

May 2016 subject reports

THEATRE

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 10	11 – 21	22 – 33	34 – 49	50 – 65	66 – 81	82 – 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 9	10 – 20	21 – 31	32 – 48	49 – 65	66 – 81	82 – 100

Collaborative Project

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 4	5 – 8	9 – 12	13 – 17	18 – 21	22 – 26	27 – 32

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 4	5 – 8	9 – 12	13 – 17	18 – 21	22 – 26	27 – 32

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The Collaborative Project is an extraordinarily good task, for the purpose to measure student attainment in this area, and goes right to the heart of the nature of this subject:

“Theatre is a dynamic, collaborative and live art form. It is a practical subject that encourages discovery through experimentation, the taking of risks and the presentation of ideas to others. It results in the development of both theatre and life skills; the building of confidence, creativity and working collaboratively.” (IBDP Theatre guide, first assessment 2016)

It is clear how the approaches to learning, knowledge and skills learned in the teaching of the core areas of the course transfer into to the Collaborative Project and so generates exciting, collaborative and original student work.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

At its best, students provided examiners with real insight into their personal context in theatre. Students gave detailed accounts of their own personal approaches, interests and skills in theatre and the reasons and causes for learning them whilst studying the course. This was especially delightful for examiners to read and gave an exciting overview of what students have been experiencing over the past two years of the course in IBDP Theatre classrooms around the world.

Students who chose a professional company that creates and stages original pieces of theatre from the suggested list in the Teacher Support Material (TSM) on the Online Curriculum Centre (OCC), often gave a more detailed account of the company’s creative approaches employed. Students who excelled in this area used and cited a variety of sourced research, such as websites, published articles, books, direct communication and interviews with the company and experiences of practical workshop. It was clear that these students understood the creative approaches employed by the company and then were able to clearly and fully consider how this could influence their approach to collaborative theatre making. This sometime led to effective and clear choices for Criterion C.

Some anomalies were that often candidates discussed more than one professional theatre company or chose companies that do not create and stage original pieces of theatre; some candidates were far heavier on details of the professional theatre company (where they were based, their history etc.) instead of focusing on their approaches to creating original theatre. Again, many students did not consider how the research on the professional theatre company’s approaches might influence their own personal approach to collaborative theatre making. This seems to be an area where teachers could spend more time with their students during the study of the core areas of the course.

Criterion B

In this criterion, better students were able to articulate the skills, interests and approaches of the other ensemble members in regards to forming their group. Examiners were given a clear idea of the thought process the student went through in determining how the group was formed. The weaker students made superficial comments around group formation, such as, there were only three of us in the class and therefore we had to work together. Careful consideration and conversations around the professional theatre companies that had been researched by others also helped students explain how the group

was formed. The ones that continued to reflect on the group's strengths, weaknesses or challenges and benefits throughout the process were able to achieve higher marks. Many students struggled with meaningful formation of the group and barely addressed the challenges and benefits of collaboration.

In regards to choosing and explaining how the group went about exploring the starting point, which includes identifying the target audience and intentions of the group, there were a variety of responses. Stronger groups chose a starting point from one of the mandatory categories listed in the subject guide. Examiners noted that students that followed the mandatory categories listed found dynamic starting points that allowed for inspiring collaborative sharing of ideas and possible approaches. This type of exploration led to clearly defined roles, engaged research and helped students determine their target audience as well as their artistic intention. The range of how students explored the starting point was quite broad. It was for many discussions, articles of interest that related to the initial starting point, theorists and practical exercises from their professional theatre company's approaches which allowed students to use the knowledge and experience that they had gained in the course. The weaker groups had trouble articulating meaningful exploration of their starting point and a lack of understanding in regards to the target audience and their artistic intention. Even though many students have their school community as their target audience, the stronger candidate was able to provide a sophisticated and nuanced connection and reason for their chosen audience, while the weaker candidate made more superficial comments such as, since the show was at the school our target audience was teenagers. Perhaps students could find deeper connections between the artistic intention of the piece, the chosen audience and the artistic impact the piece hopes to achieve.

It was evident in some cases that teachers gave the starting point or decided the formation of the group. The role of the teacher while students are working on the assessment task is clearly explained in the subject guide and must be followed. The students who paid strict attention to the command terms and their definition had more success than students who did not.

Criterion C

This criterion proved to be the most difficult in regards to meeting all of the specific requirements of the descriptor bands. That being said, the students who excelled usually followed the suggested subheading and specifically divided up the two bullet point descriptors within Criteria C in the 7-8 marker band, in order to address each one separately and paying attention to the specific command term. The first bullet point descriptor asks the student to clearly explain how the group practically developed, structured and prepared the original piece for presentation, clearly identifying their own contribution to this process. Many students saw this as an opportunity to articulate the ensemble nature of the devising process, so the word 'we' was used in a way that didn't allow the student to identify their specific contribution to the process.

It is important to understand that the specific explorations a student leads in order to help shape the final productions can be through a variety of mediums such as, workshops, playwriting, theorist exercises, world theatre tradition, technical contribution, performing, directing etc., and needs to be inclusive of "the group" in its context. These explorations may or may not result in evidence in the final piece but must have helped shape the final piece. It important to note what is edited out in the development of the piece is as important as what is included, however artistic explorations are not necessarily artistic choices for Criteria D. For example, a student who led a mask workshop in the development of the piece but did not result in using masks in the final production is as important in the documentation of the process as long as the student clearly identifies and explains the reasons or causes for this work. That being stated it is important to make sure that the student can fulfil the

requirements of Criterion D (their artistic choices), which must be evidence in the video and is obviously part of the final production. This will be addressed in greater detail under Criterion D. It is important to make a clear distinction between artistic explorations and identified contributions to the process.

Criterion D

Here, many students provided clear, effective and sophisticated evaluations of their presentation of the original piece by giving the reason and causes, i.e. explaining, by linking their original artistic intentions, capturing and measuring audience impact in various ways, and articulating how intention and impact are intertwined. This type of evaluation allowed for students to explain what worked and why it worked and/or what didn't work and why it didn't work. The weaker candidates had scantily treated evaluations that did not make references or connections to their artistic intention and audience impact. We saw a lot of summary paragraphs about how fun or challenging it was to work on the project without actually addressing the specific criteria. The word "sophisticated" implies that a student would be able to use appropriate theatre terminology and knowledge when evaluating. The stronger candidates were able to use correct terminology and were sensitive to what worked and what didn't and why as well as how Tension/Atmosphere/Emotion/Meaning were created and communicated. The clear understanding of their artistic intention and thoughtful ways to capture and measure audience impact allowed for a more sophisticated evaluation.

The second bullet point descriptor asks the student to explain his or her own specific artistic choices as evidence in the video recording. Many students were able to give reasons and causes as to the artistic choices that the student made and this was clearly reflected in both the portfolio and the video. These showed dynamic, thoughtful, and creative choices using various forms, mediums and techniques. It was clear to see skills being executed at a high level. Many students used one or more elements of Tension, Emotion, Atmosphere and Meaning to explain their artistic choices. This allowed for greater success in justifying and analyzing the student's artistic choice and gave a more insightful way to explain the reasons and causes of the student's artistic decisions. The weaker candidates had various issues arise. Some students struggled to identify their artistic choices from the groups, some could not justify or explain why they had made those choices, and the video did not provide evidence of the artistic choices that the student made. Many students submitted the entire 13-15 minute video without identifying what the examiner was supposed to focus on, which does not follow the specific requirements of how the video should be submitted. Teachers must ensure that the student is submitting and uploading no more than 4 minutes and follow the subject guide requirements for the specific guidelines. Some topics were inappropriate and so teachers should be in dialogue with their students about the content of the piece without dictating a choice. The subject guide is clear on this matter.

Director's Notebook

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 7	8 – 13	14 – 20	21 – 26	27 - 32

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 7	8 – 13	14 – 20	21 – 26	27 – 32

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The Director's Notebook clearly and effectively demonstrated students' engagement with a wide and diverse range of play texts of varying lengths, from different periods and written in different styles. Giving students free choice in their selection of play text has meant that students have generally chosen plays that they are interested in directing. A passionate engagement and thorough knowledge of the entire play and its nuances was evident in the strongest Director's Notebooks. Students who chose plays that have some complexity and which gave scope for creative interpretation and for the inclusion of imaginative ideas tended to do better at the task. Some students struggled more with naturalistic plays like Ibsen's *The Doll's House*.

The Director's Notebooks which addressed the selected play and its staging challenges in depth and which found theatrical ways to communicate the ideas of the play were the strongest. The students who explained and provided detail, especially regarding their directorial intentions for the entire play, the impact they wanted their production to have on audience and how this was to be achieved through performance and production were the most successful.

The Director's Notebooks were presented in a variety of formats with many students using text to meet the requirements of the task and explain their ideas. Some Director's Notebooks effectively used a variety of appropriate formats including images, diagrams and charts which were relevant, carefully selected and clearly explained. These demonstrated an imaginative response to the task.

It was clear that some students misunderstood the task and in Criteria B and C only addressed the two moments they had selected from the entire play. As a result, they did not address their directorial intentions or impact on audience for the entire play. This is required for Criterion B and C.

The attribution of sources, including images, within the body of the work is a serious issue and many Director's Notebooks provided only a bibliography or list of sources, without citing sources within the body of the Director's Notebook. This is a serious issue as not sourcing appropriately is considered academic malpractice. Some candidates also thought that once they had completed research for Criterion A, they no longer needed to cite sources in any other areas of the Director's Notebook where they had consulted sources.

Though students used the titles recommended in the Diploma Theatre guide to differentiate each section, this was sometimes confused especially regarding the delineation between Criterion B and C. Criterion B must present the student's artistic responses, creative ideas and explorations *prior* to developing their directorial intentions. Their final ideas regarding performance space, performance style and production elements need to be stated under Criterion C and should relate to their directorial intention and intended impact on audience.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Successful candidates under this criterion researched the context in which the play originated and/or the play's theoretical context (examining style/form/practice and/or genre) and made connections between this research and the play.

Students are required to explain the cultural and/or theoretical context/s of the play. If they choose to research both, both need to be detailed.

Some students confused context with the setting of the play i.e. the location where or the historical period when the play is set. Though the setting of the play and the cultural context in which the playwright is writing are sometimes interconnected, this is not always the case. The Theatre guide states that the cultural context is that from which the play originated. Research into the cultural or theoretical context in this instance requires the students to research and consider why a particular play was written at a particular time, in a particular place by a particular person. The student needs to consider the effect this context has possibly had on the writing of the play, the playwright's reasons for writing the play, the ideas presented in the play, the style, genre and the form the playwright has chosen to present their ideas.

The most successful students also explicitly related their research into the cultural/theoretical context to the play itself and/or to the ideas in the play showing an effective understanding of the significance of contextualizing a play text.

Some students presented the playwright's life and biographical details as the context without indicating the significance of these details to the play. Biography is only relevant insofar as it relates to the cultural and/or theoretical context of the play which is the requirement of the task. Often it gives more of an insight into the ideas that preoccupy the playwright. This is addressed by the second strand of this criterion that deals with ideas. Playwright's biography alone is not sufficient to qualify as cultural context unless this is made explicit by the student.

Many students also related their own personal context, giving personal reasons for their choice of play or interpretation. Though this is interesting to read and often gives us an insight into the way a student is responding to a play, this is not a requirement of the task and does not feature in, nor is rewarded by, any of the criteria.

Some students are relying on revision aids which, alone, are not sufficient for research purposes.

Students were generally successful at explaining the ideas of the play. There needs to be a detailed explanation of how these ideas are presented in the play by the playwright. While some students had difficulty explaining how ideas were linked by the playwright, the more successful students identified what they considered to be the essence of the play and its central meaning; they demonstrated how ideas were connected to this with close reference to the text, the action, characters, style and the form of the play.

Criterion B

Many students were not clear what this criterion required them to do, though some seemed to relish this as an area for creative freedom and wild imaginings. There seems to be general confusion between 'artistic responses, creative ideas and explorations of the play' (Criterion B) and 'directorial intentions

which are supported by a range of ideas' (Criterion C).

Students were most successful when they presented their initial interactions and interpretations of the play in the form of sensual responses, images that inspired them, ideas that came to them about particular scenes and moments from the play, questions that they had, aspects that they found interesting or challenging, experiments with style, considerations of performance space, design alternatives etc. These demonstrated a working out of ideas rather than a coherent directorial. The more creative students sought inspiration from visual arts, literature and music looking showing how these contributed to their ideas.

Links to experiences of live theatre as a spectator were, generally, not substantial enough. Some students chose to attempt to make thematic links between the subject matter of the plays they had seen and the text they had chosen. This is not required and in many instances this was forced. This strand of Criterion B requires the students to analyse and explain in detail how directors of productions they have experienced as a spectator have used performance and production (performance space, scenery, costume, lights and sound) to create a particular effect on the audience and communicate the meaning of the play. Moments of tension, emotion and atmosphere can be used as a guidance here. This analysis of the director's craft is best served by a focus on particular moments of theatre the student has experienced as a spectator. The student is required to analyse these moments, draw out the learning from them regarding directorial use of performance and production elements and explain how this will inform, inspire or influence their own direction. This is not about imitation of what they have seen but about understanding how the craft of the director in the theatre they have witnessed as a spectator can be applied to their own work as a director. This is what is meant by 'links'.

Criterion C

For this criterion, students need to consider the performance and production of the *entire* play and not just their selected moments which are addressed in Criterion D.

There was sometimes duplication between this and the work presented in Criterion B.

Criterion C presents the final decisions the director has made regarding their intentions after, as is evidenced in Criterion B, they have examined and responded to the play and reflected on how other directors have used performance and production elements.

The first strand of this criterion requires the student to present their directorial decisions supported by clear explanation of what performance space they will use, how they will use scenic (set and costume) and technical (lights and sound) production elements and style of performance (how actors will use body, voice, action). The performance and production elements should be explained using both visuals and text and should support the students' statements regarding their directorial intentions. The more successful students focused on how they were going to present the play's ideas (identified in Criterion A) with consideration of the play's form and style (even when they had decided to present the play in a style different to its original style). In this criterion the student needs to demonstrate both imagination and sensitivity to the play text.

Directorial intentions can be best presented using the future tense to express decisions made and to share intentions regarding a future production of the play. Students should explain what, as directors,

they want their particular production to communicate to an audience (intention), what experience they want the audience to have (impact) and how they intend to achieve this (using elements of performance and production). The students who did well in this criterion generally began by explaining their intentions and then explained how they were going to achieve them, providing details of how they were going to use particular performance and production elements to create a particular effect. They explained what experience they wanted the audience to have and demonstrated how they would achieve this, providing an insight into how, as directors, they were going to guide the audience's experience of the entire play.

The second strand of this criterion, though linked to the first, requires the student to consider the impact they want their production to have on an audience. This requires them to consider the audience's experience of the entire play, from first moment to final moment, and to explain how they would engineer this experience for the audience. They do not need to go through the whole play in detail but they should consider the effect and experience of the play as a whole. This strand is fundamentally about what they, as director's, want the audience to take away from the play and what they want to remain (with the audience) after the play is over.

Though the identification of a target audience may be something to mention, this should not be the focus of this section. It is the audience's experience that is significant here.

Criterion D

There was a variety of interpretations regarding the definition of 'a moment', ranging from a particular stage direction, to a short excerpt, to a whole scene. All of these were acceptable and fulfilled the requirements of the task. It was clear, however, that the more defined and narrower the moment, the easier it was for students to provide in-depth analysis, detail and explanation. The more successful candidates chose particular and precise moments of tension, emotion, atmosphere or meaning (as indicated in the guide) and explained how these precise moments would be presented, giving the examiner a clear mental picture, through words and images, of how the moments would be staged and the impact this would have on the audience.

Successful students explained why they had chosen these particular moments and why they were of particular significance for the whole play and for the audience's experience.

The second strand requires the students to address how performance and production (scenic and technical) elements work together to create a particular effect. More successful candidates explained how they, as directors, were using the coming together of these individual elements to create a particular impact on the audience.

Some students forgot to link their intended impact on audience to their stated intentions or tagged this on to the end.

It is a requirement that the student addresses two moments not just one.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Students need to understand the key command terms which differentiate each of the bands and which guide examiners: 'list' (band 1-2), 'outline' (band 3-4), 'describe' (band 5-6) and 'explain' (band 7-8). Definitions for these are provided at the back of the Theatre subject guide.

It is a good idea to run exercises with the students so they have a good understanding of the difference between these terms.

- Students should be instructed on how to cite sources within the body of the text and reminded of the seriousness of what could be considered academic malpractice.
- Students must be clear that they cite the source of all images they use in the body of the Director's Notebook.
- Students should be encouraged to explore different formats to explain and present their ideas.
- Encourage students to treat each area of the criteria equally - some notebooks were unbalanced. Each criterion and each strand of each criterion is worth equal marks.
- It may be beneficial to provide candidates with more examples of what is relevant research regarding cultural and/or theoretical context and to give them an understanding of how the cultural and/or theoretical contexts from the play originated, impacts the directing and staging of a play.
- Students should have the experience of identifying ideas, issues, themes in a play text and examining how these ideas are presented by the playwright and how these can be communicated to an audience through performance and production.
- Criterion C addresses the students' intentions for the entire play. It was clear that students need to be learn how to 'read' and analyse theatre experiences they have as spectators, examining their own responses and how directors have used performance and production elements to elicit these responses throughout a production. They should look out particularly for moments of tension, emotion, atmosphere and meaning.
- Students should examine effective moments of theatre sourced by the teacher (this can be digital) and analyse the how these have been created, examining directorial intention, use of performance and production elements and impact on audience.
- Students must understand the role of the director and how what is seen on stage is a result of a decision making process and a directorial vision.
- Students must understand and practically explore performance elements (use of body, voice, movement, gesture, proxemics, style etc) and production elements which are divided in the Theatre guide into scenic (set and costume) and technical (sound and lights). Students should also consider choice of performance space and audience configuration. Students should have practical experience of all of these areas and should understand and be able to explain how these elements are used individually and in combination to communicate the ideas of a play and to create a particular impact on audience.
- It is a good idea to examine the difference between initial artistic responses, creative ideas, interpretations and the formation of final directorial intentions. Look at different ways that artistic responses and creative ideas can be presented and formatted.
- Examine with students how initial responses to a play then inform and shape the final intentions, even when ideas are rejected.
- Give students opportunities to communicate directorial intentions for plays they study, asking performance and production elements to meet these intentions. This can be done in the form of a pitch.
- Students should practically examine how to create moments of tension, emotion, atmosphere and/or meaning using performance and production (scenic and technical) elements.

It is a good idea to have a mock or mini Director's Notebook during the course so that students are familiar with the requirements of the assessment task.

Examine the titling of the Director's Notebook and discuss how best to organize their notebooks and how to title their sections appropriately and in relation to the requirements indicated in the wording of each criterion.

Research Presentation

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 11	12 – 16	17 – 21	22 – 26	27 – 32

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 11	12 – 16	17 – 21	22 – 26	27 – 32

The range and suitability of the work submitted

When the students and teachers clearly followed the instructions, referred to all eight sections of the assessment criteria, chose a tradition from the list and then focused on a performance (not production) convention, then presentations were generally done well.

There were issues with regards to the quality of filming, which made it hard to measure the student's attainment thoroughly. Common problems were:

- Poor sound quality
- Dark room or student far away from the camera
- Power points not included in the frame and/or not sent to the IB
- Camera not moving with the student and the student leaving the frame (this happened several times for Rakugo sit down theatre)
- Incomplete videos being sent (some as short as minutes)

How closely the students and teachers met the needs of the task:

- The list of traditions to choose from allowed for a range of tastes, foci and ranges of research. This worked well, generally, and allowed the students to speak enthusiastically about their work.
- Students and teachers seemed well prepared in terms of structure and understanding the four sections of the presentation.
- Presentation skills were generally good in terms of pace, referring to images, using power points

- and working with the time frame.
- The majority seemed to understand the task, with a good balance between research, practice and application.
 - Generally, students chose moments that were appropriate for what they were aiming to show.
 - Students generally followed the structure of A to D and understanding the general nature of each section. If they did not do the work in this order they still managed to fulfil the needs of each criterion area.
 - Students generally provide a sources list, but only a small percentage referred to their sources in the presentation.
 - Students were generally enthusiastic about the work, and enjoyed undertaking the task and managed to articulate their learning.
 - There were some excellent moments of theatre, which showed interesting ideas and reflected a clear process exploration of the convention.
 - The use of supporting materials was appropriate.
 - The presentation skills were generally strong and students were well rehearsed.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Please note that for each criterion there are 2 areas, eight in total. Each point is addressed individually.

Criterion A

This was generally done well, and thoroughly, but some students spent 75% of their presentation on this section, leaving little time to do the other sections well.

A1: Many students had good examples, with details of space, characters, design, performance and production elements. Poor examples gave just general ideas. Students were good at speaking about all the production conventions, but were less thorough in explaining their one chosen convention. As this is a research presentation the sourcing is very important. Many students included a clear bibliography and some cited sources in the presentation, but many had a limited range of sources and did not cite appropriately – missing were URLs and/or dates websites were accessed.

A2: Students were good at speaking about all the performance and production conventions of the tradition, but were less thorough in explaining their one selected performance convention in context. The cultural and theoretical context must be linked to their chosen convention often.

Criterion B

This section was generally done poorly. Many students said what moment they had picked, but rarely did they say why or how they had practically explored it. Many did not speak about how they had practically explored their convention.

B1: The better examples of practical and physical exploration clearly showed and referenced research, images, demonstrations and videos, etc. of convention being explored. Students also showed video or photographic evidence of their own physical exploration.

B2: This was a weak area. Students often just gave an introduction to material to be used in the moment of theatre rather than outlining a preparation process. Students that did well in this section explained

the entire moment, breaking down how they approached each stage, before they presented the moment.

Criterion C

Some students did a demonstration of the convention, where it was not put in context so it was hard to tell when the moment started and a demonstration of practical exploration ended. Examples of this included showing the movement of a shadow puppet or the walk of a Noh character, but without giving a context to this work. Some students showed a video of their moment being performed by a professional company - this does not meet the requirements. Also, some students included others in their moment, again, this does not meet the requirements of the assessment criteria.

C1: The stronger moments were off script, showed clear mood, character and theatrical context, as a moment of theatre is created, and the moment is then explained before, during and/or after. Too much stop-start elucidation broke the sense of engagement as a piece of theatre. The most effective moments were done once with a stop/start explanation, then repeated without any explanation, to obtain flow, and an engaging moment.

If students were off script this showed that they were committed and well prepared for the task.

C2: Some students were unclear about what a performance convention was, and described doing movement or gesture, when in fact their convention was a combination of many – for example a melodramatic character. See C1 for the most effective explanation techniques.

Criterion D

This section was generally rushed in the last 1-2 minutes at the end of the presentation, and those who did it tended to make links of the tradition to another practice, not the linking the convention to another practice. Few spoke about links they made to their own practical performance work. Many did explain the impact on them as a learner, and this was done well.

D1: Generally, the students spoke genuinely and enthusiastically about the impact on them as a learner, clearly having enjoyed the work. The best examples also had links to other learning experiences as a performer.

D2: The task is to compare their convention with one other practice NOT to compare the entire tradition with other practices – this was a common mistake. Many students compared their convention to a person (Stanislavsky, Artaud, Brecht) rather than a practice. The teacher needs to help the student make the distinction. A comparison (see command terms in the Theatre guide p73) should include both similarities and differences.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Below are the key areas that need to be addressed by teachers and candidates:

- The assessment criteria: These have been revised to make the convention, moment of theatre and research focus clearer for students and teachers. The eight points of the assessment criteria are also now in line with the questions at the top of each criterion mark band. Ideally a check list for each area of the assessment should be provided to students to enable them to meet all the demands of the task. All eight areas of the assessment criteria need to be

addressed equally by teachers and students. All candidates need to rehearse their presentations to make sure they are within the time limit and using the time effectively.

- Focus on practical process: A key area that was weak was criterion B, which involves student's explanation of how they practically explored the convention and then went about applying that convention to their chosen moment. Teachers need to be give clear examples of how students could approach, record and present this section of the RP – guiding students on documenting their exploration of the convention and approaching the moment.
- Link to practices: The teachers and mentors need to help the students make clearer links to other practices during the course, and these need to be recorded in their journal so they can be referred to for the second section of criterion D.
- Source citation: Teachers need to clearly explain and guide students about how to cite their sources in a presentation and write a bibliography. They need to be reminded to refer to IB academic honesty documents, and refer to their sources throughout the presentation.
- Clothing: Teachers and students need to be aware that a careful selection of clothing for the presentation is necessary. Some candidates dressed up as if they were doing a business or intellectual presentation, and other candidates are dressed-up as if they were on 'vacation'. Candidates who dressed in neutral colours such as black or used a discreet element of their tradition, immersed us better in their presentation, and came across better prepared for what they were about to do. Ideally all back or something specific works best.
- Filming: This needs care and attention to what is in the camera frame and what can be heard. The power point needs to be included, and the movement of the camera needs to follow the student - zooming in on detail. Always check sound quality before filming and before uploading. All teachers need to be advised to have practices filming and also know the structure of the presentation, so they can anticipate movement from the frame and prevent it. Film in a quiet place and avoid filming in a gym, during breaks and turn off all phones, school bells and announcements. Do not film next to the band room while they are rehearsing.
- Uploading: When uploading material teachers need to be aware that there are only two available places to upload. Teachers can upload the film in one place and then the bibliography and supporting materials need to be on the same document, uploaded into the second location on the site.

Some recommendations for schools:

- To consider the purchase/investment of videos and books related to the conventions. There was an excessive use of the internet and very little use of primary sources.
- To film in a quiet area. Avoid filming while other students are on break so there is no background noise, and request that announcements and school bells are turned off for the duration of filming. All teachers should check film and sound quality before sending off.

Further Comments

To help students prepare for this presentation, theatre teachers will find materials, such as exemplar samples and the TSM on the OCC.

Solo Theatre Piece (HL only)

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 7	8 – 11	12 – 16	17 – 21	22 – 26	27 – 32

Considering that this was the first time the subject was being delivered and assessed, most students and schools proved to follow almost all of the requirements of the task. This is understood as demonstrating a good understanding of the task as described in the Theatre subject guide and the TSM. It has been refreshing to see the students at work in their practical presentations, generally applying the theories that were researched from relevant and adequate theorists. Most of the reports used the maximum number of words allowed and were organized following the suggested subheadings.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

In terms of range, the majority of responses embarked in the research of Western theorists and fewer from Eastern traditions. Responses that combined two different theories did not meet the specific requirement of researching the work of one theorist, and had limited success. There were a number of responses that took the work of a playwright (e.g. S. Beckett among others) as the theorist to explore, finding it difficult to identify an aspect of the theory and therefore providing a literary analysis of a text rather than a practical application of an aspect of theory into performance.

When considering the specific requirements of the task, a couple of responses showed candidates that included more than one performer in their piece, or used a voice-over of a fellow student or a teacher; some others made the audience participate actively in the piece, giving their viewers an active participation in the performance. All these fall outside the requirements of the task, that specifically instructs the students, (that) “*other performers are **not** permitted to appear in any part of the final presentation of the solo theatre piece*” (Theatre subject guide, first assessment 2016. p 36.)

Some candidates were giving lectures on a practitioner’s theory and how such theory would inform a proposal for a performance, rather than applying an aspect of the theory to a piece performed by themselves. Others were not performing in front of an audience and recording their videos by themselves in their homes or other spaces, and still some others made several recordings before they were happy with a take to submit.

Very few reports did not meet the word length requirement, going beyond the 3000-word limit. On the other hand, there were several videos that fell under or over the required 4 – 8 minute length for the piece.

There seem to be several interpretations of what Academic Honesty really means. The majority of the reports included a bibliography, but these were, in general, incomplete. Most students failed to cite sources within the body of the report, even though they might have included the sources used in the Bibliography. Many others appeared not to consider it necessary to attribute third-party images or videos, or even audios, used during the performance of the piece itself. All these are serious breaches

to Academic Honesty and must be considered and solved as a matter of urgency by teachers, students and schools.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

This is perhaps the criterion where most students reached high marks. The key has been in providing thorough research of the theorist, the theory and an aspect of the theory, using appropriate primary and secondary sources. Students who did not reach high marks under this Criterion were mainly those who failed to include either secondary, or most frequently primary sources to support their research.

Some students had difficulties in identifying a suitable theorist: movements and styles have been researched (surrealism, improvisation, etc.) and others have selected authors who have made examiners raise the question as to whether they can be considered as theatre theorists at all (Sartre, Weiss, etc).

As already mentioned, there has been a generalised failure to attribute sources properly. Although all students have been able to provide a bibliography for their work, there is a lack of attribution of sources within the body of the report.

Criterion B

Many students have failed to conduct a practical exploration of the chosen theory, and wasted words describing the performance rather than demonstrating the creative process showing relevant and appropriate explorations.

It has also been observed that many students, who have a clear vision of what their intentions are, pay little attention to the use of their mentor, especially when failing to analyse or to ponder on their feedback; this has a direct impact on their mark under this criterion. The role of the peer mentor should be covered throughout the exploration process. The peer mentor is there to question, challenge for clarity, coach, help develop, consider impacts, etc.

Criterion C

Many students have demonstrated originality and flair in their presentations, some of them showing outstanding work. This is not related to the resources available or used, as many have employed very limited technical elements but have nevertheless been able to apply their aspects of theory with imagination, clarity and skill.

Whilst talent, or acting ability per se, is not being assessed, for some chosen theories it was difficult to separate the use of appropriate theatrical techniques from acting ability. Notably, theories surrounding naturalism, and especially aspects concerning emotion memory, circles of attention and finding truth in general, necessarily tended to rely on an attempt to being believable: internal processes are difficult to demonstrate in the practice, thus the ability to acquire suitable naturalistic skills and to apply them to a character became paramount in the selection of these theorists. Choosing a male role for a female performer did not seem to fulfil this aspect of the theory.

The best examples of reports added a section to the three required in the guide, where the candidate explicitly pointed out where in the video they had applied aspects of their chosen theory, though it is not necessary to do so with timestamps, scoring highly for practical application of selected aspect(s).

It has to be noted that some schools have not provided students with the necessary elements to be able to fulfil the requirements in a serious and/or academic manner. Some students have been forced to record their presentations inside a noisy classroom in the middle of a break; some others have recorded their work at home, with no audience or teacher supervision. A number of students claimed that they were not able to set lights/the stage in the way they had planned because of a school production going on at the time of their presentations. Also, some other students have used other people in the performance when this is strongly advised against in the subject guide. It also needs to be clarified that no other person can record voice-overs to be used in the presentation and that when a pre-recorded audio file is being used (as any audio downloaded from the internet), this needs to be clearly attributed in the bibliography.

A large minority of videos did not meet the required time: most of these were under the minimum four minutes; some were over the maximum eight minutes. Some candidates' pieces were under two minutes, and a few under one minute. These pieces did not give the opportunity for students to demonstrate their application of theory beyond a superficial level. Those pieces over the maximum were stopped at eight minutes, and subsequent performance not marked. It must be emphasized that teachers or students are not allowed to cut the final recording of any part of the whole performance if this exceeded the 8-minute time, to make it fulfil the requirement.

Criterion D

This criterion has not presented many problems. It has sometimes been observed though, that as it is the last subheading in the report and needs to be written after the presentation has been conducted, some students dedicate very few words to its completion, therefore providing superficial reflection and little regard to the feedback given by the audience. The fact that they should conduct some kind of talkback session after the presentation needs to be stressed to all teachers and students.

When considering the challenges faced, candidates tended to list the shortcomings or setbacks found in the presentation to an audience, rather than evaluating what they learned throughout the experience of creating their piece.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

The assessment task is quite demanding for an 18-year-old student with little perspective of the historical/socio-cultural range of possible theatre forms and how these might interact or interlock. Yet, much of the work submitted was of a very high quality and demonstrated thoughtful and creative engagement with theatre theorists from around the world.

Teachers are encouraged to read the section of the Theatre Guide dedicated to the Solo Piece carefully, and to lead their students through the process of engaging with a Theatre Theorist in their first year of the course, as required by the guide. They are also reminded of the existence of a TSM that can be found on the OCC page, and includes detailed and extensive material to aid them on the delivery of the course. Participating in the Teachers' Forum is another available tool that provide teachers with the

possibility of discussing ideas and sharing teaching materials across the community of Theatre educators.