission of specific design details. In other words they are an important part of a larger process. Middle and lower band proposals often showed a heavy reliance on

downloads (annotated in the middle band work) and thus presented a more generalised description of production elements rather than the detailed, personal, thought-through descriptions of the upper band material.

\*There are still some proposals from schools which do not source or attribute downloaded images and these are immediately referred for a check by the IB Assessment Centre on academic malpractice as the student has signed a source acknowledgement declaration on the cover sheet form 6/Proposal (HL) +(SL)\*

### Section 3: The Report (HL only)

Stronger HL work referred to and developed research throughout the proposal and then used this final section to add a further layer of understanding of theories and how these are applied in practice. In this top band work there was clear evidence of theoretical study, understanding of the principles of the theory proposed, integration of the key theory ideas and the concept for performance, and clear examples of 'practical effects' stemming from the application of the theory. Lower and middle band proposals tended to either reiterate much of that which was described in Section 2 (narrative and/or miss-en-scene) or talk generally about a theory without any application of concepts. Upper band work which focused on impacts and resonances, clearly discussed what impacts/resonances they intended to bring about and how they were going to achieve these through the use of 'practical effects' in performance. Weaker proposals, which referred to impacts and resonances, often did no more than mention an intended outcome with no indication of how this could be realised by 'practical effects' in performance.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers should try to organise opportunities for students to see 'live' theatre (or DVDs of live theatre performances) as much as possible over the two years. These experiences offer first-hand knowledge of our active art form.
- Students should attempt at least one complete practice PPP over the two years as well as exploring the component parts of the task in a practical way.
- Teachers should try to encourage students to take on a variety of theatre roles over the two years to acquire a holistic vision of the process.
- Teachers should make available to students the sample material on the OCC.
- Some time should be spent in class learning basic drawing skills. Many roles (designer, director) in our collaborative art form depend on communication of ideas through simple sketching techniques with clear and informative annotations.

## Further recommendations

- There are still multiple occasions where schools send either illegible hand-written work or unclear/cut off photocopies instead of the originals. This adds an unnecessary layer of complication to the assessment process
- There are still multiple occasions of schools sending work in individual plastic cover sheets. Examiners annotate the work to offer feedback on the marking process to teachers. Plastic cover sheets make this service unwieldy and time consuming.

## Research Investigation

### Component grade boundaries

#### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-40

#### Standard level

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

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

There was a range of theatre practices selected and students engaged with research into these practices. The most successful candidates were the ones who approached the task with perseverance. They carefully read the requirements of the task and chose a theatre practice that they were interested in and that had a range of available resources. They researched this aspect in depth and applied their research to an aspect of a play from the practice. The formulation of an appropriate and focused question seems to be one of the key ingredients to success in this task. Students who chose theatre practices which have fixed conventions were more successful at meeting the requirements of the task.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

#### Criterion A Research Skills

Students are using a range of sources with an increase in electronic sources. Though this is perfectly acceptable, and often demonstrates perseverance, leading them to access less predictable texts, some candidates missed referring to key seminal books written on the theatre practice they are researching.

The consistent attribution of sources still continues to be problematic for some candidates. ALL sources, information and research need to be attributed. A bibliography alone is not sufficient. The exact origin of the research within the body of the essay needs to be clearly indicated. Students often mistake general research as common knowledge, especially in their introductions and as a result do not attribute it. Many students still do not attribute visuals as sources.

### Criterion B Task Relevance

Some students are still not clear of the requirements of the task. This is a task focused on the application of research into a theatre practice and to an aspect of a play/piece of theatre from that practice. It is essential that the student selects a play/piece of theatre from the practice. Detailed research into an aspect of a practice without application to a play/piece of theatre is not sufficient.

The success of this task rests on the creation of an appropriate focused question that encourages a focused and detailed response. The best research Investigations were those that chose a narrow but clear focus. Students need to directly address moments of action and, where appropriate, cite direct quotes from the play/piece of theatre. This is an area that is still not always being addressed by candidates.

The task does not require students to direct their response to a performer or to a member of the production team. The essay should be of value to any theatre practitioner without being directly addressed to one.

Some candidates chose to focus on modernizing or adapting a play or piece of theatre for a contemporary audience. This constitutes a misunderstanding of the task and leads to a creative response. It also leads to students focusing their research on contemporary productions rather than research on the traditional theatre practice they have selected.

There was a significant number of research investigations that focused on preparation for playing a part, training for the performer (especially Kathakali), the development of design skills, the application of make-up or the construction of puppets (especially Bunraku) or set. These research Investigations are problematic because they do not encourage the student to apply research to a play/piece of theatre in depth. Rather it leads them to focus on the skills development of a performer/designer/maker and leads to Research Investigations that read like 'how to' guides or training manuals. (Criterion C)

Some students also misunderstand the task as an analysis of a play/piece of theatre and some set out to prove how the play/piece of theatre is from a particular theatre practice. This is not the task, and ends up being an analysis of the play rather than the application of research to an aspect of the play/piece of theatre.

### Criterion C Presentation

Many students are still careless with their presentation of visuals. Some visuals are not clearly reproduced, too small to show the detail the student is referring to and sometimes irrelevant. Screen shots in particular, taken from video footage online, are often poor quality and blurry (as they capture motion) and should not be included. Students who have chosen a design element should include visuals and where colour is being referred to these should be in colour. In some cases students could not achieve a higher band because their essay would have benefited from more visuals.

The register of this task is academic. The essay needs to be in a formal style, coherent and well structured. Many essays are still informal, chatty and have not been carefully structured. Subheadings may sometimes be useful in a draft and can help students with structure; however, they often break up the flow of the essay and affect its coherence.

Huge chunks of text- often quotes from research- should be broken up as they impede the flow of the essay and are often not wholly relevant in their entirety.



The word count is still a cause of concern. The word count does NOT include quotes and teachers are signing cover sheets which do not have accurate word counts.

Material in an appendix, which has been included primarily to provide evidence of research or of a correspondence are not necessary and are considered irrelevant and marked accordingly. These should be avoided. An appendix should only be included if it is specifically referred to in the body of the essay and is essential.

#### Criterion D Critique of Sources (HL Only)

There has been a marked improvement in the critiquing of sources with more candidates competent at commenting on the reliability, value and relevance of the source.

Students were sometimes selective of which sources they critiqued. ALL sources which have been used in the body of the essay, however, MUST be critiqued. This is regarded as a 'limited' critique of sources and has an impact on their mark for this criterion.

### Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- It might help candidates if they kept a source log and they should check that every statement made as a result of research is attributed.
- Teachers need to help students with the specific requirements of the task, and the importance of identifying a practice that lends itself to these requirements. The practical aspects of the theatre practice that has been researched need to be directly related to an aspect chosen from the play/piece of theatre. (e.g. describing the character of Pantalone and his traditional costume alone with little reference to the play/piece of theatre is not sufficient).
- Teachers must check students work count and make sure that it is accurate before they sign the cover sheet.
- Students may use subheadings in their drafts but it would be a good idea to remove these for the final draft and find ways of connecting the sections to ensure there is coherence and flow.
- Bullet lists often encourage students to write in note form which affects the academic register of the essay.
- The student should continue drafting their question in relation to their research and the answer they are developing. It is natural that as they discover more and develop their response the exact wording of the question may change. The best composed questions included in the wording:

- the theatre practice selected
- the title of the play/piece of theatre selected
- the aspect of the play selected
- the aspect of the practice selected

e.g. what effect does the entrance of a protagonist (*aspect of play/piece of theatre*) in a Classical Greek theatre (*Theatre practice*) production of 'Oedipus' (*play from practice*) by Sophocles, have on the movement of the Chorus (*aspect of theatre practice*)?

- Avoid thematic or socio/historical questions or questions that focus on the author of a play/piece of theatre as these lend themselves to a literary response. e.g. How does Moliere use elements of character in a comedy setting to display contrasting religious values?

## Further comments

The subject report should be read carefully so that future candidates can be prevented from making the same errors.

## Theatre Performance & Production Presentation

### Component grade boundaries

#### Higher level

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

#### Standard level

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

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

The danger of any assessment task that has been current for a number of years is that responses to it can become formulaic as teachers become more familiar with the specific requirements of the task and encourage their students to focus their attention on areas which are guaranteed to meet these. It could be argued that as the years pass the work submitted diminishes in range as candidates receive the mixed benefits of the experience of teachers long familiar with the terrain. This session the ground covered was certainly a field, forgive the metaphor, that had been well tilled. In no particular order: Stanislavski, Strasberg, Meisner, Bogard, Brecht, Artaud, Le Coq, Grotowski, Boal, Berkoff and Brooke were the selected practitioners. Commedia, Kabuki, Kathakali, Noh and Bunraku with a sprinkling of other puppetry made up the traditions, the styles were realism, naturalism (rarely properly distinguished), Physical Theatre, expressionism and in-yer-face and a lot of something called Theatre of the Absurd that few who spoke about it could define.

There were certainly fewer candidates who regarded the viewing of diverse performances as critical to their development but there were more candidates prepared to be explicit about their research which was good to see. Geographical or cultural reasons may explain the reluctance to visit the theatre or indeed the impossibility of doing so but teachers need to ensure that critical eyes are sharpened by experiencing theatre.

The lists mentioned above do yield the possibility of an infinity of interesting patterns of response and some candidates surprised and delighted this examiner with original and striking responses to the work, their own and what they researched, saw or acted from others. Devising seems to have become more popular and this approach to “making” theatre can certainly cover the criteria while preparing candidates for other tasks. That a few candidates still cling to the belief that those “other tasks” (the PPP, RI or IPPP) have any place in the TPPP is testimony to the capacity for some centers to leave the Subject Report unread for 8 years in a row.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Criterion A Analysis

The more sophisticated response to the task will start from the logical assumption that two or three pivotal experiences should form the core of the presentation. This requires some strict selection and editing of the course and some forethought in structuring the presentation, but the preparation is worthwhile because a carefully regulated TPPP allows for analysis and a pattern of responses to the task. A multiplicity of units of work is usually handled by a sequential narrative that tells but does not provide analysis, does not allow for synthesis (one thing after another rarely can), and encourages reflection to be about “what” we did, not the point of the exercise. Candidates can find many different ways of telling the examiner what they did and the most repetitious of the presentations start from the premise that everything must be included. Not true, a more deft approach is to look for the relationships between the work, to set research against practice in order to test claims made by practitioners for their theories, to see theatre in order to be influenced by it or disagree with it. Such an approach makes the work new, provocative and interesting.

### Criterion B Synthesis

The most basic aspect of this is to look at theatre production (in the western style) and see how one role functions as a part of an assemblage for the finished product. The stage manager is an example and many thousands of words have been expended on “how I stage managed the school musical”. This may have its place, though it is a thankfully small one. What looms larger and makes this criterion interesting might be the comparison of how western theatrical culture might chose to synthesize its approach to playmaking and how, say, Japanese culture might approach the same task. This sadly is too often the road not taken but what treasures are yielded to the teachers and students who embark on this exploration. It is only through the struggle to grasp something new and thereby modify the sensibility of the student that pivotal breakthrough understandings can occur and the mystery of the subject can be enjoyed. The act of synthesizing the unfamiliar modifies what is already there in the understanding of the student and when this happens the work takes off. The candidates capable of exploration of this kind often chose images that were either numinous or evocative and complemented discovery with visual images that captured the moment. Theatre is not a machine with component parts that click together to form a product, that is probably what Brook had in mind when he defined “deadly theatre”. There was too much “deadly” articulation of the combine approach to theatre under this criterion.

### Criterion C Reflection

To reflect in an interesting way you have to have approached the work in a thought provoking manner. The better and riskier the work, the more disputatious, the more exploratory, the more subversive, the greater the likelihood that the candidate “thinks” and “reflects” in an exciting way. Teacher led work where the teacher stands like some Freudian shadow over the work of the students will rarely create in them the independence they require to reflect individually about what they are doing. Reflection is not an institutionalized response to pre-ordained or predictable experience yet too often this was the case. That is one more reason why the adjective “diverse” is placed before performances since the diverse is new and demands a new kind of reflection if it is to be properly explored. The better candidates used reflection as a kind of exploration not as a conclusive ordinance which every piece of work was required to submit to.

### Criterion D Application of research

This criterion is getting stronger as more and more candidates are making explicit reference to the research they do, citing sources and attributing influence before going on to test it against practical application which, in the more effective work, always carried implications that could be reflected on and placed in a deeper synthetic pattern of understanding. It would help candidates who are dealing, or trying to deal, with a figure like Stanislavski who has a large and contradictory body of work to be more specific about what *aspect* of the work they are discussing since this kind of discriminatory approach adds a specific focus to what is being explored.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Take risks in what you teach.
- Look to explore theatre in the world by comparing traditions which really are different to one another.
- Challenge your students to be independent thinkers.
- Challenge the aesthetic and theatrical claims made by theatre practitioners, use practical applications of their ideas to establish a relationship between their work and the work of the students.
- Always encourage your students to specify their focus when they are dealing with broad topics.
- Take the opportunity the accompanying images give you to make the presentations evocative and exciting.
- See as much live theatre as possible.
- Engage with the shock of the new.