

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

November 2012 was a strong session in terms of the mean grade, and an obvious improvement upon last year as well as a clear indication that the task is well understood and candidates are taking more risks with choice of roles and of subject content. Again, there was an increase in terms of Option B projects at HL, with more candidates opting for workshops as part of a rehearsal process. In addition, there was better evidence overall of skill development in a range of project choices as opposed to only director/actor, as has appeared

in past sessions. Clearly, more candidates are opting to explore areas of design and lead explorative workshops in theatre practice. The theoretical underpinning at HL has expanded to include a better quality of research directly connected to the demands of the area chosen.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Most often the strongest criterion in terms of the quality and consistency of evidence presented. Many candidates recognised the requirement to present evidence of initiative and perseverance, rather than simply indicating it had taken place; this was presented in the form of visuals, graphs, mind-map/brainstorm representations etc. Relevancy of the choices in preparation and during the project was improved from past sessions; choices were more consistently justified and connected to the aims and objectives of the project. In places the need for evidence of initiative in the latter stages of the project was needed, as some candidates still tend to associate initiative was something that happens early on in the process, rather than throughout. Stronger candidates connected progress to the aims and objective and identified areas where initiative and perseverance actually contributed to the development of the project.

Criterion B

Based on past sessions, and still evident in this session, this criterion has consistently been lacking in terms of evidence of skill development connected to the chosen area or role. Some candidates still have difficulties in articulating the skills required for a particular area or role, so that evidence may be presented to demonstrate how the skills were developed throughout the project. Directing, for example, still remains the most popular area chosen for the project; however, too many candidates still fail to identify the particular skills related to being a director, and then comment, with evidence, on how those skills were developed. Similarly with areas of design, candidates quite often identify tasks related to being a costume designer, such as cultural or historical research, but fail to deal with some of the specific skills required of a designer such as contextual drawing, colour coding/treatment and the use of fabrics, textures and functionality of costumes.

Criterion C

Reflection appears to be steadily improving in terms of a critical account offered on both learning and areas of development. Candidates are also more consistently analysing their own approach to theatre processes as well as the impact of working with others; this quality and depth of reflection appeared to be consistent in certain centres, suggesting that such reflection is an expectation in the journal throughout the course. Fewer candidates and centres are basing reflection solely on emotive or descriptive accounts of the process, though it was still evident in some, and often from all candidates of the same centre, which again suggests a particular standard of journal writing within the course. In some instances candidates and centres are limiting reflection to one section of the portfolio, quite often a final section; this is problematic for two reasons, first, it suggests that learning and/or development may have only taken part after the project, and secondly, and perhaps more relevant to the

assessment of the portfolio, the criterion descriptor indicates that reflection should be evident throughout.

Criterion D

Generally, centres appear to address the requirements of this criterion with accuracy, particularly in terms of formal areas such as the table of contents, introduction, headings and conclusion. It is worth noting that based on teachers' application of the criteria in marking the work, that some centres do not recognise that the quality and range of sources chosen to influence the project affects this criterion. Therefore even SL projects, where no theoretical underpinning is required, a candidate must demonstrate evidence of sources which have influenced the project. In addition, there are some centres that need to adhere more rigorously to proper source acknowledgement, and would be well advised to refer to the recently published article on the OCC entitled 'Academic Honesty in the Arts' – where details of proper source acknowledgement is outlined in relation to each assessment task in the course. Candidates must acknowledge all sources, visual or otherwise in the portfolio.

Criterion E (HL Only)

The theoretical underpinning at HL in this session was very effective in many centres and again indicative of similar practice taking place during the course. The greatest challenge of this criterion is for candidates to connect the theoretical underpinning to the chosen area or role for the project. This should therefore represent more than just cultural/historical/social information but also include research (both practical and from textual sources) connected to the chosen role or area for the project at HL. In instances, though fewer than in past sessions, candidates are not initiating the project with an understanding of the theory that impacts the particular role and the demands that come with it, but instead are researching for potential creative material from cultural or social research. In the more successful portfolios this session, candidates showed throughout the work how the theoretical underpinning was fundamental to the development of the project.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

The main recommendation for the teaching of future candidates is based on the understanding that the more the portfolio reflects the work that exists within the course, the more successful candidates are at the task. So for example, the journal should ideally incorporate elements of this assessment task; specifically, evidence of initiative and perseverance, evidence of skill development, reflection on learning and development and evidence of application of research. As such, candidates are gaining the experience and skills during the course required to effectively create an Independent Project Portfolio (IPP). This understanding extends into other assessment tasks as well; to some extent a good IPP should look like a successful Practical Performance Proposal (PPP) in that they both represent the process of developing a stimulus or skill area through to realisation. Therefore it is useful for candidates to see samples of both PPPs and IPPs as evidence of what the journal may look like. In addition, it is recommended that the assessment criteria for the IPP are used throughout the year in assessing the journal; this will familiarise candidates with the expectations of the task as well as the application of the criteria.

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 range and suitability of the work submitted

HL Proposals for the November 2012 session generally reflected an understanding of the demands of the task with fewer proposals falling in the lowest bands. The SL proposals had an increase in lower band work suggesting a comprehension problem with the task. However, generally, the differentiation in the quality of the proposals in terms of understanding, applying and communicating the skills and knowledge of theatre processes was the key factor in marking placement rather than misunderstanding of technicalities.

At both HL and SL, some outstanding work was presented which attests to, and reflects the strength of, centre programmes which engage the candidates in the mise-en-scene process in both a practical and theoretical manner. The weaker proposals lacked enough information for the production to be envisioned as a piece of theatre and often simply offered a series of undeveloped ideas.

HL commentaries nearly all referred to theory/research at some level. The weaker proposals generally showed a lack of understanding of concepts or did not integrate the theory/research in a practical manner into the performance. However, the HL proposals in the upper markbands showed clear 'practical effects' as a natural application of the theory/research into their intended performance.

A range of formats of physical presentation (art-books, folders, notebooks, for example) of proposals was evident with work from both levels - most offering easy access for examiners (although plastic folders were still sometimes used and these tend to hinder the opportunity for examiners to annotate work which is so necessary for teacher feedback). Sourcing and referencing the work of others, particularly downloaded images, although stressed in teacher

workshops, highlighted in documentation and acknowledged by a signature on form 6/T proposal, still occasionally remains a thorny academic malpractice issue.

Candidate performance against each element of the markbands

'Imaginative interpretation of the stimulus':

The stronger proposals offered clear explanations of what happened on stage and how; approaches to staging and links to the stimulus. There was also a clear (illuminating) process showing how (and often why) the stimulus had developed from an idea to theatrical realization. These factors showed that imagination had been engaged and a piece of theatre envisioned. Proposals at the lower end of the spectrum often simply hinted at onstage action and offered a predictable approach to staging. The majority of proposals linked the stimulus in some way within the creative process. Stage action was clearly conveyed by the upper band proposals through detailed storyboards and written descriptions of onstage events. Middle band work often described 'what' would happen on stage from a literary standpoint but did not describe 'how' it would happen.

'Concept for performance':

Most proposals offered a theme or style or aim which laid a basis for a concept. The top band work had a clear vision guided by a coherent idea which influenced artistic choices – this was the concept. Stronger candidates recognised this and used it to effect. Middle band proposals often had an implicit concept which was loosely referred to and sometimes influenced artistic choices. Lower band work usually described an onstage event with little or no justification of artistic choices

'Response to the stimulus/potential for dramatic interpretation':

This exploratory response was seen as brainstorming, research, and personal engagements (music, poetry, experiences, and other interest links) in the upper band work. Middle band work showed brainstorming of the stimulus but often did not offer greater insight into an exploration process (e.g. research, collages, mood boards, etc). Some work did not mention the stimulus but already had an idea which they then developed into a piece of (usually narrative) theatre. These proposals did not do well in this criteria element.

'Understanding of production elements/functioning in performance':

Most proposals touched in some way upon the use of space, scenography, costume, lighting, sound and props. Not all mentioned all these elements nor indeed needed to. The stronger proposals offered clear insight into production element choices using written descriptions, annotated image downloads (properly sourced) and personal sketches and doodles. These also conveyed a working knowledge of how these elements would be used to create effects during performance with 'special moment' descriptions and/or sketches. The top band work often explored the use of different types of performance spaces whereas middle and lower band work tended to select 'pros' arches citing relationship with audience as the principal reason. Some middle band work tended to get distracted by providing too much detail (describing buttons on costumes when they were of no real significance) or vague general

overviews whereas stronger work found the balance between these. Lower band efforts often just offered a series of downloads with little annotation or justification of choice (e.g. a download of a white T-shirt from a supermarket as *'he is wearing normal, everyday dress'*) or poor un-annotated sketches. Some centres sent photocopies of the original work in which the visual material was difficult to discern.

'Understanding of practical effects of theory/research (HL only)

The majority of the work presented contained some aspect of theory/research which had influenced the intended performance. In the top band proposals the candidates invoked theory/research which appeared in Section 1, was referred to in Section 2 and was treated in detail in Section 3. In lower-middle band and lower band work, theory/research would often appear in Section 3 without being considered in other parts of the proposal. The best work offered evidence of theory/research and clear examples of 'practical effects' stemming from the application of this theory/research. Middle band work had often considered the theory/research and had used this in the development of plot or character but had not developed ideas to show a 'practical effect'. A common example of this was when Theatre of the Absurd was used as theory and was then invoked to inform situations in a plot but was not extended to show how this will play out on stage i.e. a 'practical effect in performance'. Some of the weaker work showed a lack of understanding of the concepts within theory/research considered.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Successful completion of the PPP relies on having undergone the practical experience of the mise-en-scene process. In the upper level proposals it is clear from the evidence that candidates do have that experience whereas in weaker work, artistic choices often lacked the depth of understanding which results from having realised a performance and reflected on the experience.

The following skills of each stage of the PPP process need to be explored in class:-

- Pitch writing – what happens, where and how in dynamic language.
- Stimulus exploration by brainstorming, research, personal engagement
- Illumination of the process from stimulus (idea) to performance (action + design).
- Justification of artistic choices to clarify basic reasoning (practical/aesthetic/symbolic) and offer coherence (concept) of choices.
- Understanding and practical experience of how production elements can be used in performance to create intended effects. (individually e.g. costume – to suggest a period/relationship/ practice; and in combinations to bring about effects; such as costume + set colors + lighting - to create a certain mood)

- Sourcing and referencing the work of others (e.g. where do the downloaded images in my proposal come from? What is my source of a critical piece of knowledge I have referred to?) This is important training in good academic practice.

HL only

- All phases of the realization of a piece of theatre involve theory/research, selection of material for relevance, integration of concepts and application of the key aspects of the theory/research. In the PPP HL commentary all of these aspects of the practical theory/research process should be evident together with clear examples of how this theory/research is manifest on stage in performance (i.e. 'practical effects'). Theory/research may be into aspects of theatre (practice, techniques, for example) or supporting information (e.g. on the mores of a particular culture or on the details of a social issue) the key factor is how the theory/research is applied to produce an effect on stage (as opposed to influencing literary plot or character development). For 'impact and resonances', the desired consequences and/or outcomes of the performance should be explained and how it is intended to bring these outcomes about through the use of 'practical effects' on stage.

Research Investigation

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	7-9	10-12	13-16	17-19	20-30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There was a range of work submitted but there was generally a strong collection of Research Investigations with some excellent examples of applied dramaturgical research. The high quality of some of the HL candidates' Research Investigations was evident and this was often due to an increased understanding and execution of the critique of sources which is a HL only

criterion. It is clear that the majority of centres and candidates have a good understanding of the requirements of the task though there are still cases where candidates do not fulfil the requirements of the task, particularly regarding choice of play or piece of theatre. It is clearly stated in the guide and on the cover sheet that the play/piece of theatre selected by the candidate must be from the practice. If the candidate is researching Bunraku as their practice, the play they select must be a Bunraku play. Candidates who choose to mix and match practice and play do not fulfil the requirements of the task. This has an impact on the whole of the essay as it significantly changes the nature of the task.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Candidates have a better understanding of what a theatre practice is and make accurate observations that are generally supported by evidence. It is clear that candidates have developed their research skills and have an understanding of what to look out for. SL candidates sometimes struggle to get the depth of research within their word count.

Some candidates still find the concept of consistently attributing sources challenging, relying on the bibliography as sufficient attribution of sources. For many, particularly in their introductions, they introduce a practice using a consolidation of their reading without clearly stating where some of the information is from.

Sources still tend to be generally quite predictable, especially with practices where there is a lot of information. More candidates, however, are showing initiative in finding new sources or interviewing practitioners. Stronger candidates are cross-referencing sources demonstrating a competent use of, and communication of, research.

Criterion B

There has been a marked increase in candidates devising a question with a narrow and sharp focus which makes for a more successful Research Investigation. The clearer the aspect and focus the more the depth in the response with less irrelevant material. The creation of the question needs careful thought, attention and constant re-drafting as more information is uncovered.

Where there are misunderstandings regarding the nature of the task, this is often centre wide and indicates that there needs to be careful reading of the guide regarding this task.

Some candidates are still trying to update a practice for a particular audience, offering directorial or design or performance advice. In some instances candidates are choosing plays/pieces of theatre which are not from the practice.

The most common problem is that candidates do not refer to the play/piece of theatre in enough detail and remain very general about the application of the research. The most successful Research Investigations are ones which consistently refer back to the play/piece of theatre, referring to the aspect they have chosen as it appears in the play/piece of theatre.

There was a substantial number of Research Investigations that used the first part of the essay to provide research into the practice and the second half to apply this to the piece of theatre/play. Though there is nothing wrong with this, it makes it more difficult to fully apply the research and encourages candidates to provide general, rather than specific, research.

Some practices make it more difficult for candidates to meet the requirements of the task. Theatre of the Absurd often encourages a literary analysis; Epic Theatre and Theatre of Cruelty encourage candidates to offer creative responses regarding the staging of the play/piece of theatre which does not fulfil the task. Theatre practices that have fixed conventions are recommended.

Criterion C

The presentation of the Research Investigations is generally of a high quality with candidates understanding the requirements of an academic register and tone. Visual material is well presented though there are still instances of candidates who do not take adequate care with the quality of the image and in some instances reproduce it in black and white where colour is more appropriate (especially if they are discussing colour). In some cases candidates' Research Investigations would benefit from visuals especially when they have chosen an aspect of design.

The structure of the essay is important and this should be analytical, looking at a practice and applying it to the play/piece of theatre, examining possibilities according to the range of sources they are consulting. The essay should not be descriptive as this does not demonstrate that the candidate has analysed the research and drawn conclusions from it regarding the staged action of the play/piece of theatre.

Candidates, especially at SL, where the word limit is less, are describing the plot of the play/piece of theatre in too much detail which has an impact on the number of words they have left to fulfil the requirements of the task.

Though it is easier to organize by subheadings, the stronger candidates were able to integrate the research and its application. The subheadings in many instances impeded the flow of the reading and didn't encourage a holistic answer to the question.

Criterion D (HL only)

A few candidates did not submit a critique of sources which makes a substantial difference to the marks. On the other hand some candidate's marks improved substantially where there was an excellent critique of sources, even if the main Research Investigation was not of high quality.

Candidates' understanding and execution of this criterion has improved dramatically with some very sophisticated, thorough and careful critiques that address both the nature and reliability of the source, the way the candidate has used it and its relevance to their research. HL candidates should note that this constitutes 25% of their marks.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers must ensure the cover sheet is completed and signed.
- Make sure the play/piece of theatre is from the practice.
- Make sure every single piece of evidence and information presented is attributed. It is better to attribute as much as you can whether through footnotes, endnotes or within the body of the text.
- Research should be consistently applied to the play/piece of theatre.
- Candidates should continue to draft and develop their questions as they research. The narrower the question the more in depth the answer and the application of the research.
- The register should be analytical rather than descriptive, with the candidate presenting the research, analyzing it and then communicating how this would be applied to a play/piece of theatre.
- The quality of visuals is important. They need to be clearly reproduced and of an adequate size so that any points they are making can be clearly seen. If colour is significant then the visuals should be in colour.
- Candidates need to include visuals especially in Research Investigations that focus on design.

Theatre Performance & Production Presentation

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	7-10	11-14	15-18	19-22	23-30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

November 2012 saw a radical improvement in performance in response to this assessment task. Stand outs would be higher achievement levels in Criteria B and D. Traditionally, these criteria have been challenging for candidates but this session showed a marked improvement with candidates making explicit reference to applied research. The fact that the four criteria really work so closely together means that high achievement levels in reflection require a strong range of work and an interest in conveying how that work might connect together through interesting exploratory and experimental work. There is still a tendency to stick to conventional approaches in relation to the work selected for teaching. The emphasis on Eurocentric theory continues but it was significant that the better work was often characterized by a fresh engagement with more local practices and traditions. The comparative work on practices and traditions often saw these presented as active theory, ways of doing theatre that held within their movement a theory of what acting is, the ability to grasp this was a positive sign that candidates, when encouraged by courageous teaching, are capable of moving outside verbal theory into theory embodied and acted.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

The interesting feature from many centers was the notable interest in questions of cultural identity and the theatre that has emerged from this in recent decades. The confidence with which these young candidates are taking on these themes is invigorating. The growing awareness of eastern theatre cultures is also evident. This made for some exciting contrasts in theatre practice. It was interesting to listen to candidates who had explored diversity in their visits to the theatre and again for many centers from the major urban centers accessibility to live theatre was not an issue. The importance for the candidate to have a firm grasp of exactly what this criterion is asking for should be stressed. Too often, excellent presentations were compromised because the focus shifted away from the designated criterion areas. The range of work touched upon is necessarily less extensive at standard level but it is a fact that many candidates at this level were far too restricted in their range, a problem that had consequences in relation to the criteria dealing with synthesis and reflection.

Criterion B

This was often done very well with many candidates relaxed with the idea of creating a notional pattern of intellectual response with many different strands. The ability to hold many different approaches to theatre in a creative relationship to each other was encouraging and few of the candidates were afraid to experiment and explore. The use of images is always a functional way “into” this criterion and there were many examples of illuminating use of images, far transcending the mundane illustrative approaches that are the norm. Where the candidates narrated the course in their presentation and used a sequential way of doing so they usually did not manage to meet the specific requirements of this criterion. The tyranny of explaining what happened in the course, as opposed to simply selecting a careful analysis of it by building up a pattern of response to it, made the former approach burdensome and non-

productive. Content heavy, reflecting emotional immersion rather than interesting (synthesized) understanding, these narratives were general and lacked focus.

Criterion C

For effective reflection to occur candidates have to be adept at connecting the demands of the criteria as organically as possible at the reflective moments. Many achieved these establishing lines of reflective thought that were able to link a performance to a theory and a practice and test all three against a personal involvement in some aspect of the whole. If the reflective narrative loses ground to the reflective analysis, as it tended to do more at higher than standard level, then this marks a shift of understanding from identification to insight. It was refreshing to see reflection focusing on candidates' own work so that the reflective practitioner role was assumed by some, a mark of a more mature, nuanced appreciation of how we "know" in theatre. The quality of the teaching the candidate receives is strongly felt in how the candidate responds to all criteria but in this one it is particularly evident because too often it is clear that the candidate has not been taught reflective skills but has been simply left to "reflect". The importance of knitting the reflective into the other specific criteria demands is a crucial point to stress.

Criterion D (HL only)

This was where candidates really appeared to make a breakthrough with more explicit links to research. This certainly helps the moderator to confirm marks since it constitutes stronger evidence than the conjecture born from trying to figure out implicit indications. The academic approach to theory is to be encouraged and was evident here in places but there is still a tendency to "tag" theorists with general reference to their most well-known dictums. The most successful candidates managed to link research not only to application exercises but also to the overall pattern of response they drew in relation to the subject as a whole.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

The list below could be given to candidates to be used as a checklist.

- Select and edit before you present, there is nothing worse than tendentious lines of thought that exist in isolation, look to create a pattern in your thinking, for that you need work that is similar and contrasting.
- Honor the way we understand in theatre and make sure that theory is applied and tested through your own experimentation and exploration. In a like manner do not list the characteristics of a tradition or practice, do it yourself, find out about it actively.
- Always be explicit when you are using insights garnered from specific research, let the moderator know where you have searched and what you have brought back.
- Images can illuminate if you integrate them and make them part of your vision of theatre. If they only illustrate in a strictly literal way you may be missing an opportunity. In any event you need to verbally annotate them in the presentation so that they can come alive and support you.

- Look for diversity in what you see in the theatre and make sure you do something with it; this is where keeping a journal can come in handy.
- Analysis is preferable to narration.
- Emotional responses are natural and fun but this is an assessment task that requires more of you than that. Emotion may be the first step it should not be the last.
- Find resources among yourselves; look at one another as practitioners.
- Move beyond the familiar, explore new work, and challenge old theory.