# Government of South Australia LogoSACE Board Logo2024 Drama Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2024 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.

Across the Assessment Types for this subject, students can present their responses in oral or multimodal form, where 6 minutes is the equivalent of 1000 words. Students should not speed-up the recording of their videos excessively in an attempt to condense more content into the maximum time limit.

If a video is flagged by markers/moderators as impacted by speed, schools will be requested to provide a transcript and markers/moderators will be advised to mark/moderate based on the evidence in the transcript, only considering evidence up to the maximum word limit (e.g. up to 2000 words for AT3).

If the speed of the recording makes the speech incomprehensible, it affects the accuracy of transcriptions and it also impacts the ability of markers/moderators to find evidence of student achievement against the performance standards.

The Subject Renewal program has introduced changes for many subjects in 2025, these changes are detailed in the change log at the front of each subject outline. When reviewing the 2024 subject assessment advice, it is important to consider any updates to this subject to ensure the feedback in this document remains accurate.

School Assessment

Teachers can improve the moderation process and the online process by:

thoroughly checking that all grades entered in Schools Online are correct

ensuring that all uploaded materials (particularly video and multimodal files) can be opened after uploading

ensuring tasks are uploaded to the correct student

using the Student Identification Sheet to ensure students are clearly and correctly identified by student number and role/s in video/multimodal evidence. Uploading a colour photograph for each student in costume (as they appear in the video/multimodal presentation) is recommended for each assessment task if necessary

ensuring that task sheets are uploaded to the teacher materials section

ensuring amendments to the teaching and learning program are clearly and accurately detailed on the LAP, and that any special provisions for individual students are indicated using variation to moderation materials during upload.

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.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

guiding all students into role(s) for assessment that demonstrate their strengths while providing scope for learning

encouraging students to focus on one to two roles for the purposes of assessment while acknowledging that students working as a company may assume additional roles and responsibilities in the creation of their presentation

signposting moments throughout the creative process for students to capture evidence of ideation, exploration, experimentation and self-reflection on their making and refinement of creative choices

ensuring scaffolding does not limit student agency, creativity, or broad exploration of dramatic concepts and ideas

providing a directorial concept, company vision or artistic statement for students to respond to in the creation, analysis, and appraisal of their work

providing opportunities to view live or recorded professional works (theatre or film as relevant) and guiding shared analysis of how theatrical/filmic elements have been manipulated and combined to convey intention and meaning, and impact an audience

supporting students to identify their intended impact on the audience during rehearsal, and which techniques or stylistic choices can be used to illicit that response

ensuring that each student in an acting role has their own five minutes of performance in the presentation.

The more successful responses commonly:

showed careful selection of evidence to demonstrate how the student collaborated with a range of different roles throughout the process

provided genuine evidence of their process to illustrate their engagement in the creative process (e.g. rehearsal footage, images of making and works in progress, collaborative problem solving, etc.)

focused on fewer dramatic roles to provide deeper discussion, analysis and appraisal of their process and work

focussed on the development of their role/s and its relevance and function in the production

provided artefacts relevant to the development of their work with reference to specific moments collaborating with others

focussed on authentically capturing and presenting the creativity of the process rather than contriving a creative context for the presentation

integrated their discussion of dramatic theory with examples from their own application of the theory. Such responses often connected the stylistic features used to their own work and used multimodal evidence in their discussion

explicitly explained, appraised, and analysed the final product as evidence of artistic choices in the creative process with reference to the impact or meaning made by the audience

were well-drafted and rehearsed

provided deeper, more detailed, evidence through the combined use of video/images, voice over and text on screen through a video or slide show with recorded narration or written annotations. Such responses often spliced performance footage throughout the presentation, allowing for explicit links to be drawn to dramatic theory and ideas

made clear what meaning was created by their role (e.g. how costumes reflected character given circumstances and development) in specific moments

analysed and evaluated choices from the entire dramatic process, including choices that may not have been included in the final

captured an authentic sense of the process and experience of creating the work. For those impacted by absences or misadventure, appraisal of the creative process was aligned to the performance standards and still demonstrated in-depth understanding of theories, techniques and process that influenced their work and its success.

The less successful responses commonly:

provided a recount of what the group did, focussing on detailing group dynamics and what did not work rather than evaluating choices made and their success at communicating the ensemble’s intentions

had an imbalance of evidence that focussed on lower order skills such as line learning, lantern rigging, etc.

offered evaluation of the entire production and work of others rather than the development and success of their individual role/s in achieving the success of the production

did not evaluate the production season from the point of view of the audience

were unscripted with few or no artefacts or evidence of learning shown, missing opportunities to take advantage of multimodal formats

were reports, written retrospectively, without supporting video evidence of rehearsal, exploration, or the final performance

lacked clarity around which role was being undertaken by the student

provided general ideas about work done in many roles, limiting their capacity to show in depth creative thinking, analysis, and appraisal of process

provided their five minutes of performance as an isolated section at the end of the presentation, preventing them from clarifying how the process and key choices were shaped into these final moments

lacked analysis and dramatic reasoning for creative choices

focussed on logistical problems (e.g. budget, resources, time) or regrets about their work ethic

were heavily scaffolded leading to formulaic responses that limited the capacity of students to demonstrate the organic process of developing their work.

Assessment Type 2: Folio – 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.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

ensuring students have a thorough understanding of the learning requirements, the performance standards and how they are applied to this task

ensuring the elements of both evaluating and creating hypothetical dramatic outcomes are covered for this assessment type, especially in integrated tasks where both elements (and word and time allowances) are combined

ensuring that students have experienced a variety of live or recorded professional works in the year of study, analysing them collaboratively to understand the intended meaning and impact on audience as a result of combined theatrical elements

explicitly teaching all students the text or practitioner, and guiding/supporting their cognitive and practical ideas, understanding, critical thinking and hypothetical application

selecting a range of dramatic events (e.g. performances, workshops) for the evaluation component that provide links for students to develop their role/s in the creativity component and/or other assessment types to activate student agency, identity, and vision for themselves as an artist

ensuring scaffolding does not limit student agency, creativity or broad exploration of dramatic concepts, ideas, and opportunities

supporting students to construct a well-structured question to focus their task/s.

The more successful responses commonly:

applied dramatic theories, concepts, techniques, or stylistic features intentionally to the creation of the hypothetical or realised product, demonstrating complex synthesis of theory and practice to develop dramatic concepts and ideas connected to a text or practitioner through their stylistic choices

generated original and creative ideas for their own creative application

Included practical evidence of dramatic thinking, even when the final product was hypothetical

demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the interdependent nature of drama and dramatic elements

had a clear focus on a particular aspect/s of productions and the role they were undertaking

demonstrated an in-depth understanding of the stylistic choices of the performance/practitioner

made insightful reflective links between their learning from dramatic events and the development of their own skills, processes and/or role(s) as an artist. Such responses often provided specific examples from theatre events and explicitly connected them to artistry or dramatic process

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 through artefacts such as images, videos, designs, and annotated scripts

demonstrated a high level of sophistication in their responses and evaluation of themselves as artist, as well as professional performances, understanding what impact their own creative decisions would have on an audience

used subject specific language and dramatic terminology to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and provide depth of analysis

interpreted and analysed artistic choices of theatre or filmmakers with insightful commentary on audience or cultural impact of the work, making links to their own hypothetical work.

The less successful responses commonly:

described or listed what they did with limited analysis or appraisal of stylistic influences or intended dramatic meaning or impact on audience

were heavily scaffolded, formulaic, or constructed in response to a template

gave comprehensive background information about the innovator, company, style, or text studied rather than conveying an understanding of their purpose or intention

were vague in their assessment of the intentions and success of performances or dramatic events and/or did not address the cultural or artistic value of the works or experiences

provided generalised emotive statements in reaction to a theatre event, without justification

mostly retold the narrative of the performances/texts, or described the practice of the innovators/ practitioners without analysis of meaning, theories, ideas, style, form, context, or appraisal of successful and/or impactful moments

were unclear which elements of the text or script students had applied their own ideas to, or which ideas were pre-existing in the selected text

provided generalised ideas for the hypothetical product and intended audience reaction

did not include evidence of experimentation during the dramatic process

did not reflect on or evaluate how they were influenced by performances or workshops from professional companies or artists

did not make clear connections with their own practice

created a product based on their own personal interests or stimulus without connection to dramatic theories, texts, or innovators/practitioners

used practitioners without documented theories, published company vision, or evidence of a body of work to form a theoretical basis to build their own creativity tasks.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

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 conceive, plan, and produce a creative dramatic presentation. They apply the knowledge, skills and understanding they have learned, including dramatic theory and process, individually and collaboratively. 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.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

providing opportunities for students to work in roles that demonstrated their strengths, acknowledging student preferences and the best group dynamics within each class

encouraging students to focus on one or two roles for the purposes of assessment while acknowledging that students working as a company may assume additional roles and responsibilities in the production of their presentation

providing opportunities throughout the creative process for students to capture evidence of ideation, exploration, experimentation and self-reflection on their making and refinement of creative choices

supporting students to capture and present the authentic creativity of the process, rather than contriving a creative context for the learning portfolio

ensuring task design provides students with the necessary agency to freely explore the often non-linear process of theatre making or filmmaking

providing check points in the dramatic process to support students constructing their presentation, and allowing them to reflect and refine throughout the process to ensure a more refined and intentional dramatic presentation

challenging student thinking that the length of a dramatic production is directly related to its quality, reinforcing that time allowances are maxima only and that succinct performances below the maximum time can meet the performance standards at the highest level

guiding students to draw on the range of works, artists, and companies they have viewed or studied throughout their Stage 1 and Stage 2 learning, to draw on and reference in their own dramatic work

providing a student identification form for Schools Online submission where each student is photographed as they appear in the Learning Portfolio and dramatic presentation as well as the role(s) for assessment.

The more successful responses commonly:

identified their dramatic role(s) at the beginning of the learning portfolio

focussed on one or two roles allowing for in-depth discussion, analysis, appraisal, and evidence of the development of the role(s) through the creative process

consistently made analytical connections between the creative process and the final product with multimodal evidence from throughout the development phase and final product to support their discussion, analysing the intended and final impact on the audience and the problem solving that took place

explicitly connected their decisions to notable dramatic theories, practitioners, texts and/or dramatic works as well as works viewed or workshops experienced as part of their course of study, careful not to repeat information from other assessment types

showed the specific application of the theory or works that informed their practical work. Such responses would include things such as how specific shots were influenced by the use of another practitioner, or decisions they had made in staging based on the work of a theatrical innovator

connected and evaluated their work through the lens of a directorial concept developed by the ensemble as well as also analysing the connection to the themes, playwright’s intentions, or stimulus material to their role(s)

connected themselves as an artist to the work they made, finding personal resonance to their dramatic work or the thematic approach that they linked to the intended meaning and connection for the audience

made clear what meaning was created by their role (e.g. how costumes reflected character given circumstances and development) and how they collaborated with a range of company members in the creation of the dramatic presentation

demonstrated strong awareness of the purpose of their role, how they fulfilled their company’s vision and show how their influences were integrated into their role

provided a concise discussion of style and theory in the learning portfolio, focussing on connecting the stylistic features to their own work

utilised voice over, text on screen, and video/images to analyse specific moments from the final dramatic product and experimentation in the dramatic process.

The less successful responses commonly:

were unclear about which specific role(s) they were being assessed on in their learning portfolio

focused on multiple roles, limiting their ability to provide in-depth analysis, evaluation, and evidence of the development of each role

mostly provided a recount of what the group did and/or the narrative, without the use of drama specific terminology

discussed only the final product retroactively, limiting opportunity to deeply discuss the process of making the work

stated decisions or ideas that occurred without justification or connection to theory, dramatic works, or concepts

demonstrated limited ensemble and collaborative work that led to focused dramatic outcomes

gave journal-like reflections at points determined by the teacher instead of synthesising their learning and key moments retrospectively

reflected only on their interpretation or recount of events in a direct-to-camera oral, rather than integrating multimodal evidence from the dramatic process such as artefacts of planning as a company, storyboarding, drawings, brainstorms, cue sheets, etc.

used multimodal evidence that was not related to the voice over analysis of the process or product

focussed the discussion on the activity and process of the whole group, limiting their discussion of role specific building and refining of creative choices

demonstrated limited connection between the student’s processes and notable dramatic theories, practitioners, texts and/or dramatic works

relied on a concept or theme only to generate ideas, limiting opportunity to demonstrate understanding of other dramatic works

demonstrated a lack of applied conventions (of film and theatre) in their dramatic presentation and learning portfolio

focussed on logistical problems (e.g. budget, resources, time) or regrets about their work ethic

were heavily scaffolded or formulaic responses where students had structured their response from template limiting their capacity to demonstrate the organic process of developing their work.

General

The subject outline stipulates in all assessment types that students may take on multiple roles in creating their dramatic responses. However, teachers should encourage students to make informed choices regarding which role(s) they are choosing to be assessed on in each assessment type. An individual may take on multiple roles in the organic process of making a product when working in a company, but they do not need to be assessed on everything they do. For example, a student may take additional responsibilities for costume design and acting in the presentation for Assessment Type 3 but choose to only be assessed on their role as director. In this case, the learning portfolio should focus the discussion on the development of the role chosen for assessment providing opportunity for in depth analysis, appraisal, and presentation of evidence of the creative process at higher levels.

Teachers are also reminded that word and time limits for each assessment type are maxima only.

Teachers are encouraged to continue to utilise the flexibilities already inherent in the course to make the course more manageable. In 2024, the flexibilities of Assessment Type 2 were utilised by many teachers who designed their teaching and assessment program with either two independent tasks (one evaluation task and one creativity task) or a combined task integrating both evaluation and creativity components, to best suit their context. When designing their LAPs for 2025, teachers may find that there are benefits to covering the course requirements by combining the tasks for Assessment Type 2, especially where illness and absence are likely to provide challenges or interruptions. This would see students appraising their learning from dramatic experiences or events (evaluation) to inform their development of a hypothetical product or dramatic concept (creativity). This approach may also provide opportunity for students to more deeply examine the concepts, theories and ideas explored in the dramatic events and apply the synthesis of their learning to their dramatic concept with greater complexity, sophistication, and detail.