

## THEATRE

### Overall grade boundaries

#### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 11	12 – 22	23 – 36	37 – 50	51 – 62	63 – 75	76 – 100

#### Standard level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 9	10 – 18	19 – 29	30 – 42	43 – 56	57 – 69	70 – 100

### Independent Project Portfolio

#### Component grade boundaries

#### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 6	7 – 13	14 – 19	20 – 26	27 – 32	33 – 39	40 – 50

#### Standard level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 5	6 – 10	11 – 14	15 – 19	20 – 24	25 – 29	30 – 40

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

Generally speaking this was the most successful session in terms of candidates meeting the requirements of the task; in addition, it is clear that many teachers are encouraging candidates to take risks in terms of choices and an approach based on an authentic sense of exploration. There was again this session a surprising increase in the number of option B projects; candidates are mostly engaging in workshops for this option, though this is not the only possibility. What is particularly pleasing is the number of workshops approached with a

clear sense of exploration and specifically with the intent to understand more about a theatre practice or practices. More candidates chose to experiment with more than one practice than in past sessions. A difficulty with some of the projects chosen at both HL and SL was often rooted in the candidate's choice of role or task. Candidates, in some instances, are taking on too many roles/tasks for an independent project and therefore struggling to demonstrate convincing skill development during the project and subsequently within the portfolio itself.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Criterion A

Primarily this criterion is about the independent choices candidates make in the development of the project. The portfolio must demonstrate evidence of initiative and perseverance; an implicit reference is not sufficient, nor is just a statement indicating that initiative or perseverance has taken place. **Initiative** can be defined as going beyond the predictable to examine areas that are relevant and/or illuminating. **Perseverance** can be defined as working systematically and thoroughly in the achievement of goals. The issue of relevance is worth mentioning under this criterion as it differs to "relevance" under criterion D. Relevance under this criterion refers to the relevancy of choices made in the development of the project.

### Criterion B

The successful candidates in this criterion established and connected clear goals to the role and in particular, the specific area of skill development. A concern in this area was related to the identification of skills relative to a particular area. This difficulty was often connected to poor or even no sources influencing the project. Candidates, when approaching a project, need a sufficient grounding in production and performance elements and theatre practice in order to identify the necessary skill-base of a chosen area. It is highly recommended, therefore, that such grounding exists within the course.

### Criterion C

Some candidates (though fewer than in past sessions) still tended towards descriptive or emotive writing rather than a critical account of learning and development. Reflection should support the development of a skill area with direct reference to learning. It is worth noting that the choice to section the portfolio into headings based on the dynamic stages of the creative process (preparation, action and reflection) although not directly penalized, tended to limit candidates' ability to reach the upper achievement levels in some criteria, specifically criterion C. The subject guide indicates as a formal requirement that the portfolio must have clear headings. The guide does not, however, indicate that they must be based on the three headings listed above. To do so in many instances meant that evidence of independence and research was limited to the opening section and that reflection was contained within a final section rather than throughout, as indicated in the assessment criteria descriptors. It is recommended that candidates title and section their headings based on whatever is appropriate to the particular project/portfolio.

### Criterion D

Requirements for this criterion were generally met, with the word limit in most instances under the limit. Sources were more consistently and accurately attributed and in particular in this session the range and quality of sources improved – this practice is to be commended as

range and quality of sources quite often determined the depth and scope of a project. Relevancy under this criterion refers to the relevancy of the materials contained within the portfolio.

### **Criterion E (HL only)**

Generally speaking there was a better standard of theatrically based theoretical underpinnings this session. A relatively small number of schools are still neglecting this crucial aspect of the project/portfolio. At HL, it is imperative that the project is rooted in a theatrically based theoretical underpinning; cultural and/or historical research is certainly appropriate to support theatrical research, but should not represent the theoretical underpinning in its entirety. In addition, it is worth reiterating the importance that the underpinning is fundamental to the development of the project; in order for this to happen, the research must, at least to some extent, be referred to throughout the portfolio. In these instances, it was clear that the underpinning was truly fundamental to understanding the development of the process.

## **Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates**

As mentioned in the previous section, an area that still seems to be of concern is in relation to evidence of skill development (specifically in relation to criterion B). Candidates are still choosing areas without necessarily understanding the related skill (such as writing a play but not dealing specifically with the process or skills of writing for theatre or designing costumes without mention of colour/texture/materials etc.). The problem appears to stem from candidates' lack of awareness of the skill-base associated with particular areas of theatre. It is recommended that during the course this area of concern be explicitly addressed with topic areas to allow for candidates to then make such connections when approaching the independent project. Additionally, it is important that candidates are aware that this understanding is fundamental to beginning a project or creative process, as it is difficult to show skill development in an area of theatre if the related skills are not clearly outlined at the outset.

## **Further comments**

It was particularly encouraging to see the number of SL projects that initiated and outlined a project based on a solid research-base; though this is not a requirement at SL, it certainly improved the quality of evidence within the portfolios, and presumably the related projects. Again, the very high standard of work in this session is to be commended, in particular the inquiry-based projects and evidence of candidates taking new and challenging risks, both intellectually and creatively.

## Practical Performance Proposal

### Component grade boundaries

#### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 2	3 – 4	5 – 8	9 – 12	13 – 15	16 – 19	20 – 25

#### Standard level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 1	2 – 2	3 – 4	5 – 8	9 – 13	14 – 17	18 – 25

### General Comments

Generally, at both SL and HL there appears to be a greater understanding of the task as fewer proposals fall into the 1-5 markband than in previous years. The differentiation between proposals seems to be based more on candidate effort and application rather than understanding of the mechanisms of the assessment procedure. With HL candidates the commentary continues to be a stumbling block for some schools as the application of research/theory is often not developed to include 'practical effects' i.e. clear practical examples of how the research/theory will appear on stage.

In section 1, at both SL and HL, the most effective pitches occurred when a clear vision of intended action, space and style were conveyed. Some pitches spent too many words on theoretical justifications of choice and discussion which did not help to convey a vision. However, as the PPP is marked globally a poor section 1 pitch was often recovered by clear development of ideas in section 2. There were also cases at both SL and HL of provocative and intriguing section 1 pitches which failed to lead into developed ideas.

A general formulaic approach seems to be coming through in section 2 to include:

- exploration/research of the stimulus
- concept/process development
- plot (action)/character development
- production element understanding and use
- production element effects and combinations

The proposals which dealt with these areas in a holistic and integrated fashion did well against the criteria (markband 11-15 and above), particularly if there was clarity in conveying the 'what and how' of the onstage action. Those which involved clear personal engagement, innovation and vision of what happened on stage, how it happened and why these choices were made, did extremely well (markband 16-20 and above). However, some exemplars

treated these areas as a checklist and these proposals tended to fall into the lower to mid markbands. The lower markband proposals at both SL and HL in section 2 offered some general staging ideas sometimes not showing any processional link to the stimulus or understanding of the intricacies of the *mise-en-scène* procedure or production elements in general (markbands 1-5/6-10).

Most proposals attempted to explore the chosen stimulus through brainstorming of ideas (including plot, characters, narrative, etc). The better proposals (markband 11-15 and above) supported the brainstorming with research and suggestions of 'dramatic potential' (key staging moments described through action ideas or use of production elements) evoked by the stimulus.

A performance concept was clearly discernible in the better proposals, although sometimes the concept lacked stated clarity. Coherence of artistic choices was apparent in better pieces of work and this was often due to an understanding of the principle of performance concept. In middle markband proposals, themes or styles were often proposed as concepts but then were not used to validate artistic choices. Weaker proposals often simply presented ideas of action and/or staging with little clarification of the process of choice.

There were a number of proposals which used many pages to clarify the devising process of the plot and outlined literary sketches of characters. Whilst these were enlightening, they were sometimes not developed to explain how the plot or characters would be translated to the stage. The purpose of the PPP according to the subject guide is for the candidate to "write a rationale, outline and detailed description of a proposal for **staging a performance**" (subject guide p27). Whilst it is realized that a certain amount of 'devising' must take place this should be balanced with a matching emphasis on how the plot/characters take to the stage.

Generally, in most proposals presented, a basic understanding of the elements of production, which contribute to a piece of theatre, was evident. The degree of understanding which differentiated the level of the work often lay in the depth to which the proposal revealed understanding. The better pieces of work (markband 16-20 and above) often reflected a thoughtful process engaging research (how), exploration, justification (why) and clear communication of an onstage vision (what). In weaker proposals, the 'what' was often partially described (usually using un-annotated downloaded internet images) or there was a lack of balance with, perhaps, costume and make-up being described in detail and other production elements being barely referred to.

Descriptions of "the subtleties of ... effects in performance" (subject guide p37/38) in one area of the production elements (e.g. communication of details of how lighting is to be used to create a certain effect at a certain moment) was clear in higher level proposals. Whereas top markband work conveyed certain moments in the performance where a "comprehensive understanding of the function and **interrelation** of the production elements" (subject guide p38/39) was evident through reflective description of onstage happenings.

HL section 3 commentaries varied widely between those which had embedded the theory/research into their proposals from early on in the process (markband 16-20 and above) to those which appeared to have chosen some onstage ideas and linked them to a piece of theory/research as an afterthought. The top markband work clearly fell into the former bracket. There were some proposals which did not mention the theory/research aspect until

the commentary and this led to inconsistencies in the overall vision. The 'pick and mix' approach to theatre practitioners was less in evidence this year with some very good justifications for the use of what appeared to be contrasting philosophies. In the lower markband work (markbands 1-5/6-10), there were still instances of research/theory which was not applied to the performance in a practical way but used to develop plot. In these cases, the section 3 was not developed to show how the theory/research choice would lead to 'practical effects' on stage. Another type of lower markband section 3 were those proposals which merely re-iterated what had been presented in section 2 only in written form namely creative artistic choices with no apparent theoretical basis. Another great weakness in the less strong section 3 commentaries were those proposals which chose an onstage action they had already decided upon and tried to link this to a theory or practitioner (e.g. "in the second act one actor will come forward and talk to the audience – this breaking the fourth wall and so is an example of Epic theatre). The better proposals (markband 11-15 and above) often introduced the theory/research throughout section 2 and then used section 3 to show their deeper understanding and integration of the theory/research, supporting their groundwork with practical examples ('practical effects') from their proposed performance.

A general comment – some schools still present the proposal with each sheet of paper in individual plastic covers. This causes an increase in marking time as each page must be removed for annotation and then put back in the plastic cover.

## Research Investigation

### Component grade boundaries

#### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 4	5 – 9	10 – 14	15 – 19	20 – 24	25 – 29	30 – 40

#### Standard level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 9	10 – 12	13 – 16	17 – 19	20 – 30

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

There were some strong essays submitted clearly illustrating that candidates had engaged with the practice, fulfilled the requirements of the task and effectively applied their research to a play/piece of theatre from that practice.

It was clear once again that the strongest candidates were those who chose an aspect to focus on that was appropriate to the practice and clearly evident in the play/piece of theatre.

This combination helped candidates to develop a good research question that guided their research and their response. It was evident that getting the question right is essential to the task. The question itself should also be subject to redrafting and revising. It should be refined and developed as the candidate gets further into the research and develops a more sophisticated understanding of the material.

Perseverance and initiative were evident when candidates were clearly interested in the practice and the play/piece of theatre and were inspired to research deeper. This was also evident when candidates cross-referenced sources to check the validity of the information and to gain more depth in the area being researched.

Some candidates continue to select plays/pieces of theatre which are not from the selected practice. This is a misunderstanding of the requirements (criterion B), which also significantly changes the nature of, and approach to the task. The exercise can become a creative exercise focussing on adapting the play/piece of theatre for the practice. In this respect it also impacts on the register of the writing (criterion C).

In some instances the research was very general and led to unfocussed essays that served as a superficial and general introduction to the practice. One cannot reiterate enough the importance of specific, focussed research that is directly applied to specific moments of action in the play/piece of theatre selected.

The most successful research investigations focussed on a theatre practice where there were strong conventions and clearly defined approaches to staging. A narrow focus encourages focussed and relevant research. Candidates who chose directing as an aspect found it challenging to focus and to deal with particular aspects with depth. Directing covers many areas and candidates should be encouraged to be more precise about which particular aspect/s of directing (blocking, stage action, text delivery etc) they wish to focus on.

The research investigations were generally well presented; well-written and visual material was well used.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### **Criterion A - Research skills**

Some candidates researched thoroughly and consulted a variety of sources which provided them with an in depth knowledge and understanding of the practice.

Candidates chose different forms of attribution and referencing and most were consistent. Most candidates included the required bibliography as well as attributing sources in the body of the work or in the form of footnotes or endnotes.

Weaker candidates attributed sources only within the bibliography. It cannot be emphasised enough that the source of all observations that candidates have drawn from their research should be attributed within the body of the work. This is also the case with visual material, photographs, images, charts and drawings.

ALL information presented needs to be clearly attributed regardless of how insignificant it may appear, as some candidates are selective about attribution. This sometimes prevents candidates from reaching the upper achievement level of this criterion.

Candidates should make sure that their observations, deducted from their research, are

supported by research evidence. Candidates should avoid broad, general and unsubstantiated descriptions or 'potted' guides to a theatre practice.

Productions of a piece of theatre may be a useful source of information and excellent research. Candidates, however, should be careful not to make this their main source of research and should be mindful that this may be ONE (performer or director) particular interpretation of the practice and not authentic to the practice.

Generic research into colour, directing skills, performance skills, set construction etc. which is not related or specific to a particular practice/s or practitioner is less useful and sometimes redundant.

### **Criterion B - Task relevance**

The most successful candidates formulated a question that met the requirements and helped them to focus their research, show their understanding of the selected theatre practice and demonstrate an ability to apply this research to stage action. Poor questions steered candidates away from the practice and in some cases prevented them from meeting or fulfilling the requirements.

The formulation of a research question is part of the requirements of the task and is directly assessed within this criterion. Care should be given to the question. Candidates should start with a preliminary question to guide their research but they should be open to redrafting and refocusing the question the further they research and the more they know.

An example of a poorly formulated question was 'How does a set designer construct the set of Samuel Beckett's *Endgame*?' This question is problematic because:

- it does not focus on a practice but on the playwright and the play which led to the candidate focussing on text analysis and interpretation
- the 'construction' of the set encourages a 'how to...' approach rather than a focus on the conventions of the set
- the candidate struggled to research particular set conventions that related to a particular practice and as a result focused on materials and aesthetics
- this encouraged a research investigation that read more like a set design project than a research paper
- this led the candidate to examine the themes in the play rather than a particular practice

Candidates who choose an area of design as the aspect of the practice should be careful not to take on the role of the designer but to provide research and information (particular to the practice) that would guide any practitioner.

The subject guide and all forms specify that there needs to be a research question. This should not be in the form of a statement but should be a question. This encourages candidates to directly address and *answer* the question rather than *explore* a statement. The narrower the focus of the question the more depth and focus the candidate will have. An aspect is not a broad element of production (directing, performing, designing etc) but should be something specific and particular to the practice being researched. Rather than:

*"How would a traditional Classical Greek Theatre production of Oedipus be directed?"*

A better question is:

*“How would the Chorus enter and exit the performance space in a Classical Greek Theatre production of Oedipus?”*

The research should also be constantly and consistently applied to the play/piece of theatre as the application of research is one of the key elements of this task.

### **Criterion C - Presentation**

The majority of research investigations were written in the appropriate register and adopted an appropriate tone.

Visuals that are used should be relevant and have a purpose beyond the decorative otherwise they are considered irrelevant. The strongest candidates made sure they were clearly attributed (criterion A) but also captioned the visuals indicating their relevance as well as referencing the visuals in the body of the essay.

The essay should be formal and academic in register. It should not be addressed to a particular practitioner, as the research could be relevant for all practitioners interested in staging the production using its authentic practice.

Some candidates chose to divide the essay into titled sections. Though this was sometimes effective, some essays were often divided into too many sections and this had an impact on the coherence of the essay. These also encouraged the candidate to superficially address discrete but related areas without treating them holistically.

The use of large sections from the research or quotes is somewhat clumsy as it is difficult for candidates to address all aspects of such text. It is better for candidates to break up the quote and address it in sections, drawing out its relevance and significance.

Early drafts of the research investigations should NOT be included as an appendix. These are considered irrelevant and only material that is relevant to the question is required.

### **Criterion D (HL only) - Critique of sources**

There was a range of critiques of the sources with the most successful candidates addressing the source's reliability as well as its use and relevance. The candidates are required here to demonstrate both a personal and an academic evaluation of the sources.

## **Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates**

- Teachers should work throughout the course on research tasks that would prepare the candidates for this task. In addition candidates need to have an understanding of applied research, in other words how research can be transformed into stage action.
- It is always useful to take the candidates through the assessment criteria and encourage them to list the skills that are required for this task.
- Candidates need to understand how an academic essay is structured, referenced and how sources are attributed. There needs to be some preparation for this.
- Ensure that the quality of reproduced visuals is of good quality. Colour should be used if this is relevant (make up, set, costume) and the image should be large

enough to be clear.

- The research question should be drafted and worked on and candidates would benefit from looking at what makes a good question.

Candidates should be careful to avoid research investigations which:

- focus on a literary analysis and interpretation of a play. This is often the case when the aspect selected is the language of the play. This seemed to be particularly the case with research investigations that focused on Theatre of the Absurd.
- describe the candidate's own directorial vision regarding how they would stage the piece or that focuses on a production of the play that they have seen and are attempting to reconstruct.
- analyse the themes of the play without looking at how this has an impact on the action and how it relates to the practice. This is sometimes the case with political theatre practices such as Theatre of the Oppressed.
- present a training programme for the performer to develop their skills in a particular practice. This does not demonstrate the candidate's ability to apply research to a piece of theatre/play but rather on a series of exercises and activities.
- present a character analysis or interpretation. This was particularly problematic where the practice selected was naturalism (Stanislavski and method acting) and the candidate proceeded to analyse and interpret rather than examine how the practice impacts the action.
- present their own ideas of set design.

## Theatre Performance & Production Presentation

### Component grade boundaries

#### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 5	6 – 10	11 – 16	17 – 21	22 – 25	26 – 30	31 – 40

#### Standard level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 10	11 – 14	15 – 18	19 – 22	23 – 30

## The range and suitability of the work submitted

The performance at higher level for the November session was arguably of a high quality. The schools have clearly taken the critical comments from last year into account. The careful reading of internal assessment feedback forms is a crucial part of the process of development for schools so it was positive to note that many issues raised by the examiner in the last November session had been considered.

Some centres are still using the old 6/T candidate profile forms which do not help the moderator in the evaluation of the work. The actual assessments of the teachers are closer to moderation marks than they have been. Too many candidates (the majority) are clearly reading from a prepared text, some centres are kind enough to prove this point by including the text, referred to as “the manuscripts” by one centre. The fact is that candidates who refer to notes in a considered manner but do not obviously read from them often perform better than those candidates who are tied to a pre-prepared script. The use of the images accompanying the presentations continues to vary from no reference at all to careful structuring of the presentation around the visual material. The latter approach is naturally more successful since it responds to the nature of the assessment task.

The focus in all cases varied between two fundamental processes. The first, following the recommendations in the subject guide had candidates focusing on a couple of key theatrical experiences and branching out from these to other important work. This had the merit of establishing links between the works since the underlying purpose behind extending the argument was invariably because another practice, tradition, performance, production or play seen allowed the candidate to delve more deeply into the original subject matter. This approach allows for a more organic look at the course and is easier for the candidate to control; the images also integrate well to the narrative they are illustrating or, in the best of cases, illuminating.

The other approach, (often adopted by weaker candidates) was to make little selection or editing of their course and adopt a sequential narrative which took everything into account. If the candidate was extremely capable this could result not only in an extraordinary list of accomplishments and a startling series of connections but also in an engrossing account of an exciting and wide ranging course, marked each step of the way by stunning images which enhanced the narrative. That I use the word narrative is to make a distinction between this approach, which is often presented by candidates in narrative form, and the more selective approach described above which tends to insist on sustained analysis if it is to succeed with the clear advantage of more closely fulfilling the remit of criterion A.

The “downside” of the narrative approach depends on whether it is straight narration or analysis. In the former case both criteria B and C become immediately less effective since in a wide ranging course narrative of one thing after another in a sequential line tends to ignore the obligation to synthesize and can often encourage the candidate to reflect only in general rather than specific terms. The importance of establishing a dramaturgy for the course is also likely to be undermined since the course narrative is about telling the examiner what happened, not how it happened and to what purpose. The research underlining good practice can be swallowed up if there is no forum for its exploration in the presentation and this is often the case in a narrative that is essentially about summation rather than exploration and analysis.

Too many candidates did not refer to any performances in the theatre. The role of spectator must be taken on by the candidate of IB theatre and there is no excuse for any candidate not to see a range of diverse performances during the two year course. Scrutiny of the work of peers is absolutely acceptable to meet the requirements of this mandate.

There is still an overwhelming bias towards European practitioner theory and when practices or traditions are explored from world theatre there is rarely any reference to a dramaturgy that underpins them. The notion that only European theatre has an academic rationale is just another example of how Eurocentric many centres are in their approach to the demands of criterion D which along with criterion B continues to be difficult for candidates to fully master.

The importance of reflection as the condensing element which ensures that the course is seen holistically, and that the selected parts are articulated as being parts of a whole, cannot be underestimated. It is the metaphorical glue that holds the presentation together so much so that if reflection becomes an exercise in subjectivity or anecdote there is little that the candidate can do to answer to the requirements of the criteria.

At standard level the documentation issues are less prevalent here than at HL.

The tendency to narrate the course is more pronounced among SL candidates and a less assured understanding of the demands of the criteria is also characteristic of many SL candidates.

A frustration is that the internal assessment feedback comments are clearly not being collated and distributed to subject teachers by IB coordinators in these centres since the same errors of approach are still being made by the same centres and teachers year by year.

The ability to speak concisely and critically about the work they had experienced characterized the more successful candidates. There was a sense in these presentations that time had been expended on the business of selecting, editing and shaping the analysis to the demands of the criteria. After all you can talk about anything in 30 minutes and too many candidates did just that, letting the narrative ramble and such prolixity has its cost.

The tendency to simply describe theory of practitioners without showing how this theory was tested by the course was too often a disappointing feature of the work as was a tendency to list achievement. The importance of connecting through analysis and reflecting on the subsequent relationships is not as common as it should be at this level.

The use of national traditions of theatre was an interesting feature of some presentations. It is always refreshing to see candidates from Latin America dealing with the pre-conquest indigenous traditions and some insightful work resulted.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Criterion A

The key term to apply here is “analysis”. As outlined above the tendency to narrate prohibits the candidate from an analytical relationship to the material presented. The importance of world theatre, diverse performances and analysis of the different practices and approaches to theatre these allow the candidate to explore are fundamental to the core elements, theatre in the world, in the making and in performance. The successful presentation ensures that the analyses are dedicated to demonstrating the way the experiences of the candidate tie in to

the core and the criterion that supports it. A focus on selected material and experience rather than an exhaustive survey of everything is a far better way of responding to the requirements of criterion A.

At SL the word “analysis” is not always understood and is often taken to mean synopsis. This can be a cultural issue and may relate back to styles of teaching still prevalent in certain centres where content and the identification of practice, style or genre is considered enough. That these aspects of the theatre are closed by a series of definitions rather than explored as a live body of work with contemporary application is characteristic of teachers whose consideration of the past is closed and historical or whose understanding of an unfamiliar tradition is established through facts rather than practical experience or application. Theories are understood as general rules, rather than specific ways of engaging the candidate with possible insights into the performance, design and production.

### **Criterion B**

Criterion B was completed successfully by those candidates who noted connections in different kinds of theatrical work. This awareness was triggered by the selection of work that had a strong resonance across different theatrical practices. This kind of work, carefully associated in the course to appropriate theory and performance allowed the candidate to draw from an integrated course that had been designed by the teacher to raise awareness of the composite nature of theatre as an art but also the relatedness of different aspects of the course. The relationship between theory, applied to practice, a particular theatrical tradition further explored in a performance or a workshop, or a diverse performance in the theatre highlighting features of the candidate’s own work all helped to achieve the sense for the synthesis in theatre this criterion is designed to encourage. Many candidates looked closely at different functionalities within a performance to highlight the inner connections within performance that allow a work to be staged. Design and technical roles functioning together within an ensemble is an excellent example of one kind of synthesis. Where opportunities to see diverse theatrical performance in the theatre were lacking and exposure to world theatre traditions was slight this focus on the production of theatre as a synthesis of different roles was often an acceptable way of dealing with the issue.

Criterion B can be difficult for SL candidates because they are not always sure “what to do” with the theory they learn. Far from repeating the rules of epic theatre they may set up Brecht as a practitioner whose theory came out of a specific time and place that requires re-evaluation in the light of contemporary theatre practice. And though there is no criterion D (HL) obligation for the SL candidate to pursue the dramaturgy of the course the better candidates do so as a matter of course for deeper understanding of what they are talking about. The casual mention of theory or practitioner laws for performance is a characteristic of the candidates who find this criterion difficult. The need to connect theory, to link traditions in their common relationship to performance is rarely a priority. The atomizing of information is far too frequently the result of narrating the course in such a way as to preclude any synthesizing instinct. The notion that the candidate can deepen understanding through comparing like to unlike or like to like is understood by the better candidates but rarely by those who struggle.

### Criterion C

Reflection of the course is what much of the presentation is about but what the candidate chooses to reflect on and where the candidate places the reflective emphasis is the key to success here. At times the focus of reflection is on the subjective experience of the course rather than the lessons the course engenders. Subjectivism can too often diminish the candidate's approach to reflection. The analytical reflection of the interplay between different aspects of the course and the learning it encourages the candidate to internalize through the experience of that interplay is fundamentally what the candidate should reflect on. What is seen, what is explored, what is realized, what is linked, what relates to what and why? How theory is tested against practice and how research can inform practice; these kinds of areas require reflective analysis and analysis is more effective if it is objective.

The tendency to get fixated on one "event", not in the manner suggested in the subject guide but as an experience of and for itself is common among SL candidates and can usually be expected to resolve itself around the "performance" of a role in the production. While the theatre course is about performance it is also about many other things and this is an essential point that teachers need to clarify with their candidates. Reflection about personal feelings clinging to moments of glory and triumph do little for the candidate who needs to be giving the teacher and moderator a more varied impression of a theatre practitioner, alive to the potential of many roles in a composite art, not a performer moving from one play to the next.

### Criterion D (HL only)

There was a definite improvement in the responses by candidates to this criterion. Candidates are seemingly more aware of the importance of explicit reference to research and are less inhibited in stating their sources clearly. The examiner needs to know when a candidate is raising perspectives or issues that have been discovered through specific research so the more explicitly this is outlined the better. The importance of submitting theory to practical application is still not fully embraced by some candidates. References to practitioner views on acting, directing or producing theatre are, in themselves, not complete until they have passed through the test of the candidate's own work. Dramaturgy must have a practical purpose and so practical exploration of ideas will give them the validity they need to be part of the convincing presentation of the candidate's experience.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

The point that candidates frequently ignore but which needs continual emphasis by teachers is that the four criteria at higher level and the three criteria at standard level are designed to function together as aspects of each other's function within the presentation. Analysis, synthesis and research into practice define what the style (analytical) and purpose (the realization of synthesis, or the awareness of difference) of reflection is in the presentation. The assessment task encourages the candidate to see how the diverse work practically explored in the course through research and making, through theory and performance, through witnessing theatre and participating in it, through attempting individual and ensemble experiences is linked or is distinguished.

Candidates should be encouraged to refer to notes; they should speak with passion and conviction but the presentation should **not** consist of a reading from a pre-prepared script.

Candidates should be taught to view theatre as a composite of many arts and should be encouraged to see how these complement one another in how an unfamiliar tradition may work or a performance in a theatre may startle them. These insights only begin to make sense in the context of this exercise if they are brought into relation with the work of the candidate.

Of all the subjects in the Diploma Programme perhaps theatre is the one where candidates can most afford to take risks, to be risk-takers just as the IB learner profile encourages them to be. Teachers need to challenge them to use theatre as a subversive as well as a constructive force.

As with higher level the teacher should challenge standard level candidates to take risks, to focus on how the act of theatre can liberate them from many of the knowledge boundaries other subjects may need to impose. A quixotic thought worth nurturing with your candidates is there are no boundaries nor should there be any secrets. Every theatrical event whether it be a play the candidates' watch, a text they encounter or an improvisation they extend into a performance represents an adventure and an opportunity. The foreground dynamic needs always to move towards the holistic as in how apparently disparate experiences may connect, or conversely the other paradigm approach can be dialectic as in the study of how experiences may conflict or be held in tension by opposing purposes or aims.

The criteria are open to both approaches and clearly a wide ranging course will allow a candidate to explore both dynamics.

It is perhaps wishful thinking to expect candidates to move beyond the trinity of Brecht, Artaud and Stanislavski for their practitioner work, all three of these practitioners are of course extraordinarily interesting but need to be treated in an open minded combative manner, they cannot simply be accepted. They need to be applied and tested against the experience of the candidates, no matter how basic their theatrical experience may be.