

May 2017 subject reports

THEATRE

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 9	10 – 20	21 – 32	33 – 48	49 – 64	65 – 81	82 – 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 8	9 – 19	20 – 30	31 – 47	48 – 64	65 – 80	81 – 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 range and suitability of this year's work showed improvement since the 2016 marking session. It was clear that teachers had taken on the recommendations for the teaching of future candidates from 2016 and implemented them into their theatre courses. However, examiners are still encountering candidate work that clearly does not fulfil the requirements of the task and the assessment criteria. This unfortunately results in candidates not following the required process for the Collaborative Project or the requirements for the portfolio, and subsequently does not fulfil the criteria.

When done well, the Collaborative Project clearly and effectively demonstrates candidates' engaging with a wide and diverse range of starting points, generating exciting, collaborative and original student work with clear artistic intentions that elicit thought-provoking responses from their target audiences. Candidates' portfolios, at the higher level, clearly demonstrate and explain the dynamic stages of their creative process, including preparatory inquiry, practical action and meaningful reflection. Work at the lower end of the spectrum tended to present superficial and disorganized work which lacked explanation or justification.

Candidates seem to make the most of the maximum 15-page limit, but many still need to consider how to divide their work up in an effective way to cover all the criteria successfully. As with 2016, candidates who used the recommended subheadings presented in the theatre guide and paid attention to the 7-8 marker band descriptors and command term(s) were more organized and more successful than candidates who did not. In general, candidates require more engagement with the command terms throughout the course so they can understand what constitutes evaluating, explaining, describing, outlining and listing prior to starting this internal assessment task.

The attribution of sources, including visuals, diagrams, plans, sketches etc. within the body of the work is still a challenge and many Collaborative Project Portfolios provided only a bibliography or list of sources, without citing sources within the body of the portfolio. This is a serious issue as not sourcing

appropriately is considered academic malpractice. Some candidates also thought once they had completed research for Criterion A, they no longer needed to cite sources in any other areas of the Collaborative Project Portfolio where they had consulted sources. If a student uses any work (including ideas or images) belonging to another person in the collaboratively-created piece or the process portfolio, the student must acknowledge the source at point of use and in a list of sources. Failure to acknowledge a source will be raised as an exception and the IB will investigate it.

It is still concerning to see some candidates unprepared for the task and treating serious topics with limited sensitivity. Some topics chosen as a focus for the collaborative project were inappropriate. Teachers must continually discuss the suitability of the work being developed with their candidates (without dictating the content). Teachers are strongly encouraged to review the subject guide on this matter. The health and safety of the student is always a priority over the artistic choices a student or group may want to explore. Teachers and schools are responsible for carefully handling these situations.

Candidate performance against each criterion

It is important that candidates understand that each criterion has TWO strands and that they need address both strands of each criterion separately to ensure they fulfil the demands of each criterion.

Criterion A

Examiners saw more candidates describe and explain their own personal context in theatre for Criterion A Bullet Point 1 this year. Those candidates who struggled with this descriptor bullet often listed their personal context or gave a brief summary.

It is important to understand that a student may identify some or all of the areas referred to as “their own personal context in theatre” (approaches, interests and/or skills) but to reach the top mark band a student must explain how their personal context in theatre (which may include approaches, interests and/or skills) was acquired, developed, experienced or learned, by giving reasons and causes. A student’s personal context in theatre may include things they learned or experienced prior to studying the theatre course or whilst studying the course.

- A student who provided a list typically gave a sequence of brief answers with no explanation, such as “juggling, dancing, speaks French and plays soccer”.
- A student who provided an outline (a brief account or summary) typically wrote about their personal context in theatre but in a brief way and/or write about experiences outside of theatre such as MUN or Sports, with no relationship to theatre.
- A student who provided a description (a detailed account) would write about their personal context in theatre, and/or wrote about experiences outside of theatre such as MUN or Sports in detail but appropriately relating these to theatre.
- A student must be able to explain to reach the 7-8 mark band, providing a detailed account of their personal context in theatre along with reasons and causes in regards to how they are relevant and appropriate.

For Criterion A Bullet Point 2 examiners saw some excellent explanations of the creative approaches employed by an appropriate professional company that creates and stages original pieces of theatre and clear explanations of how candidates could possibly use the approaches of the professional

company in their own approaches. This was clearly supported and attributed by research that candidates had carried out.

This year more candidates used the list provided in the Teacher Support Material (TSM) of professional “devising” companies that create and stage original work and this made life easier for them. When candidates did not perform well on this bullet point descriptor it was clear that they had not chosen a company that creates and stages original pieces of theatre. Unfortunately, we continue to see whole groups and classes researching the same professional company or have been given a company by the teacher. Each student should choose and research a professional company themselves. The teacher’s role is to help guide them, not to make the choice for the student. The professional company should not have already been studied in depth as part of the course, however experiences such as workshops, master classes, performances by the company seen prior to this task etc., are all acceptable, as these often authentically inspire candidates to research particular companies for this task.

In this descriptor bullet it is important that a student explains (giving reasons and causes) the research they found regarding the creative approaches used by a professional company that creates and stages original pieces of theatre and explains (giving reasons and causes) how they could possibly use the creative approaches of the professional company in their own approach to collaborative theatre making. Please note that even in the 1-2 mark band the student is still required to link their research to their own possible approach to creation, therefore if the student only wrote about the approaches employed by the company and did not even list how they might have used their approaches, the candidate scored 0 for this descriptor bullet.

Although work for criterion A should ideally be written from a timeline perspective BEFORE the creation of the piece (as indicated by “prior to forming a collaborative group”), if a student had talked about these influences retrospectively (i.e. giving examples of how their research did eventually inform the creation of the collaborative piece) the student was still rewarded.

Again, candidates in this section tend to present research along with their explanations, so candidates must be sure to check that all sources are acknowledged as references within the portfolio.

Criterion B

Most candidates did a good job in describing or explaining the formation of their group (Bullet point 1.) The more successful candidates gave a narrative of how the group was formed but also explained this process (giving reason and causes). The weaker candidates only gave a brief sentence or two saying some like, “There were only three of us in the class, and therefore we had to be a group.” Candidates should be able to go beyond the given restraints of the required size of the group and explain the process involved in forming a group with others.

In the 7-8 mark band the concept of “relevancy” appears (“work is detailed, appropriate and relevant [p.79]). Work in this band made connections between the individual group members and the formation of one collaborative team. Some examples of “relevant” explanation included an appreciation of the similarities and differences of the theatrical interests or skills of the group, the different professional companies studied, or an awareness of the diversity of the group and the potential this had for creative collaboration in this project.

Bullet Point 2 is still challenging for candidates due to the number of things this descriptor is asking for. Candidates here must have both identified how and why the ensemble chose and explored the starting

point. Exploration of the starting point could be through theoretical and/or practical activities such as mind-mapping, improvisations, physical exercises etc. A student may explore multiple starting points in order to guide their ensemble to choosing a specific one. In addition, a student must also show how they identified a target audience and artistic intentions for the proposed original piece.

- An artistic intention can be defined as the group identifying their purpose as creators in shaping the piece.
- A target audience is defined as the specific group the piece is aimed at.
- “They” refers to either the student or the group.

Here are some key areas that Candidates need to be aware of in this bullet point: 1-2 mark band: In addition to consideration of a starting point, a student who only identifies a target audience or artistic intentions for the proposed original piece cannot move out of this mark band.

- 3-4 mark band: In addition to consideration of a starting point, a response in the 3-4 mark band needs to also identify both artistic intention and the target audience (no matter how brief). If not, the work falls in the 1-2 mark band.
- 5-6 mark band: A student is required to describe both how and why the ensemble collaboratively chose and explored the starting point to be able to fall in this mark band. If they only say how they cannot move out of the 3-4 mark band. In addition, the student needs to also describe both artistic intention and the target audience (no matter how brief). If not, the work falls in the 1-2 mark band.
- 7-8 mark band: A student needs to explain how and why the ensemble collaboratively chose and explored the starting point. In addition, they need to show clear consideration of the target audience and artistic intention. If a student fails to consider either the target audience or the artistic intention, the work falls in the 1-2 mark band.

The literal words of starting point, target audience and artistic intentions do not have to be used as long as the moderator can see evidence of those things within the script. For example “we had an idea about dreams and our other classmates are perfect as an audience for our piece to inspire them to go for their goals in life.” This is evidence of a starting point, intention and audience.

Criterion C

The submission of work in Criterion C was very varied. Often candidates combined both bullet points in this section and it was often unclear what was a candidate’s own specific contribution to the collaborative process versus the process by which the group practically developed, structured and prepared the original piece for presentation. Often there was also a tendency for bullet point one to be answered in Criterion D, especially if candidates were not using the newly revised subject guide & criteria.

For bullet point 1 candidates should explain their specific contributions to the collaborative process. Specific contributions could feasibly include developing material, performance or production exercises, directing, scriptwriting with the group, research, a theorist or world theatre tradition exercises etc. These contributions might come from the perspective of creator, designer, director or performer. “My own contributions” should not be irrelevant tasks that do not relate to the creation of the original piece. For example: taking responsibility for writing the talk back questions. Candidates need to identify their specific contributions to the collaborative process of creating the original piece of theatre from the first-person perspective, i.e. writing as “I”.

Candidates who were most successful at explaining (7-8) used theatre terminology and underpinned their work with references to theatre practice (theory, traditions, terms, movements, styles etc.) However, candidates can also succeed in the 7-8 mark band with clearly explained reasons and causes, possibly using Tension, Emotion, Atmosphere and Meaning.

For bullet point descriptor 2 those candidates who met the top mark band clearly explained how their group developed their initial responses, ideas and explorations based on the intentions they had formulated for the piece. The candidates explained how their group structured the material they had created to form a piece of original theatre piece, bearing in mind their intention. In addition the candidates explained how their group prepared the piece, once it was created, for performance (i.e. referring to the feedback they received from their teacher/peers in their mock performance and the developments during technical rehearsals, as well as their final rehearsal process).

- In this bullet point, “developed” refers to the process the candidates took in moving from their initial explorations of the starting point to the creation of the material (script, set, costume, movement etc.) that they ultimately ended up using in the piece of theatre.
- “Structured” refers to how the Candidates ordered the material they created.
- “Prepared” refers to the rehearsal process and staging of the created piece.

It is important to note that “structured” only appears in the 5-6 & 7-8 mark bands. If a student does not refer to structuring of the piece they cannot be placed higher than the 3-4 band for this descriptor bullet. If a student has addressed structuring and has been describing preparation and development, then begins to explain either development or preparation, the work can feasibly move up into the 7-8 mark band. Examples of structuring may include a list of scenes, a chart, a diagram, a plot, a narrative explanation, a storyboard, a script etc.

Criterion D

In general, most candidates did well in describing or explaining their own specific choices made in the specific moment(s) of theatre seen in the selected video recording (Bullet Point 1.) There were, however, several schools that did not follow the requirements of the video and submitted the entire piece rather than a selected moment or moment(s) in the video recording. In these cases examiners did not watch beyond the first 4 minutes, unless the student had timed-stamped where to look in the full presentation to find their artistic choices. Teachers need to remind candidates that there should only be a maximum of two timed-stamped references, which together do not exceed 4 minutes. A moment is not defined by blackouts or scene changes. Teachers and candidates should refer to the guide for specific details. If a student included more than two moments in the portfolio the examiner only marked the first two moments referenced.

Bullet point two, “evaluating the presentation of the original 13–15 minute theatre piece, explaining the extent to which the piece fulfilled its intentions and the impact it had on the audience (making reference to the audience’s responses during the talkback)”, revealed to be one of the weakest areas of this task. Candidates either did not have enough space or were not giving this section the focus it required to meet the higher markbands.

Those candidates who performed in the top mark band evaluated (making an appraisal by weighing up the strengths and limitations) the piece as a whole, comparing and contrasting their original intentions with the impact the piece actually had on the audience, based on the audiences responses. Candidates who fell into the 7-8 mark band of a “thorough and discerning evaluation” made clear judgments about their work in relation to their stated intentions. For this bullet descriptor candidates must make reference

to the audience's responses, and while the bullet makes specific reference to a "talkback", the descriptors do not. Therefore candidates who acquired other feedback to determine audience impact and responses were considered as equally valid.

Here are some key areas that candidates did not do in this bullet point and therefore scored in the low mark bands:

- Candidates who did not refer to audience responses could not score above the 1-2 mark band.
- Students who evaluated the final piece and included audience responses but did not address how the artistic intentions and impacts were fulfilled could not score above the 1-2 mark band.
- The work of a student who did not explicitly consider the entire piece in their evaluation (for example: only explaining the impact of their own contribution) was considered as underdeveloped work and did not achieve a mark above the 3-4 band.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers and candidates should become more familiar with the most recent updates to the subject guide, especially the process for the assessment, the role of the teacher, the structuring of the portfolio and the assessment criteria.
- To fully prepare candidates for the demands of this assessment task, teachers should ensure their planning of the core syllabus provides opportunities for their candidates to collaboratively create original theatre and explain how and why they did what they did.
- Candidates should have opportunities, within the study of the core syllabus, to perform original theatre in front of a live audience so they can set an artistic intention(s) and evaluate their presentation explaining the extent to which the piece fulfilled its intentions and the impact it had on the audience. An audience could be their own classmates, peers or other invited members of their school community.
- Teacher should provide opportunities, within the study of the core syllabus, for candidates to learn the skills and approaches of documenting the process of collaboratively creating a piece of original theatre in their journals.
- Candidates need to understand the key command terms which differentiate each of the bands for this assessment task and which guide examiners: List, Outline, Describe, Explain and Evaluate. Definitions for these are provided at the back of the Theatre subject guide.
- Teachers should support candidates by providing a list of professional companies that create original theatre. The Teacher Support Material has a good working list for Candidates. This helps candidates choose a company that has sufficient and accessible resources.
- In preparation for Criterion C teachers should try to get candidates to be very clear in discerning the work of the group and their own individual contributions to the process. Teachers should also clarify the differences in the mark band descriptors between Criteria C & D, therefore not letting a student repeat or write about their own individual contributions for Criterion D.
- Teachers must ensure that candidates are following the subject guide requirements for submitting the video; uploading no more than 4 minutes and should serve the purpose in capturing the artistic choices the student made and is discussing in the portfolio for Criterion D.
- Teachers need to teach candidates how to attribute sources within the portfolio including research, visuals, diagrams, plans, sketches etc. If a student uses any work (including ideas or images) belonging to another person in the collaboratively-created piece or the process portfolio, the student must have acknowledged the source at point of use and in a list of sources. Teacher must ensure that they are helping candidates understand and uphold the Academic Honesty Policy of the IB. This should be embedded throughout the core of the course, the

journal, and all assessment tasks. Candidates and teachers are signing off on work that clearly has academic honesty concerns and will be referred to the Academic Honesty Board for further investigation and possible consequences. The Subject Guide couldn't be clearer on this matter.

Further Comments

- It is imperative that all teachers are aware that next year candidates must follow the IB procedures and instructions in the newly updated DP Theatre guide and criteria published on the OCC.
- When assessing the Internal Assessment Task teachers must justify their marks within the comment box provided. Examiners do read these comments when moderating the task.
- We are still finding schools having trouble uploading work onto the new online system. Several schools did not include a separate sources page and many videos did not upload or were too large to download. Teachers need to check that the student's work has been uploaded before pressing submit.

Director's Notebook

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 8	9 – 14	15 – 20	21 – 26	27 – 32

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 8	9 – 14	15 – 20	21 – 26	27 – 32

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There was a broad range of work with some outstanding notebooks that demonstrated an excellent understanding of the craft of the director and the process of transforming ideas into stage action. Many candidates clearly understood the requirements of the task and selected challenging and interesting texts. The choice of text is key to the success of the task; richer texts that lent themselves to imaginative interpretations and readings offered more opportunities for candidates to succeed. Sometimes the most ambitious notebooks were also the most successful.

Some candidates were under the impression that the envisaged production had to be staged in their school. This impeded their imaginative engagement with the text and restricted their staging possibilities, encouraging them to focus on how they would overcome practical obstacles and deal with restrictions. Candidates should choose a performance space that will serve their vision.

Some candidates are also using up a lot of precious space providing a rationale for why they have chosen one particular play above others. Though this is often interesting, it is essentially unnecessary and does not fulfil any of the requirements or criteria unless it is explicitly linked to their directorial intentions or explorations.

It was sometimes disappointing to read notebooks where the student-director failed to include a single sketch or diagram or image and where the entire production was presented as a cerebral experience and not one that the examiner could access visually.

Candidate performance against each criterion

It is important that candidates understand that each criterion has TWO strands and that they need address both strands of each criterion separately to ensure they fulfil the demands of each criterion.

Criterion A

Some candidates are still researching the setting of the play rather than the context in which the play originated. Many candidates also regard biographical detail as contextual information. This is only relevant if a feature of the biography has a material effect on the dramatic form and its ideas. Context should be far more orientated around the cultural milieu from which the play originated or the form, style or genre the dramatist has chosen.

The stronger candidates related context to the playwright's ideas and took it into consideration when determining their artistic explorations and their intentions.

Quotations from research into context should be integrated into the student's explanations; huge chunks of quotations without explanation constitute little more than a list of information.

Ideas were not always clearly identified, and even when they were identified, candidates did not always consider how they were presented by the playwright.

Stronger notebooks revealed candidates' understanding of the ways in which a writer's context helps to shape the play and its ideas.

Criterion B

Some candidates struggle to understand what the term "artistic responses" is asking for. The cultural background of the play and the ideas they identify are all potentially fertile areas for artistic investigation. Many candidates also sometimes jump straight to their final vision for the piece (Criterion C). Criterion B is not about directorial decision. Criterion B is about possibilities. Candidates here should refer to what they 'might' or 'could' do or present possibilities ('It would be interesting to...') or raise questions ('I wonder if').

Candidates did not always appreciate the difference between a literary and a theatrical response to the play. Their explorations should always refer to how ideas will impact staging or performance.

The student needs to explain their artistic responses and demonstrate how these might influence and inform their staging and the performance and production elements of the WHOLE play.

Candidates are also required to explain how the director has achieved a particular impact in the productions moments of TEAM. In other words, this strand requires candidates to demonstrate that they understand how a director uses performance and production elements to achieve a particular impact.

Criterion C

Some candidates are still mistaking this section as focusing on intention and impact for only the two selected moments rather than the entire play.

Production and design elements are too often prioritised over performance elements. They should be given equal status.

Candidates are required to show how performance and production elements TOGETHER combine to form the intended effect on audience. If they do not address this they are in effect not addressing one

of the stands of this criterion, however detailed their explanation of each individual performance and production element.

The strongest candidates included visual support for their well-articulated ideas and they tended to refer to original responses showing the genesis and development of their ideas.

Criterion D

Under this criterion candidates are required to explain their ideas for staging and how this will achieve tension, create an emotional impact on the audience, establish an atmosphere or communicate ideas to an audience (TEAM). They do not need to address all of TEAM but are free to choose just one or two aspects.

The candidates who narrowed their focus were able to demonstrate more depth in their explanation of their staging and the way performance and production elements would work together to create tension, emotion, atmosphere or communicate meaning. Some candidates focused almost exclusively on the visuals and the technical and overlooked the performers and their actions.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates:

- Candidates should use headings and remember that each criterion has two strands that both need to be specifically addressed.
- Though a short plot summary is useful, lengthy details of the action do not address any of the criteria unless they are explicitly linked to action, context and/or ideas.
- Candidates should understand the difference between the play's setting and the context from which the play originates.
- Candidates should understand that production elements are defined by the programme as scenic (set and costume) and technical (lights and sound).
- Any sketches or images used should be annotated in a detailed manner and attributed.
- Candidates must include the play text as one of their sources.
- Candidates should be guided to choose texts that are manageable but that have great potential for imaginative interpretation and staging.
- Encourage candidates to experience live theatre with an awareness of the director's craft and moments of tension, emotion, atmosphere or meaning have been created using performance and production elements.
- Give candidates opportunities during the course to sketch their ideas for sets/costumes and to plan lighting states for individual sections of text.
- Give candidates the opportunity to direct short sequences of action from a range of performance texts to give them the experience of dealing of transforming text into action and exploring how best to communicate moments of tension, emotion, atmosphere or meaning.
- Some candidates are not confident in their discussion of technical issues and this is one area where they could prepare themselves more fully by familiarizing themselves with the appropriate terminology to discuss production elements.
- Candidates should have a range of practical experiences working with lights, sound, costume, set and the configuration of different spaces.

Research Presentation

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 9	10 – 14	15 – 20	21 – 25	26 – 32

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 9	10 – 14	15 – 20	21 – 25	26 – 32

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Generally the performance of candidates in the May session was very good, and there was a broad range of traditions covered from the prescribed list. Many candidates had chosen a tradition they were genuinely passionate about and fully committed themselves to the task. Research into the tradition was thorough, but many candidates are not referring to a range of sources, relying predominantly on the web. As this is a research task candidates must include a bibliography, source all material seen in the presentation (for example, images on the power point) and include in-presentation citations where possible. Many candidates do not seem know how to write a bibliography, source or cite material. Teachers need to ensure candidates are taught a referencing convention.

When the candidates and teachers understood the terminology, in the task description and assessment criteria, then work was done well. Candidates that understood the distinction between a tradition, a convention and a practice had well-structured presentations with specific content. Candidates that were unclear of the term 'convention' struggled to make distinctions between criterion bands, as the areas lacked focus. Fewer candidates focused on production conventions this time (make-up, costume design, puppet construction), showing that more understood the task. A clearly focused and well-defined convention choice, as with any research stimulus, ensured relevant enquiry and facilitated application in the moment of theatre.

The eight bullet points of the assessment criteria are still causing some problems for candidates, with many not covering all areas. Many candidates did not show a process of exploration of the convention for criterion B, and for the second bullet of criterion B many did not explain why they chose their moment and how they went about applying their convention to this moment. The other area that was often done poorly was criterion D, which was generally rushed and superficial.

Moments of theatre were generally done very well, and the stronger candidates explained what they were going to show us before they embarked on their moment. Candidates seemed prepared and well-rehearsed, with fewer candidates needing to read from a script.

There were still many problems with filming. Common issues included: presentations made in noisy rooms, candidates being too far away from the microphone, audiences creating noise with chairs or mobile phones, cameras positioned too far away for the student to be clearly seen and power points not appearing in the camera frame.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Please note that for each criterion there are 2 bullet points, therefore there are eight bullet points in total that the candidates need to cover in their 15 minute presentation. Each point needs to be addressed.

Criterion A – Research

This was generally done well, and thoroughly, but many candidates spent too much time on this section, leaving little time to do the other sections thoroughly. Candidates must state their tradition and their chosen convention, so that the examiner knows what they are focusing on, and they make it clear when they are moving from A1 to A2.

- A1: Many candidates performed well in this area, but spent too long on this one criterion bullet point. The best work has **SAD** facts in the A1 research on the tradition = **S**pace, **A**ction, **D**esign. The area of context enquiry should include a mix of the following: dates, places, myths, events, famous people, evolution of tradition, critical growth, links to other theatre forms and be based on cited research. Candidates should base their RPs on the full name of the tradition on the list e.g. British Pantomime NOT just Pantomime. As this is a research presentation the sourcing is very important, so candidates need to be guided how to research from a range of sources, how to cite and how to write a bibliography. If candidates use a power point then all images in the power point need to be sourced, on the slide or in the bibliography. Many candidates included a bibliography, but websites were missing URLs and/or dates websites were accessed. Candidates also need to mention where information comes from, ideally using in-presentation citations, and make sure all the sources they mention are in the bibliography.
- A2: The focus for this bullet point is on their one chosen convention. The student should state what the convention is, as this is what will be examined later in the moment of theatre, and if it is not clearly stated then the work becomes vague and would be considered 'limited' or 'underdeveloped'. This convention must be a performance convention, and the student needs to have specific research they have done that focuses on this convention. This criterion examines how well they explain the convention, so they need to put it in the context of the tradition itself and explain how it works alone (and alongside other conventions, if applicable) within a performance context. Candidates must be careful not to blur the line between this criterion and B1, which focuses on practical exploration. In this section, we do not expect the candidates to demonstrate the convention (although they can), as at this stage they are still sharing research and explaining to the audience what they have discovered through research. Some examples of conventions are below:

Good ones that meet the requirements:

1. Tradition - British Pantomime
Convention - The use of slapstick (using face, movement and voice)
Convention - The pantomime dame in performance (using voice, body, gesture)
2. Tradition - Rakugo
Convention - The use of the 2 props of the hand towel and the fan (using movement and gesture)

Convention - Portrayal of characters (using voice, body, gesture)

Conventions with issues that do not meet the requirements:

1. Tradition - English Renaissance theatre
Convention - monologue structure (literary convention)
2. Tradition - Shadow puppetry, China
Convention - colour design of the puppet (a production convention)

Criterion B – Action Process

This section was not done so well. The requirement of this criterion is that the student explains the process they used to explore the convention, to learn it practically and get it into their body. The second half of the criterion focuses on how the student approached applying that convention to a moment of theatre. Again, this is a process that needs to be explained, ideally in stages, so that the audience is walked through their process, step by step.

- B1: This bullet point focuses on the process of exploration of the selected convention, that has happened in the past, and candidates need to make sure they explain their physical stages of learning, from being a novice to mastering (as well as they can) the convention they are going to share with us in a performed moment of theatre. Candidates can physically demonstrate their stages of learning or they can have photos to show their learning over time. Many candidates have run workshops, photographed themselves at stages of learning and development or videoed a beginning, middle and end of a learning process. Candidates need to have evidence of their process, so they need to decide the best way to do this - quotes shared from their journal and feedback from their mentor are other good options of evidence and illustrations of a process over time.
- B2: For this bullet point candidates need to articulate how they went about applying their convention to a moment of theatre. The moment of theatre they chose needs to be articulated here. They need to explain WHY they chose that particular moment, and why it was a suitable vehicle to show their convention in performance. They then need to explain HOW they went about applying their convention to this moment. They are telling the audience (and examiner) the choices they made during their rehearsal process. The candidates that did best in this area explained a step by step process of how they broke the moment down into stages, words, lines, movements, to be able to apply their convention effectively and thoroughly. In effect, narrating their moment to their audience before they show it. This area should prepare the audience for what they are going to see in Criterion C.

Criterion C – Action Presentation

Generally this section was done well. Some moments were too brief to show thorough understanding of the convention in performance. As this is a moment of theatre so needs a brief introduction for the audience, if this has not been clearly articulated in criterion B.

- C1: The stronger moments were presented off script, and had a clear start and finish. The Candidates that chose a moment that was appropriate to their convention were also more successful, as they could embrace the mood and meaning appropriately. Many candidates gave themselves a moment before they 'performed', when they added a costume item or there was a lighting change. Simple costume items that were easily added/removed worked best. Some candidates wasted valuable time with a costume change, this is not advised, and if complicated make-up or costume is needed then wear this for the entire presentation. Many

candidates were in darkness for the moment, so please make sure they can be clearly seen, as the examiner needs to see detail here. Moments of theatre **MUST** be live, they cannot be filmed. If candidates chooses to do a stop/start approach (different from second bullet - B2) to the moment, then they should aim to repeat their moment without pauses to enable their moment to be viewed as an uninterrupted piece of theatre.

- C2: Many candidates used their body and/or voice confidently. Candidates that were well prepared for their performance with music set up, puppets ready on the table, lights easily accessible to turn on/off etc generally did well. These moments came across as being more 'polished' and clearly the candidates had put time and thought into the performance of the moment. The student comes across as confident if they are familiar with their convention and the material (not reading from a script) and present their work with conviction and in an informed manner.

Criterion D - Reflection & connections

Generally this section was squeezed into the last 1-2 minutes of the presentation, and those who did include it tended to make links of their tradition (not their convention!) to another practice.

- D1: Generally the candidates spoke genuinely and enthusiastically about the impact the work had on them as a learner, but did not then make links to other learning experiences they have had as a performer. Note that this needs to be an experience in the past. They are not talking about future aspirations, but experiences they have had during the course. A performance can include roles they have had on stage in a play, an in-class performance or presentation or any other public performance (public speaking, dance performance etc) they have been in.
- D2: This bullet point was usually done poorly. The task is to compare their **convention** with **one other performance practice**, not to compare their chosen tradition with other practices. A common mistake was that candidates compared the tradition (not their chosen convention) to another practice. Many candidates compared their convention to a person rather than a practice (from example talking about Brecht, rather than Epic Theatre). A performance practice can be rooted in theory (Theatre of the Oppressed, Viewpoints, Butoh), genre or style (Naturalism, Absurdism, Kitchen sink) or a tradition (Bunraku, Topeng, Kutiyattam). Note that the assessment criteria say: "connections **and/or** comparisons" in the criteria so the student does not have to give similarities and differences; simple pertinent connections would suffice with the mark depending on whether listed, outlined, described or explained. [few = more than one]

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

The assessment criteria

Ensure that the candidates are clear about every bullet point of the assessment criteria, understand what everything means, the difference between each mark band and the timing of the task. Refer to The Guide pages 56, 82 & 83 for glossary of terms. Make sure that a performance convention (not a production convention) has been selected by the student. During the presentation make sure it is clear to the listener (audience and examiner) when they have moved from one criterion to the next, particularly moving from A to B and then B to C (see the section on 'Performance on each criterion'). It helps to have a brief introduction to each criterion: '*Now I will explain how I practically explored my convention*', '*For my moment of theatre I am applying my convention to..... I will now show my moment of theatre*'.

Environment and filming

The filming must take place in a quiet place, so that there is no background noise and the student is not distracted (for example by a band practice going on next door or a mobile phone going off!). Don't allow people to be moving about in the background behind the camera - for example, do not sit next to the camera and type on the computer, or allow candidates in the audience to be moving their chairs about. People should not enter or leave the room during the presentation.

Sources and supporting materials

Ensure that there is a range of sources in a variety of formats. Discourage candidates from relying only on web sources, encourage them to look at a variety to include: academic journals, interviews, books, magazines, films, live performance etc. Send the PPT with the bibliography. Add sources to the PPT and urls to the bibliography. If the PPT is not sent (which it should be) then make sure the examiner can read it - i.e. light shining on it or too far away.

Note that if the examiner cannot see the power point, and it is not sent, then the RP cannot be marked, and this will cause a delay, as the IB will request that the school sends the PPT or repeats the filming (if sending the PPT is not an option).

General presentation

Don't read, if possible. Cue cards are a good idea to help with presenting, but use these to guide the presentation, as you need to engage with your audience. Engage with the audience and be aware of the camera, but treat the camera as another audience member that the student needs to include.

Use of language

Ensure they know the difference between 'tradition' and 'convention', and what a *theatre practice* means (this covers practices, styles and traditions, for example: Epic theatre, Absurdism and Wayang Kulit). Know the pronunciation of the words they are using in their presentation, for example specific terminology needed to talk about the tradition itself, character names etc. Discourage candidates from saying slang phrases such as 'and stuff' or 'and things like that'. Check their information is accurate, for example the Commedia characters are not Columbia, Archelino and Pulchina!!

Filming

Don't position the camera too far away from the student and avoid fancy camera work with zooming in and panning. The power point and student need to be clearly seen in the video frame. Always check your final recording for quality of sound - if in doubt redo it! Make sure the student is lit for their moment (many are in the dark because the focus has been on the power point). Practice the filming and make sure there is someone to turn the lights on and off.

What to wear: Avoid revealing/unsuitable clothes (very short shorts, low necklines, tight jeans), clothes with bold writing on, smart clothes that restrict movement, footwear that hinders performance and a dark outfit on a dark background. Wear the costume for the entire presentation if the change into it takes time. Wear comfortable, neutral clothes if a specific costume is not required. Take shoes off to perform the moment of theatre. Remember this is a formal exam task, so informal clothing is not acceptable if no costume is required, all blacks is better than shorts and a t-shirt.

Use of time

Consider how the time is being divided between the criteria - some Candidates are spending too long on criterion A and therefore not leaving time for the others to be adequately covered. Try to use all the time allotted, if doing stop/start also do a continuous performance, if time allows.

Showing a video - Criterion A1, A2, B1 or B2

If showing a video to demonstrate the tradition or a convention then explain WHY this is being shown. What are we looking for? The video needs to be sourced. Note that a video can be used for criterion B but not for criterion C, as the moment of theatre must be live. Do not rely on the internet, make sure the video is downloaded and ready to play (practise this in advance).

Further Comments

The task requires candidates to select a tradition that is unfamiliar to them and create a detailed presentation that fulfils specific assessment criteria. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the candidates in their care understand what is required of them, are familiar with the assessment criteria, and are guided accordingly if they are going off on the wrong track. There are still too many candidates that have carried out thorough research but then do not fulfil the requirements of the task. If teachers are unclear about their responsibilities in this task then they should read p60 of The Guide, where their role is outlined, and one responsibility is as follows: *'give feedback on the student's one mock presentation prior to filming.'* This is when any last-minute anomalies can be addressed, bibliographies can be proof read and PPTs can be checked for sourcing. Remember to send the PPT to the IB along with the bibliography.

Teachers are advised to refer to this report to help their candidates succeed in this task. The other resource they have is the OCC, where there are marked samples of the Research Presentation. There are also the Teacher Support Materials (TSM) which contain helpful guidelines to assist candidates and teachers understand the needs of this assessment.

Teachers need to note that The Guide was revised last year and the assessment criteria have changed. Criterion B should be spoken about in the past, as it has happened before the moment is performed live to the audience, so a rehearsal process would need to be explained before the "*start and stop*" moment. If candidates choose to do a "*start and stop*" moment then they are advised to perform the moment twice, with one performance being an uninterrupted moment of theatre. Note that Criterion C focuses only on assessment of the moment of theatre in performance.

The assessment task can be a maximum of 15 minutes. Teachers need to communicate to their candidates that anything beyond 15 minutes will not be viewed or assessed by examiners, so candidates must practice their presentations so that they do not go over time. If candidates are under 15 minutes then they should re-visit their work, check they are addressing all eight bullets of the assessment criteria, and ask themselves the questions that address each criterion band.

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

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There were very good examples of clearly organized reports that followed through the different requirements as specified both by the Subject Guide and the Assessment Criteria. This was mainly evident in the choice of solid Theatre Theories and their aspects, as well as in the demonstration of practical explorations that led to the creation of some outstanding pieces of theatre, with incredibly inventive, original, and highly effective uses of space and actor-audience relationships. There was a general demonstration of enthusiasm towards the task, as well as commitment and learning in the chosen areas.

At the weaker end of the spectrum, it is quite evident that many teachers have not read (or have done so superficially) the Subject Guide and the requirements of the Solo Piece. Candidates must be made aware of these requirements. It is also concerning to realize that a lot of candidates are not acquainted with the assessment Criteria.

Far too many schools still send material that does not attribute sources beyond the inclusion of a bibliography. This does not follow any of the recommendations in the Subject Guide regarding academic honesty, and is a real matter of concern to all examiners.

Word limits must also be respected, as going beyond the requested 3000 words will have a serious impact on the marks, especially under Criterion D which, being the last portion of the report, is what would fall into the exceeded amount of words, and therefore the examiner would not read. Schools must ensure that the student is able to meet all criteria within the word-count limit required. The length of the piece is also prescribed, and therefore must be respected. Examiners will not watch beyond 8 minutes of recording, while less than 4 minutes would also impact on the overall performance of the candidate.

Candidate performance against each criterion

It is important that candidates understand that each criterion has TWO strands and that they need address both strands of each criterion separately to ensure they fulfil the demands of each criterion.

Criterion A

It was refreshing to see the use of several appropriate theorists whose work appropriately fulfils the task. These theorists have a body of written work that explains their ideas on the practice of Theatre and have very defined aspects that are made evident when staged. Candidates who were most successful explained both the relevant background of the theorist's biography/ideas/theories and the

chosen aspect/s of the theory. Explaining both contexts (of theorist and aspect of theory) is crucial here, and unfortunately, a minority of candidates did this. Most candidates only explained one or the other. It is worth noting that the first descriptor in this criterion asks for the context of the theorist and the aspect/s of theory. Failing to include one, even when explaining one but not the other, would have a direct impact on the mark.

The second descriptor in this criterion asks for evidence of effective support for their work with the sources used in the research. All candidates provided a bibliography with a list of the sources used. Nevertheless, it is still a matter of concern to all examiners in this component, to see the amount of schools that do not present work that properly attributes the sources throughout the body of the report (at point of use), as specifically stated in the Subject Guide. The vast majority of work presented only cites quoted material and takes for granted the fact that the rest, which has obviously been paraphrased, is appropriately attributed with the sole presence of the list of sources. These cases are all subject to study by the Academic Honesty team at the IB, as the failure to attribute somebody else's work is a serious infringement of the academic honesty expected from all. Besides, this criterion asks for "effective use" of sources, which can only be witnessed by the student explicitly demonstrating in the report where and how they used the sources listed.

Criterion B

Candidates who reached the highest marks in this criterion explored the chosen aspects of the theory in practice and developed and shaped their Solo Piece from the discoveries made through their practical work. In other words, they started with a theory and its aspect/s (and probably their own intentions), and physically worked on those aspects, through exercises, improvisations, games, workshops, mood-boards, story-boards, playing with lights, space, textures, costumes, music, sound, etc. It is not enough to "sit and think what to do for the Solo Piece", or to "come up with the idea of..." out of the blue.

This said, it must be clarified that the practical exploration could be done through exercises created by the selected theorist, but this is not compulsory. Many theorists have invaluable practical exercises that can be used by the candidate to explore the chosen aspect (like Grotowsky, for example), but many others don't. Any relevant practical exploration that addresses the aspect being explored is valid here. What is important is that the candidates go "on their feet" and use relevant practical exercises that connect to the chosen aspect and the intentions for the piece.

There seems to be some confusion regarding what is meant by "intentions". Demonstrating to the audience how the chosen theory "works" is not really related to what the task is proposing. Through the thorough research of a theory, candidates are expected to apply aspects of this theory to fulfil their own artistic intentions, those ideas/concepts they would like the audience to take with them.

The second descriptor deals with the mentor/s and the way the feedback impacts on the practical work being developed by the student. Again, it is not enough to re-tell what the mentor has said. What is important here is what the student does with the feedback and how it is transformed into a useful discovery that contributes to the creation of the piece. Many candidates did not even mention a mentor, and many of those who did, only recorded in the report what the mentor suggested or instructed, with no further comments on how this feedback impacted the piece. It might be worth clarifying here what "useful mentoring" might mean: the student should not search for "solutions" in the mentor/teacher, but should ask for an external view that points out where in the process the student is not meeting his/her own intentions. Candidates who came up with the "solutions" themselves after receiving this kind of feedback, reached the highest marks under this descriptor.

Criterion C

The most successful work was from those candidates who could clearly demonstrate their chosen aspects in their presentations. This is very difficult to assess, for example, with those theorists whose aspects relate to the psychological or emotional. These theories (as Stanislavsky's, for example) require the application of naturalistic techniques, which go "within" the actor's internal processes. This inevitably requires the student to use a certain amount of skills to be able to fulfil the task. Many candidates have also chosen several theatre practitioners (directors, actors, designers) or playwrights rather than theorists. It is very difficult to find an aspect of a theory when the theory itself is not evident (or even inexistent), and this would inevitably impact in the whole work in one way or another. Playwrights who have particular styles are also very difficult to demonstrate through this task, when they don't have a specific theory that has an impact on production/performance.

Again, as explained above under Criterion B, candidates who articulated only learning intentions rather than their own artistic intentions, made it difficult to the examiner to identify whether their use of the aspect/s and elements of performance and production were effective or not.

A minority of candidates included other performers in their piece (asking the audience to offer pre-prepared actions/comments, or by making them participate actively in the performance). Candidates and teachers are reminded that this is to be avoided, as clearly specified in the Subject Guide. A still smaller amount of candidates failed to meet the minimum 4 minutes required, making it very difficult to evidence the sustaining of appropriate elements.

There is no need for sophisticated technical equipment or facilities to reach the highest marks under this Criterion, but Candidates must be able to demonstrate their performance skills as well as their use of space or other relevant technical aspects related to the theory and/or intentions to reach the highest mark band. There is no problem with performing the piece inside a classroom, but candidates must be aware that the use of performance/production elements are being assessed here. Making good use of these elements does not mean having to produce a professional performance, but it certainly means that candidates need to use their creativity to fulfil the task. This will hardly be fulfilled if the piece is filmed with a smartphone sitting on a couch at home.

This last remark brings also the attention to the fact that the student must have an audience, and there needs to be some kind of feedback from this audience. There is no need to bring in an audience from outside the school; other candidates (and even one might suffice) could be invited to see the performance.

Criterion D

The first descriptor in this criterion was the best tackled of the two. Nevertheless, candidates must be careful to balance their reports and dedicate enough words to this criterion, as it carries the same amount of marks as the others and should not be neglected. Also, candidates must make explicit reference to the feedback given by the audience. The kind of evaluation being assessed has to do with the extent to which the initial artistic intentions were met, taking into account what the audience received while attending the performance. If the student didn't have an audience, or feedback is not taken into account, then this will certainly impact the quality of the student's evaluation. What they "sensed" or "felt" during the performance is hardly enough to fulfil this criterion.

It was more difficult for candidates to relate their learning in the Solo Piece with their expectations and learning in theatre. This is a HL task, and as such, candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate how it ties to what they have learned or are planning to learn in the future. Detailed reflections on the learning about the theorist, the acquisition of new skills and their insightful comments on the process were the most successful, as opposed to those very general learning commentaries about time management, etc.: the more specific reflections, including those that reflected forwards on the potential for improving future work, found it easier to access the top bands.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers must allow candidates enough time to prepare for this assessment task. This is the HL component, and therefore should be treated accordingly. Far too many candidates still complain about their “time constraint” when completing the task.

Candidates must be advised to select theorists that best fulfil the requirements. While the IB does not prescribe a list of feasible theorists, some are more suitable than others. Candidates who have chosen theorists whose aspects of theory are easily demonstrated on stage are bound to reach the highest marks.

Teachers are strongly advised to read the Subject Guide together with the Assessment Criteria, and to share this information with their candidates. It is helpful to keep the criteria at hand when organising the work, exploring the practice and writing the report. Teachers are also encouraged to read the Subject Report each year.