

November 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

Recommendations for IB procedures, instructions and forms

Teachers marking the IA must understand the 'Best Fit' model.

All teachers need to use the language of the assessment criteria when writing their comments and when justifying their marks.

Many candidates 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.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The range and suitability of the work submitted this year for the November Session was varied with dynamic work that showed a clear understanding of the assessment task and criteria and also work that was incomplete. When done well, the Collaborative Project & Portfolio generated exciting, collaborative and original student work.

It was clear how the approaches to learning, knowledge and skills, learned in the teaching of the core areas of the course, transferred into to the student's Collaborative Project & Portfolio. Candidates who used the recommended Subheadings and paid attention to the 7-8 marker band descriptors and command term(s) were more organized and more successful than students who did not.

Unfortunately, there were many indications of schools where candidates were clearly not familiar with or understood the requirements of the tasks and the assessment criteria. This resulted in them not following the correct process for the Collaborative Project & Portfolio; missing task requirements, and/or not addressing certain criteria. These candidates tended to present superficial and unorganized work which was lacking explanation.

It was concerning to see candidates unprepared and treating serious topics with limited sensitivity. Some topics were inappropriate and teachers must be in dialogue about the content of the piece without dictating the content. Please 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 handling these situations carefully.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Please see my comments written in the subject report for the May session.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers 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 with possible consequences. The Subject Guide couldn't be clearer on this matter.

Teachers and candidates should have a better understanding of the 7-8 marker band descriptors and command term(s). Many candidates only addressed one of the descriptor bands or only looked at the subheading and neglected what was written in the bullet point descriptors.

Taking an inventory of a student's personal context in theatre is an extremely useful exercise both for decision-making and self-reflection. Students should have an opportunity of doing this before in the study of the core areas and learn how this exercise can help in making decisions, such as forming a group.

Teachers should spend ensure that students have the time to research a professional theatre company and see how the company's approaches influence their own personal approach to collaborative theatre making during the study of the core areas of the course.

Teachers should provide the list of Professional Companies that create original theatre. The Teacher Support Material has a good working list for students. This helps students choose a company that has sufficient and accessible resources. Teachers must ensure that candidates have chosen one professional theatre company that create and stage original pieces of theatre.

Teachers should lead activities where students can try out different ways of forming groups.

Teachers should provide opportunities where students are working from different starting points.

Students should be provided opportunities within the study of the core areas to find deeper connections between the artistic intention of a piece of theatre, the chosen audience and the artistic impacts the piece hopes to achieve. These opportunities could be for students to make these decisions in their own work and/or discuss these choices in the work of others.

Teachers should continue to provide opportunities for students to create original work collaboratively.

Teachers should continue to provide opportunities for students to evaluate their work or the work of others.

Teacher should continue to provide opportunities for students to analyze and justify their artistic choices.

Teachers should incorporate Tension, Emotion, Atmosphere and Meaning into their teaching of the core areas more and help students understand how this can be beneficial in every assessment tasks. For example in the Collaborative Project looking for one or more elements of T,E,A,M in Criteria C and/or in Criteria D helps a student articulate a more sophisticated response.

Teachers must ensure that students are following the subject guide requirements for submitting the video; uploading no more than 4 minutes that serve the purpose of capturing the artistic choices the student made, which are discussed in the portfolio for Criteria D.

Further Comments

All teachers should be involved in the OCC Theatre forum, check for updates on the subject guide, use the TSM to help students, and above all else be knowledgeable of the subject guide.

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

There was a range of work with a high number of accomplished and imaginative notebooks showing candidates engaging with different types of texts. It is clear that some texts lend themselves better to this task than others. Plays that encourage an imaginative interpretation and give the director scope to bring their own ideas to a production seem to be the ones that students engaged with most passionately and effectively. The candidates were able to show both a good understanding of the play text, be inspired by it and imagine how they would bring it to life using their own visions and ideas. The task relies largely on the ability to imagine and visualize and candidates who used visuals effectively helped to bring the play text to life.

It was clear when candidates had really engaged with the play and explored it thoroughly as the stronger candidates focused on detail and depth. It was inspiring to read some of the notebooks and candidates' ideas regarding the staging of plays.

The attribution of sources still remains an issue for some candidates. A bibliography alone is not sufficient as a means of attributing sources. The source of any information needs to be clearly indicated in the body of the work, as footnotes, endnotes, in parenthesis etc. This is also the case regarding images where some candidates have been negligent in clearly indicating the source of the image.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

The candidates who researched the cultural and/or theoretical context from which the play originates using relevant and credible sources were most successful under this criterion. Some candidates misunderstood the task and researched the setting of the play. The most successful candidates effectively demonstrated an understanding of the impact of the context on the playwright and the relationship between the cultural/theoretical context of the play, the ideas of the playwright and how these are presented.

Candidates need to address the ideas of the play in some depth, demonstrating an understanding of these ideas and how they are treated and presented by the playwright within the text.

Criterion B

There was often confusion between what constitutes an artistic response and what is an artistic intention. This criterion focuses on the candidates' initial ideas which need to be explained but do not need to be developed. These responses and explorations of the play can be varied and can range from the presentation of different options for space, to character ideas and analysis to collages and mood boards. Some students used this section to explore the playwright's ideas and context from which play originated which they had explained in Criterion A. This provided some candidates with a framework for exploring how ideas and context might be transformed into action and influence staging.

Connections don't have to be made thematically between live theatre experiences and the play the candidate has selected. Rather it is the candidate's learning from experiencing and deconstructing the work of other theatre directors that is of significance here. The strongest candidates focused on specific moments examining and explaining in detail how directors created tension, emotion, atmosphere and/or meaning.

Criterion C

This criterion focuses on candidates clearly presenting and explaining their directorial intentions for the whole play. This requires candidates to discuss what they hope to achieve as a director regarding their ideas for staging the entire play to an audience. This vision needs to be supported by their decisions regarding performance and production elements (scenic and technical). This involves performance style, choice of space, set, costume, lights and sound. This is often most effectively explained and communicated using visuals.

Where criterion B was about explorations and looking at possibilities, criterion C is about choice and decisions made. It is important that when writing about the exploratory process in criterion B, candidates use a conditional tense (would, could etc), and when writing about the decisions made for Criterion C, candidates use a definitive future tense (is going to, will etc).

Candidates need also to address the impact that their staging will have on the audience, showing an understanding of how performance and production elements create a particular effect on the audience. This should be naturally in line with their intentions and the ideas they want to stage.

Some candidates were confused regarding what belonged to Criterion B and what belonged to Criterion C. Some candidates also did not support their vision with ideas regarding performance and production elements. This is a key aspect of this task.

Criterion D

The candidates who were most successful in this criterion chose two different moments to discuss carefully. The more focused and narrow the moment, the more effectively they were able to explain the staging with detail and understanding.

This criterion needs to address the staging of the moment, an explanation of the action and how this action makes the moment one of tension, emotion, atmosphere or meaning. Tension, emotion, atmosphere and/or meaning provide a framework for the choosing of moments and are designed to focus the student's attention and give them an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of what a director does to achieve these.

Candidates are also required to explain how performance and production elements are employed by the director in these moments to have a particular effect (impact) on the audience.

The most successful candidates were able to synthesise the two strands of this criterion.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Students would benefit from exercises which give them an understanding of the difference between the command terms of list, outline, describe and explain
- Give students an understanding of how ideas are transformed into action through practical activities
- Examine how key information can be communicated and explained through the use of visuals
- Give students an understanding of performance elements (voice, body, gesture, face, movement) and how these are related to style and are used to communicate ideas
- Give students an understanding of scenic (set and costume) and technical (light and sound) production elements and how these are used to present ideas to the audience and also to have a particular effect on audience (impact)

- Use productions students have experienced as audience members to draw attention to directorial intention and impact on audience
- Use productions students have experienced as audience members to analyse and explain how directors have created moments tension, emotion, atmosphere and meaning
- Students should understand the difference between the setting of the play and the context from which the play originates
- Students should be able to explain the ideas presented by the playwright with justification and evidence from the play text
- Differentiate between Criterion B (possibilities and explorations) and Criterion C (decisions made)
- Students must make sure they explain their intention and intended impact on audience for the entire play
- Ensure the student chooses 2 moments to explain in detail
- Give students practical exercises in creating tension, emotion, atmosphere and meaning

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

Generally the performance of the candidates in the November session was strong. There was a clear understanding of the needs of the task and the assessment, with most candidates covering the four criterion areas.

When the candidates 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.

The list of traditions is allowing the candidates to select something they are genuinely interested in. There are a few traditions that are more popular than others, but in each session all traditions from the list have been covered. Only Pantomime is still causing some misunderstanding for some candidates.

Teachers and candidates seem to understand the needs of the task well in terms of what is required for research. Many candidates are also referring to a range of sources – books, videos, online sources, primary sources etc. There was generally a good balance between research, practice and application, with candidates articulating well the process they went through to explore their chosen convention.

Generally, candidates chose moments that were appropriate for what they were aiming to show, with a good range of moments, coming from the tradition itself, another source or being an original piece.

The candidates used the time well. Few were a lot under the time and only a few were over. Generally presentations were 12.5-15 mins Presentation skills were generally good in terms of pace, referring to images, using power points and sources.

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 candidates spent up to 50% of their presentation on this section, leaving little time to do the other sections thoroughly.

A1: Many candidates had good examples, with details of performance space, characters, design, performance and production elements, supported by visuals and explanation. Poor examples gave just general ideas. Candidates were good at speaking about the production conventions generally, but were less thorough in explaining their one chosen performance convention within the context of the tradition. As this is a research presentation the sourcing is very important. Many candidates included a clear bibliography and some cited sources in the presentation, but many had a limited range of sources, referring only to web sources, and did not cite appropriately – missing were URLs and/or dates when websites were accessed.

A2: Candidates were generally good at speaking about the cultural and theoretical context of their tradition, with some making links to community and change over time. They did not always make links of the context to the tradition itself or to their chosen convention. They must try to make links to their chosen convention *often*.

Criterion B

This section was generally done quite well, when it was done. Many spoke about how they had approached exploring their convention practically; many candidates did not go into detail about how they then approached applying their convention to their moment.

B1: The better examples of practical and physical exploration clearly showed and as we as referenced research in practice. Candidates used images, demonstrations and videos to show what they did in their process, alone or with others.

B2: This was a weaker area. Many candidates just gave an introduction to the material they were using for their moment of theatre, but neglected to outline a preparation process of applying the convention to the moment. Candidates that did well in this section explained the entire moment, breaking down how and why they approached the moment, applying their convention to each stage of the moment.

Criterion C

Some candidates did a moment that lasted 30 seconds, others lasted up to 3 minutes. Shorter moments were too short to be informative or engaging. Some candidates showed a video of

their moment being performed by a professional company - this does not meet the requirements. Also, some included other candidates in their moment, again, this does not meet the requirements of the assessment criteria.

C1: The stronger moments were presented off script, with confidence and conviction. The most informative moments had clear explanation of exactly what was being watched and applied for each section of the moment. This explanation was done before the moment or after. The start/stop presentations were also effective, if a start/stop approach was done after the entire moment was presented in an uninterrupted manner, then a start/stop moment was done also.

C2: Candidates used an imaginative and effective range of supporting materials that were appropriate for the presentation. Mock-up costumes were effective, for example pyjama bottoms being used as water sleeves. Presentations were well structured, with some variety in the orders of the presentation (not starting with criterion A but C, for example). All were effective.

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.

D1: Generally, the candidates spoke genuinely and enthusiastically about the impact the work had on them as learners, clearly having enjoyed the work. The best examples had clear links of other learning experiences as performers to their tradition and exploration of the convention.

D2: The task is to compare their **convention** with **one other practice**, not to compare the entire tradition with other practices. A common mistake was that candidates compared the tradition (not their chosen convention) to another tradition. Many candidates compared their convention to a person rather than a practice (for example talking about Brecht, rather than Epic Theatre). Please note that a comparison should include both similarities and differences (see command terms in The Guide p73).

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- *The assessment criteria:* Each criterion has two parts, so there are eight areas of assessment that need to be clearly understood, and equally addressed. The language used in the criteria is specific, so candidates and teachers should check they understand the meanings, for example what does 'compare' mean. All command words are explained in the guide on page 73. Ideally a checklist for each area of the assessment should be provided to students to enable them to make sure they meet all the demands of the task. 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:* Criterion B, which involves candidates explaining how they practically explored the convention and then went about applying that convention to their chosen moment. Teachers need to give clear examples of how the candidates could approach, record and present this section of the RP – guiding them on documenting their

exploration of the convention and approaching the moment. This is an area where the mentor could be used in the practical exploration.

- *Link to practices:* The teachers and mentors need to help the candidates, understand what practices they have covered during the course and help them to make clear links to their chosen convention. This is required for the second section of criterion D.
- *Source citation:* Teachers need to guide candidates on 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. All images need to be sourced, dates of websites accessed included and URLs added.
- *Clothing:* Teachers and candidates need to be aware that a careful selection of clothing for the presentation is necessary; ideally something easy to move in, all black or something specific for the chosen tradition works best.
- *Filming:* This needs care and attention, with the camera operator being aware of the presenter's use of space, ambient noise, and use of any supporting visuals (the power point needs to be in the frame). Always check sound quality before filming and before uploading. All teachers need to be advised to have a practice film run, so they know the structure of the presentation and can therefore anticipate and follow movement. Film in a quiet place and avoid filming in a gym, during breaks and turn off all phones, school bells and announcements.
- *Uploading:* When uploading material, teachers need to be aware that there are only 2 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. If a handout is mentioned in the presentation that also needs to be uploaded.

Further Comments

The task requires candidates to select a tradition that is unfamiliar to them. It is also advised that a moment is selected that is unfamiliar. If they have seen RPs from earlier assessment sessions, then it is preferable for them to select a moment that has not been done before. This helps to keep their work fresh and enriching, as they embark genuinely on a new learning path.

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

Recommendations for IB procedures, instructions and form

During this session, it was much easier and faster to access video files thanks to the «transcoded» version being available. This saved a lot of time and allowed for a smoother examination of each candidate.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

In general, the majority of the submitted work focused mainly on theorists such as Lecoq, Brecht, Meyerhold, and Wilson. There were a few candidates that dared to embark on something different from the usual names, and presented work from Michael Chekhov or Richard Schechner. Other examiners in my team also found some works from Copeau and Krapow which they also found refreshing.

It was noted that many candidates submitted what seemed to be incomplete reports. A small minority submitted videos that either did not show their solo theatre piece, or were cut off after several seconds. A small minority of reports included large chunks of writing contained within pages of images - this attempt to circumvent the word limit must be discouraged. Some candidates reported that their performance had to suddenly move venues on the day, leaving them without technical resources and the space that they had planned on using.

Some candidates performed without an audience present which does not conform to IB procedures.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Theatre in context: There was a very good selection of theorists in general. Candidates also tended to describe and explain the context of the theorist and the theory. There were cases

when candidates failed to find the right primary source from which to cite the theorist directly. There were a few cases when candidates failed to provide an analysis of the theatrical aspects from the chosen theory and merely tended to enumerate or describe them.

Criterion B

Theatre processes: There was a tendency for candidates to describe their final choices with an emphasis on explaining their approach and creative decisions instead of describing the exploratory stages of their process based on the theory and the aspects chosen. In my opinion this should also be considered since for the candidates the presentation of their projects consists in much more than just a paper presented for evaluation along with the video, it is also their conceptualization and devising of a piece based on their vision.

Examiners noted that most candidates were able to refer to feedback, though a small minority merely mentioned the occurrence of feedback without even listing what that feedback was. Also, there is seldom a case when candidates reflect on feedback and the impact this had on their work, in order to obtain the higher mark according to the criterion descriptor.

Criterion C

Presenting theatre: Overall, the quality of pieces was high. The vast majority of candidates were able to show and apply the aspects of their chosen theory in the accompanying videos. There were some difficult-to-examine cases when the filming was done in a hand-held fashion, and also cases where sound quality was detrimental to understanding their delivery of lines.

Criterion D

Evaluation: Overall, candidates presented a sound evaluation of their pieces and the impact that it had on their audience. Similar to the previous session, there were some instances when candidates confused the evaluation of challenges faced during their projects with technical difficulties during presentation. Evaluation of personal discoveries was in general appropriate in the manner of what was learned and how the candidates grew as theatre persons.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Taking into consideration that the application of the new descriptors for the May 2017 session are in essence the same for criterion B, it would be important to insist that candidates focus on a **practical** exploration of their chosen aspects from the theory. This was an issue in some cases when candidates failed to provide evidence of a practical exploration and present more of a theoretical justification of choices during their processes.

Please ensure that candidates have access to a suitable venue that is available in the run up to, and including, the performance. Centres must ensure an audience is present.