2021 Drama Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2021 assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

Teachers should refer to the subject outline for specifications on content and learning requirements, and to the subject operational information for operational matters and key dates.

School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Group Production

Students complete a Group Production worth 40%. Led by the teacher, students work collaboratively within the framework of Company and Production to conceive, explore, develop, produce, refine, and perform (or present) a dramatic product.

Students provide evidence of their learning in relation to their Knowledge and Understanding of dramatic theories, styles and practices, Critical and Creative Thinking as an artist, and Creative Application of dramatic skills and techniques.

The more successful responses commonly:

* evaluated the success of their theatrical role(s) by analysing choices made in the dramatic process, not just in the final product
* carefully selected evidence from the dramatic process and the final performance to illustrate ideas, spreading the five minutes of performance footage across the evaluation
* explicitly connected dramatic theories, techniques and intended audience reaction to choices made by the student
* analysed one or two theatrical roles deeply
* utilised the full-time allocation of 15 minutes
* presented well-synthesised information across voice, imagery, and on-screen annotations
* provided a sophisticated, detailed, and holistic synthesis of their role(s), with all choices justified with dramatic reasoning
* students identified moments of themselves in the early phases of creation and rehearsal and then found multiple checkpoints of this same moment. This allowed them to deeply reflect on the learning and development process
* produced documentation that reflected the student’s knowledge and understanding of the dramatic process, clearly addressing the key phases of conceiving, exploring, building, refining, presenting, and evaluating
* clearly articulated their role/s within the context of their company and broader directorial vision
* demonstrated a strong awareness of audience and how this impacted their choices
* avoided superfluous information. Students carefully targeted their analysis of the process with in-depth probing of their role(s) thereby demonstrating detailed knowledge and understanding of dramatic theories, conventions, styles and texts
* use of correct, contextual, and sophisticated dramatic or cinematic terminology
* demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of dramatic/cinematic style and provided pertinent filmed footage to support their application of this.

The less successful responses commonly:

* discussed the performance in general terms and outlined broad audience intended reactions, or did not mention the audience at all
* provided a diarised account of the process
* described dramatic theory and techniques and did not link these to specific choices made by the student, or linked them implicitly together
* used direct-to-camera or audio-only evaluations, followed by five continuous minutes of performance evidence
* video journal with direct-to-camera delivery and no additional footage of the playmaking or film-making process
* split focus across too many roles and therefore were not able to dive deeply into their reflection or creative application in one area
* included too much teacher led and directed discussion that did not appear to allow students to formulate enough of their own individual responses, analysis, and evaluation as part of their documentation.

Assessment Type 2: Evaluation and Creativity

Students undertake one or two Evaluation and Creativity tasks with a combined weighting of 30%. In this assessment type, students reflect upon their own emerging artistic style and practice, as informed by their learning in the Exploration and Vision, and Company and Production areas of study. Students evaluate and analyse dramatic works, theories, practices, and practitioners and apply this to their own hypothetical creative product.

The more successful responses commonly:

* explicitly demonstrated the connections between theatre practitioners, styles or texts and the hypothetical product
* analysed the decision-making process and intended audience reaction of the hypothetical product
* included evidence of experimentation during the dramatic process and evaluated decisions made. Evidence was illustrated through artefacts such as images, videos, and designs
* connected artistic impacts of theatrical works on the student by connecting it to their own artistic development in making Drama
* a high level of sophistication in their responses and evaluation of self as artist, as well as professional performances
* clearly addressed both the Evaluation and Creativity components of this assessment type
* used subject specific language and dramatic terminology to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and provide depth of analysis
* produced an individual creative piece that truly explored the range of options available for this assessment task
* made clear connections in the evaluative component with their own Drama practice
* evaluation tasks deeply interpreted and analysed artistic choices of theatre or filmmakers, with insightful commentary on audience or cultural impact of the work
* evaluations integrated theatrical or cinematic elements and examined their impact in terms of dramatic style or form
* creative responses clearly articulated their role, and demonstrated deep thinking and experimentation to achieve a hypothetical product
* unique creative responses that clearly demonstrated a strong understanding and application of conventions and style
* creative product choice provided a breadth of opportunity to highlight the student’s knowledge of dramatic theory and processes.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided generalised ideas of the hypothetical product and intended audience reaction
* did not include materials to act as evidence of experimentation during the dramatic process
* used personalised statements to show artistic impact of theatrical works and connected these to their own drama-making in a non-specific manner
* did not take the time to self-evaluate
* tended to review professional companies, but did not apply or reflect on how they were influenced by these performances
* did not make clear connections with their own practice.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Creative Presentation

Students undertake one creative presentation worth 30% comprising two parts: a presentation and a learning portfolio.

Students work as a small company of between two and five to individually and collaboratively conceive, plan and produce a creative dramatic presentation applying the knowledge, skills and understanding they have learned, including dramatic theory and process. The presentation may take a variety of forms.

They individually record, analyse, reflect on, and appraise their creative decision-making and application of the dramatic process and skills toward realising the product in a learning portfolio. The learning portfolio includes synthesis, analysis and evaluation of individual and collaborative ideas, decisions and contributions during the process and appraisal of the artistic merit of the product.

The more successful responses commonly:

* made clear stylistic links between the Learning Portfolio and the Product with detailed reference to the techniques, genres and innovators who inspired the work and articulated and referenced their knowledge and understanding of dramatic movements
* demonstrated in-depth knowledge and understanding of the dramatic style and form being explored and could speak to specific developmental moments in relation to this
* where an innovator was referenced, the student provided intellectual discussion demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the theory and approaches to applying techniques and systems, and directly linked this to evidence of their own drama-making and/or final product
* made clear the student’s role(s) from early in the Learning Portfolio
* explored the student’s role(s) in-depth in terms of drama-making conventions and process, and could effectively evaluate the artistic merit of these choices
* focused deeply on fewer clearly defined practical roles for assessment in their Learning Portfolio despite the student perhaps contributing in other areas in the development of the holistic group product
* implemented, documented, discussed, and provided evidence of broad experimentation and exploration in the development of the product with articulate appraisal of the intentions and impact of their choices
* succinctly articulated the company’s ethos and artistic vision and related this to their justification of dramatic choices, often with broader anticipation of the intended audience response
* used accurate, contextual, and sophisticated dramatic and/or cinematic terminology in their discussion
* demonstrated a high degree of originality in their Product avoiding simple replication of the work of others and could explain their decision-making
* had a clear purpose and intention for the work demonstrating the ability to create meaningful work for a specified audience
* applied a range of film techniques with detailed explanations and analysis of cinematic choices in cinematic products, discussed in the Learning Portfolio with sophisticated appraisal and cinematic language
* understood the experience of creativity, exploration and experimentation and succinctly and clearly communicated their ideas throughout these stages using a variety of forms including purposeful visual materials and clarity of language and progressed their ideas in a logical manner
* showed sophisticated and highly detailed exploration of student’s own work demonstrating a refined and insightful understanding of the purpose of their role in the ensemble and the interdependent nature of drama
* utilised the maximum time for their presentations and used the time to provide information and evidence relevant to the creation of the product
* synthesised discussion (e.g. voiceover) with visuals integrating the evidence within their explanation
* evidenced thorough rehearsal, preparation and refined performance of the role(s) for dramatic and/or cinematic outcomes
* demonstrated highly proficient, refined and focused application of practical skills in their chosen role(s) to achieve dramatic outcomes.

The less successful responses commonly:

* improvised their product or product was unrehearsed or underprepared and lacking in focus and/or purpose
* demonstrated limited research, experimentation, and exploration of skills specific to the practical role assumed, and limited analysis and appraisal of their decision-making
* provided generalised statements, hyperbole and/or personalised opinion regarding the impact of creative choices and outcomes of the work and did not expand on choices made
* did not submit a final product or learning portfolio demonstrating the application of dramatic skills and reasoning in producing dramatic outcomes
* did not clearly identify the practical role undertaken; or in circumstances where more than one role was assumed, did not articulate the scope of the roles in the learning portfolio
* did not link their work to a practitioner, genre or text and could not link their ideas to an understanding of dramatic purpose, style, and intention
* were descriptive in nature of the process and provided limited exploration and analysis of the reasons behind the choices that were made and influences that shaped the product
* repeated discussion and information in both the product and the learning portfolio
* lacked a cohesive or structured approach to the task
* provided a general and often diarised overview of the group’s drama-making often with limited focus on their own role within the ensemble
* where students assumed many different roles in the ensemble (e.g. more than 3), they were unable to demonstrate and sustain depth and sophistication of analysis, appraisal and synthesis of all roles in the learning portfolio. In these circumstances, the breadth of roles being assessed limited depth of evaluation and analysis in the student’s discussion
* did not communicate their ideas clearly or carefully plan their artistic choices in a logical manner
* the evidence presented in the learning portfolio did not reflect the student’s development of their role within the ensemble and/or product
* were teacher-directed reflections (e.g. interview format) as opposed to a synthesised documentation of the student’s own thinking, application of processes and self-evaluation of their drama-making
* did not provide evidence of the development of ideas at various stages of the creative process
* showed that the task design did not provide students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge through creativity, exploration and experimentation
* were not able to communicate how they applied their knowledge of drama within the creative development of original work.