

THEATRE

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-11	12-22	23-36	34-50	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

Generally speaking, there was a greater sense of independence woven into 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 a theoretical underpinning. Though a theoretical underpinning is not a requirement at SL, it was

encouraging to see the number of candidates that chose to base and develop a project on a sound theoretical and/or practical research base. It was quite obvious that an increasing number of schools understood the significant difference between Options A and B – this is fundamental in achieving success at HL. The most consistent difficulty with the projects chosen at both HL and SL was rooted in candidates' choices of tasks. Candidates are in some instances taking on too many tasks/roles for an independent project and therefore struggling to demonstrate convincing skill development during the project and within the portfolio itself.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

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

This criterion addresses specifically the evidence found within the portfolio of skills in theatre practice. In other words, does the candidate demonstrate the skills he/she acquired during the course of the project? There needs to be evidence of skills related to production/performance elements and theatre practices within the portfolio. Candidates, when approaching a project, need a sufficient grounding in production and performance elements and theatre practice in order to identify the necessary skill-base of a chosen area. It is highly recommended therefore, that such grounding exists within the course.

Criterion C

Candidates should approach reflection with a more evaluative and analytical consideration of learning and development. Emotional and descriptive accounts were in some instances a problem, though not nearly as much as in past sessions. It was encouraging to see 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. The Subject Guide indicates as a formal requirement that the portfolio must have clear headings; the Guide does not, however, indicate that they must be based on the three headings listed above. To do so in many instances meant that evidence of independence and research was limited to the opening section and that reflection was contained within a final section rather than throughout, as indicated in the assessment descriptors. It is recommended that candidates section and title their headings based on whatever is appropriate to the particular project/portfolio.

Criterion D

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. The use of appendices was, in some places, not appropriate to the portfolio; appendices may form a supportive role, but the portfolio cannot be dependent upon them, nor should they introduce new information or content. There is no reason that visuals should be contained within an appendix; if the visual is useful in demonstrating evidence of learning and/or skill development, then it is better placed within the main body of the portfolio and its source acknowledged.

Criterion E (HL Only)

Despite the very encouraging signs from work submitted, there were still some candidates who did not approach the task at HL with a theoretical underpinning into theatre 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.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers might consider more opportunities for practical application of theory. The most successful projects were those where the candidates established clear objectives and made reference to those objectives throughout the portfolio. The structure and development of the projects should be heavily influenced by planning, exploration and discovery, and candidates 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 candidates in the assessment of their own work using the assessment criteria and wording in the descriptors.

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

Generally, at both HL and SL, the task was completed correctly and with focus on the different sections of the work – i.e. exploration of stimulus, development of idea/concept, communication of on-stage action, description and justification of design elements, (and HL commentary) - attempted to varying degrees. The level of the work ranged from a collection of undeveloped ideas to outlines of sophisticated pieces of theatre. The most popular stimulus was *'For the Love of God – Damien Hirst'* followed by *'The DNA of human beings'*. The music *'See Emily Play'* was the least popular choice of task stimulus.

There are some points that need to be addressed by schools to ensure that the correct procedures on academic honesty and task requirements are being adhered to.

- **The problem of non-attribution of image sources is a major concern.** Many scripts contained downloaded images from the internet and used them, at will, to communicate inspirations and ideas. Other images are downloaded and built into collages with, again, no attribution of original sources. Some schools add a bibliography and attribute the image sources within this. This practice is acceptable but there are still too many scripts that provide no source attribution and are, therefore, designated as examples of academic malpractice.
- Some candidates submit photocopies of their work as they wish to retain the script as part of their college or further education portfolio. **This is acceptable providing the copies are complete and clear.** There were a few examples, this year, of work that was difficult to decipher due to cut-off sections and/or illegible text. These problems can affect the mark awarding capability of the examiner.
- The PPP is an assessment task in which ***“the stimuli must not be explored in class and candidates must not have any prior knowledge about the nature of them. Candidates must prepare for this assessment alone and without teacher assistance.”*** (Theatre guide p28). There were a few instances in submitted work this year where there were suggestions that the task had been approached as a class group with scripts from the same school all having chosen the same theorist making the same points in a very similar manner. There were also instances of all scripts from the same schools being inspired to use a published text (the texts were different) but the links to the stimuli were, sometimes, questionable suggesting possible group work in the preparatory stage of the task. As outlined in the Theatre guide, this is an **individual assessment task** without collaborative engagement of any sort.
- Marking scripts can take much time as examiners try to ensure the best possible mark is awarded for candidate endeavors. **Placing work in plastic folders**, although protecting the work and offering an attractive presentation **slows the marking process down considerably as examiners annotate the work to ensure that candidates (and teachers) have the most beneficial feedback possible.**

Candidate performance against each criterion

The majority of HL and SL proposals showed an **imaginative response** to the stimuli by brainstorming, researching, showing personal responses or suggesting secondary stimuli through inspiration. The better proposals clearly showed a **process from stimulus to product with justified choices**. Weaker proposals tended to outline a process but were often lacking in why certain ideas suddenly appeared or their link to a process. Most proposals had either an explicit or implicit **concept for performance**. The stronger proposals used this concept to justify artistic choices to give cohesion to the intended piece whereas the weaker efforts hardly referred to the concept in the development process. From text and images in the stronger proposals one could **envisage an onstage event with action, design and movement conveyed by plot/story outlines and storyboards with shape and colour**. Weaker proposals often left many questions unanswered with undeveloped outlines of action and incomplete descriptions of the use and effects of production elements. The best commentaries at HL clearly **linked what happened on stage to research/theory with practical examples** OR showed how **practical effects on stage led to intended outcomes in the audience**.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- In class, practise exploring a stimulus through brainstorming of ideas, research, personal reactions and links to inspirations/secondary stimuli.
- In class, practise clarifying and applying 'a concept' to coherent artistic choices in a piece of theatre. Do exercises to justify the choices using a selected concept and looking at viewed performances to 'guess the concept'. Read and discuss the chapter in the TSM p128 'An artistic director speaks: starting points and living notebooks'.
- In class, look and practise different ways of communicating on stage action including a theatre storyboard (not a film storyboard!).
- In class, work on the skill of preliminary design sketching for space, set, costume, lighting effects using line, shape, colour and texture.
- When, in class, using images downloaded from the internet ALWAYS ATTRIBUTE THE SOURCES so that it becomes an automatic response and describe what these inspiration-images lead to as artistic choices.
- In class, practise linking theory concepts researched to practical in-performance examples.

Further comments

The skills for successful completion of the PPP must be rehearsed in class over the two years. The PPP final assessment should be an opportunity for the candidate, on their own, to demonstrate and celebrate their facility in applying the skills necessary to communicate a creative and mise-en-scene process from stimulus to performance.

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 range and suitability of the work submitted

The most successful candidates chose appropriate theatre practices and had researched carefully before selecting a suitable play and developing their research question. Initiative and perseverance were demonstrated in instances where candidates were engaged with the practice they had chosen and were therefore motivated to research extensively.

Candidates that have a clear understanding of the task (Criterion B) are usually also successful in the other criteria: a clear and focused question encourages focused research into the chosen practice (Criterion A) and helps the candidate to respond to the question in detail. The narrower the focus the more successful the investigation.

The candidate should develop their question after preliminary research into the theatre practice they have selected and the play/piece of theatre from that practice. The question should be redrafted as candidates gain more knowledge and understanding of the theatre practice, as they move from broad research to much more specific detail.

Research Investigations were generally presented well, with good use of visual material and employing a formal register. Decorative visual material is still sometimes included and candidates are penalized for irrelevance. Visual material must be considered as part of the response or to illustrate what the candidate is explaining. The purpose of the visual should be clearly indicated.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

The attribution of every source used is very important and this is particularly the case in the introduction when candidates sometimes tend to provide unattributed information.

Though using actual theatre artists and educators as a source is greatly encouraged, the person interviewed or contacted should be a specialist rather than someone with an interest in the theatre practice. Some candidates are citing particular artists as sources who are clearly not specialists in the theatre practice being researched and as a result their contributions are sometimes irrelevant or too general to be useful.

Criterion B

It is imperative that candidates select a play from the practice, as clearly stated in the guide and on the cover sheet, in order to fulfil the requirements of the task. The most successful Research Investigations chose a theatre practice where there were strong conventions which have often not altered over time.

Focusing on answering the question is essential as candidates can be penalized for irrelevant material. Sometimes candidates are tempted to show their broad knowledge and make use of their research but unless the information relates directly to the question, this is not recommended.

The question should also be redrafted as the candidate's knowledge of the theatre practice increases. The most successful Research Investigations has a narrow focus which gave the candidate the opportunity to answer with depth rather than breadth.

Criterion C

Large chunks of quotes often impede the flow of the essay and provide unfocused information. The candidate is better off paraphrasing ('According to...') rather than including unedited chunks of text. In some instances, especially in the case of Research investigations focusing on Theatre of the Absurd, candidates presented a literary analysis of a text, demonstrating why a particular play would be categorized as a piece of theatre of the absurd. This is an inappropriate register and also does not fulfil the requirements of the task.

Candidates should also be mindful of writing lists of aspects they have discovered. When this is recurring in an essay it can affect the register so that the essay reads more like notes.

Criterion D. Critique of Sources (HL ONLY)

There was generally an improvement in this criterion with more candidates effectively critiquing the sources as well as demonstrating how the source was used and its usefulness.

All sources cited within the body of the essay must be critiqued.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- The research question like the essay should be also drafted and redrafted and adjustments should be made as the research grows and the essay develops to

ensure that the question is appropriate to the answer and vice versa.

- Candidates need access to sufficient theatre resources in order to be able to make good choices for their Research Investigations.
- Teachers should prepare candidates during the course by helping them develop the skills required for this task- research, attribution, setting up a question, essay writing, critiquing of sources, choosing the right play etc. It is also advisable to engage candidates with small research projects where they have to do practical research for productions that teachers may be working on as part of their extra-curricular programme.
- It is a good idea to get candidates to assess sample material as this gives them the chance to get a good understanding of the criteria and the requirements of the Research Investigation.
- Candidates need guidance on how to integrate quotes and properly attribute sources. It cannot be assumed that candidates know how to do this from writing in other Diploma subjects. They should be taught how to plan, structure and write an academic essay, paying attention to coherence and an appropriate register.
- The critique of sources should include an objective description of the source, analyzing its reliability, general usefulness, the way it's written, the way information is communicated etc. as well as a more subjective critique where the candidate explains how they used the source and how useful the source was for this particular research.

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 work was characterized by a reasonable range of reference but there was nothing that seized the attention as being new and revolutionary in the approaches. Tried and tested ground was covered with a pleasing attention to the work of the first Australians. There was a puzzling fascination with European practitioners which, on reflection, may have something to do with notions of cultural bias but is a little strange in that there is now so much more exposure to Eastern and Oceanic theatrical traditions. The famous trio: Stanislavski, Brecht and Artaud were prominently featured. It was interesting to see work that really focused on practical explorations of theory, the best kind of analysis and reflection here certainly bordered on the intense engagement of action research. Bunraku, Noh and Kabuki were all covered in this way in the best of the work, in the less effective work the examiner heard a great deal of generic information about these traditions but not much of it was very productive unless it was associated to practical work. The best of it was. Use of images was sometimes significant and on one occasion, brilliantly so. Again there were occasions when candidates did not even mention the images, nor manage to avoid putting more than one image per A4 sheet. Reading the Subject Guide carefully makes sense in this context, this is a complicated assessment task.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Those candidates who were selective and edited their experience around two or three pivotal experiences generally managed to produce analysis that was based on specific detail rather than general ideas which exist in the world of opinion rather than argument. The relationship that should exist between the candidate as spectator at the theatre and the positive effect of diverse productions on the work was managed very well by some of the candidates. This could be exhilarating if the work was on unfamiliar types of performance that challenged the candidate to revise established ideas about what theatre is and what it can do. There were too many candidates at SL who opted to narrate their experience, some of these narratives were enjoyable but they did not tally with the criteria's expectations.

Criterion B

This is always a challenging criterion which appears to favour the candidate who has an instinct for discovering creative relationships between the works or even within a specific work. When this is done well it really does help to "fire" the presentation. Sporadic connections which flit in and out of the presentation is usually married to the sequential arrangement of the presentation, the kind of structure that keeps the candidate moving along the chronology of the course and makes it more difficult to design the more patterned and nuanced response a more thoughtful attention to fewer but more resonant experiences can engender.

Criterion C

This is usually the criterion that candidates feel most confident about but this is misplaced if they do not select their focus for reflection with care. Reflection can also be a synthesizing force which feeds back into Criterion B. The typical candidate will always be enthusiastic

about what they have done but this needs to be tempered by a closer distinction observed between a deeper more ruminative learning and a superficial comment.

Criterion D

Research is not always explicitly described as such in the presentations which mean that some observations, valid products of research are mistaken for something shallower. The candidate should tell the examiner if an insight originates for a secondary source like an academic study or a primary source like a performance.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates should be mandated to refer to the images; they should be made to work as illuminating features or structuring agents in the presentation.

Candidates (and their teachers) should visit the theatre as often as possible, or if they cannot, they should access live performances through other means and relate what you see to your own work.

Candidates need to build a pattern to their responses and concentrate on a reflection that synthesizes experience and does not simply comment on it.

In their exploration of world theatre, candidates should not be satisfied with the conventional route to understanding; this is a creative subject that rewards the subversive, the taker of risks.