CHELSEA ACADEMY

Anchored in Christ

GCSE Drama Handbook

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AQA GCSE Drama – Introduction

GCSE drama is split into 3 components. Component 1 is a written exam which is taken at the end of Year 11. Component 2 and 3 are both practical exams with written components. This means that the course is, loosely, 30% practical and 70% written.

Component	Percentage of GCSE	Overview
1 Understanding Drama	40% - a 1hr 45 min examination taken at the end of Year 11.	Multiple choice questions on theatre knowledge. Questions on practical application of drama in a play studied in class. Questions on analysing a live theatre performance.
2 Devising Drama	40% - assessed by your teacher and externally moderated.	A 6-20 min performance devised by a small group of students. The performance constitutes 25% of the marks of this component. The other 75% come from a written (or spoken to video) log which charts the process of devising and how successful the final performance was.
3 Texts in Practice	20% - externally assessed.	Students will present work as either as a performer or as performance support in TWO performance extracts (from one play) to an Edexcel examiner.

The AQA GCSE in Drama encourages you to:

- Develop a personal interest in why drama matters and be inspired, moved and changed by studying a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study
- Work imaginatively and creatively in collaborative contexts, generating, developing and communicating ideas
- Consider and explore the impact of social, historical and cultural influences on drama texts and activities
- Reflect on and evaluate your own work and the work of others
- Develop and demonstrate competence in a range of practical, creative and performance skills
- Develop a basis for your future role as active citizens in employment and society in general, as well as for the possible further study of drama
- Actively engage in the process of dramatic study in order to develop
- Work closely in groups with different people with success
- Become an independent learner and a critical and reflective thinker with an enquiring mind

Course Planner

What to expect at each stage of your GCSE course.

Year 9

Term 1 Practical Intro to drama
Introduction to drama genres

Term 2 Themed lessons leading to a theatre trip
` Theatre trip and review writing sessions as written exam practice (Component 1 practice)

Term 3 Introduction to Theatre Practitioners
Scripted performance presentations in a drama presentation evening (component 3 practice)

Year 10

Term 1 Perform TiE piece in a local primary school
MOCK COMPONENT 2
Component 2 mock workshops and coursework

Term 2 Teacher led specialism to increase drama knowledge
Reading a complete play.

Term 3 Mock exam questions on the play studied.
MOCK COMPONENT 1
Devising and performing a piece from scratch.
Writing/recording associated logbook
EXAM/COMPONENT 2

Year 11

Term 1 Reading complete plays and choosing extracts
Performing extracts to external examiner
EXAM/COMPONENT 3

Term 2 Reading a complete play
` Theatre trip and making notes on the show

Term 3 Component 1 written examination
EXAM/COMPONENT 1

Rules and Expectations

1) You will be expected to attend all lessons and catch up on any work you miss if you should be off school for any reason. You must see your teacher in advance if you will be missing a lesson.

2) You should be filling in your practical journal, this should take at least one hour every week.

3) You should be fully utilising the google classroom which your teacher has set up for you in order to monitor your work and give in coursework assignments. Please seek help if you do not understand how to use the classroom.

4) Meet all IL deadlines.

5) If you experience difficulty with a topic or particular skill, seek help straight away.

6) Do not be afraid of making mistakes – this is a vital part of good drama!

7) Familiarise yourself with the criteria for GCSE grades.

8) Your practical exam in Year 10 (evening) is **absolutely compulsory**, if you miss this your grade *will* suffer. Your teacher will let you know when this date is a long time in advance.

9) You will be expected to attend at least one theatre trip during your time studying GCSE drama. If you have financial difficulties you should see your teacher.

10) You should aim to be part of at least one extra-curricular club which is arts based.

11) You should aim to have worked very closely with EACH member of your GCSE class by the end of the course – even unsuccessful groupings will teach you a lot!

Resources

Google Classroom
Any IL set and help for coursework will be in the Classroom. Your practical work will also be uploaded to here – only you and other members of your class can see it. If in doubt at any time please refer to it!

Textbooks
You will read several complete plays during your course. These will be provided by your teacher. However, if you'd like to gain a better understanding of them it's well worth buying Letts Study guides, or looking for more information on the plays online.

Pocket Posters
Your teacher will give you a 'Drama Pocket Posters' in Year 10. This will give you a huge amount of information in handy booklet form.

Drama Online
A great introduction to Ancient Greek Theatre.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/ancient_greeks/arts_and_theatre/

GCSE Bitesize have lots of helpful games and quizzes, and a forum where you can talk to other GCSE drama students from around the country!
http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/drama/

The LRC
There are lots of plays and useful books in the LRC and these are being added all the time. If you think there's something that would be really useful and isn't there…tell your Drama teacher at once!

Live Theatre
You live in one of the world's greatest theatre cities. Why not try to go to the theatre with your friends sometime. The more theatre you can see, the better. Ask your teacher if you need advice on what you might enjoy going to watch.

Film and TV
Stretch yourself – watch a film or something on TV that you would never normally dream of looking at. Look at the acting styles, costumes and sets and try to find 6 positive things to say about whatever you've watched – even if you didn't enjoy it much. This can be noted in your drama journal.

Extended Curriculum Opportunities

As a drama student you should be trying to take advantage of the extra-curricular activities offered by the department. These will increase your confidence and give you skills that sometimes cannot be learnt in the classroom.

Mondays: **Drama club** with Mr Redfearn. The opportunity to play drama games and try out skills in a relaxed environment. You can take part in Year 9 and help out in Year 10 upwards!

Fridays: **LAMDA club** – a great opportunity for GCSE students. This will give you the chance to take an internationally accredited grade in solo acting. This must be paid for by your parents as the academy cannot fund it. However, if you get to grade 5 and pass well you could gain UCAS points towards your university entry whilst doing your GCSEs!

The **Academy Musical** – there is a musical production every year. This will give you the opportunity to work with people from other year groups as well as improving your confidence and teaching you about the processes involved with putting on a large scale production (important knowledge for the component 1 examination) Even if you think you can't sing there are opportunities for all!

Future Pathways

Drama is one of the best subjects to learn transferable skills - co-operation, confidence, communication – these are all actually taught in this subject and are qualities that future employers will absolutely look for in any job that deals with people. Over 70% of lawyers working in England have GCSE drama or a higher qualification in drama.

It is one of the few GCSEs where you have to rely on others to help you gain the best grades as there is a group work component (2). As such this really helps with negotiation skills.

- Express yourself fluently and with confidence
- Be able to understand your own strengths and weaknesses
- Be able to speak in front of an audience
- Proof that you are able to work successfully with other people
- Be able to analyse dramatic texts
- Understand social, cultural and historical aspects of texts
- Promotes empathy
- Can prepare you for higher study of drama at A level or degree level

Component 1 – Understanding Drama

This component is a written exam in which students are assessed on their knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed (AO3), including in connection to a set play and on their ability to analyse and evaluate the live theatre work of others (AO4).

The paper constitutes 40% of the GCSE. Students have 1 hour and 45 minutes to answer the paper.

The paper is divided into three compulsory sections:

- Section A: Theatre roles and terminology
- Section B: Study of set text
- Section C: Live theatre production.

In the exam students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the subject content.

Section A: Theatre roles and terminology

In Section A students answer four multiple-choice questions on professional theatre maker roles and/or terminology.
Section A is marked out of 4.

Section B: Study of set text

In Section B students answer short and extended questions on one set play
Students are expected to know and understand the characteristics and context of the whole play they have studied.
One extract from each set play is printed in the question paper.
Students answer questions relating to that extract, referring to the whole play as appropriate to the demands of the question.
Where relevant they may support their answers with sketches or diagrams.
All students must be prepared to answer questions from the perspective of a performer. The exam will include one compulsory short answer question for all students linking design and context and/or theatrical conventions.
Students don't need to have gained practical experience of design to answer this question. One part of Section B will offer students the choice of answering as either a performer or designer (lighting, sound, set, costume, puppets).
Section B is marked out of 44.
Students are permitted to refer to a clean copy of their chosen play during the exam. This must not be annotated and must not contain any additional notes, marks, alterations or inclusions.
Students must not answer Section B and Section C of the exam on the same play ie the live production seen cannot be their set play.

Section C: Live theatre production

In Section C students answer one question (from a choice) on the work of theatre makers in a single live production.
Students must have experienced live production as an audience member as part of their course. They should be able to discuss a variety of aspects of one production giving a personal analysis and evaluation of the theatrical elements and how successfully meaning was communicated to the audience.
Students are assessed on their knowledge and understanding of the subject content detailed in Knowledge and understanding as well as their analytical and evaluative skills.
Section C is marked out of 32.
Students must not answer Section B and Section C of the exam on the same play ie the live production seen cannot be their set play.

The set texts for the examination for this year are as follows:

Playwright	Set play
Arthur Miller	*The Crucible* (Methuen Student Editions – ISBN: 978-1408108390)
Willy Russell	*Blood Brothers* (Methuen Modern Classics – ISBN: 978-0413767707)
John Buchan/Patrick Barlow	*The 39 Steps* (Samuel French – ISBN: 978-0573114403)
Carl Grose (Kneehigh Theatre)	*Hansel and Gretel* (Oberon Books – ISBN: 978-1849430579)
Malorie Blackman/Dominic Cooke	*Noughts and Crosses* (Nick Hearn Modern Plays – ISBN: 978-1854599391)
William Shakespeare	*A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Penguin Shakespeare Edition – ISBN: 978-0141012605)

Component 2 – Devising Drama

This is a practical component in which students are assessed on their ability to create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance (AO1), apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance (AO2) and analyse and evaluate their own work (AO4).

Component 2 constitutes 40% of the GCSE.
It is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

For this component students are required to complete the following two assessment tasks:

- produce an individual Devising log documenting the devising process
- contribute to a final devised duologue or group performance.

The Devising log is out of 60. Contribution to the final devised performance is out of 20.

Guidance on devising

The starting point for the devised piece must be arrived at in the following way:

- Step 1: Teacher presents students with a range of stimuli
- Step 2: Students select one or more on which to base their devised piece

We recommend that students choose one or more genres or performance styles for their devised piece but this is not a mandatory requirement. Genres and performance styles include but are not limited to:

- comedy
- tragedy
- melodrama
- commedia dell'arte
- naturalism
- epic theatre
- documentary theatre
- physical theatre

Specialisms

Each student must choose to be assessed as a:

- performer or
- lighting designer or
- sound designer or
- set designer or
- costume designer or
- puppet designer

Costume designers may choose to include make-up and / or hair and / or masks. Set designers may choose to include design of props.

Each student must choose one specialism only.
They are assessed in relation to this specialism for both the Devising log and devised performance.

The Devising log

Each student is required to complete a Devising log documenting the creation and development of their ideas to communicate meaning through a devised piece and analysing and evaluating their individual contribution to the devising process and the final devised piece.

The Devising log must comprise three sections, each marked out of 20 marks:

- Section 1: Response to a stimulus
- Section 2: Development and collaboration
- Section 3: Analysis and evaluation

Section 1: Response to a stimulus

In this section students are expected to explain their initial ideas, research and intentions for the devised piece.

The student must explain:

- their initial response to the stimuli presented by the teacher and the stimulus they chose
- the ideas, themes and settings they have considered for the devised piece in response to the stimulus they chose
- their research findings
- their own dramatic aims and intentions
- the dramatic aims and intentions of the piece as a whole

Section 2: Development and collaboration

In this section students are expected to explain the process they undertook to refine their initial ideas and intentions into a final devised piece.

The student must explain:

- how they developed and refined their own ideas and those of the pair/group
- how they developed and refined the piece in rehearsal
- how they developed and refined their own theatrical skills during the devising process
- how they responded to feedback
- how they as individuals used their refined theatrical skills and ideas in the final piece

Section 3: Analysis and evaluation

This section offers students the opportunity to demonstrate their analytical and evaluative skills with respect to their own devised work. Students are expected to analyse and evaluate the ways in which they individually contributed to the devising process as a whole and to the final devised piece, exploring their strengths and the learning opportunities taken from the experience.

Students should analyse and evaluate:

- how far they developed their theatrical skills
- the benefits they brought to the pair/group and the way in which they positively shaped the outcome
- the overall impact they had as individuals

Students should also appraise those areas for further development in their future devising work (ie the aspects that did not go as well as they'd hoped).

In the context of this section:

- to ‘analyse’ is to identify and investigate

- to ‘evaluate’ is to assess the merit of the different approaches used and formulate judgements.

Assessment evidence
The Devising log evidence presented for assessment must be the student's own work.
Details of admissible evidence types for the Devising log can be found below.

Evidence for the Devising log must be one of the following:	Suggested length per section	The Devising log must not exceed in total (evidence beyond this must not count towards the mark)
Entirely written	400–600 words	2,500 words
Written accompanied by annotated: • photographs and/or • sketches/drawings and/or • cue sheets.	2–4 A4 pages	15 pages
Written accompanied by audio/visual/audiovisual recording(s)	200–400 words and 2–3 minutes	1,500 words and 12 minutes
Entirely audio/visual/audiovisual recording(s)	3–4 minutes	15 minutes

Component 3 – Texts in Practice

This component is a practical component in which students are assessed on their ability to apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance (AO2).

Component 3 constitutes 20% of the GCSE.
It is marked by AQA.

For this component students must complete two assessment tasks:
• study and present a key extract (monologue, duologue or group performance)
• study and present a second key extract (monologue, duologue or group performance) from the same play.

Each student's contribution to each key extract performance is marked out of 20.

Drama Strategies

During the course you will work with all of the below strategies AT LEAST ONCE.

Explorative strategies

- Still image
- Thought-tracking
- Narrating
- Hot-seating
- Role play
- Cross-cutting
- Forum theatre
- Marking the moment

The drama medium

- The use of costume
- The use of masks and/or make-up
- The use of sound and/or music
- The use of lighting
- The use of space and/or levels
- The use of set and/or props
- The use of movement, mime and gesture
- The use of voice
- The use of spoken language

The elements of drama

- Action/plot/content
- Forms
- Climax/anti-climax
- Rhythm/pace/tempo
- Contrasts
- Characterisation
- Conventions
- Symbols

Descriptors for Assessment

Component 2 – Devising

Devising log Section 1 (20 marks)

Band	Mark	Descriptors
4	16–20	**Excellent** response: • The explanations given in the Devising log evidence excellent skills in creating and developing ideas to communicate meaning. • There is evidence of a highly developed and highly creative response to the stimulus. • The explanation is very clear and points are comprehensively explored. • Precise details are provided throughout.
3	11–15	**Good** response: • The explanations given in the Devising log evidence good skills in creating and developing ideas to communicate meaning. • There is evidence of a creative and engaged response to the stimulus. • The explanation is clear and most points are explored in some detail. • A number of precise details are provided.
2	6–10	**Reasonable** response: • The explanations given in the Devising log evidence reasonable skills in creating and developing ideas to communicate meaning. • There is evidence of a meaningful response to the stimulus which shows some creativity. • The explanation is reasonably clear but some points are not explored. • A few precise details are provided.
1	1–5	**Limited** response: • The explanations given in the Devising log evidence limited skills in creating and developing ideas to communicate meaning. • There is evidence of an under-developed response to the stimulus. • The explanation lacks clarity and depth. • Minimal detail is provided.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Devising log Section 2 (20 marks)

Band	Mark	Descriptors
4	16–20	**Excellent** response: • The explanations given in the Devising log evidence excellent skills in creating and developing ideas to communicate meaning. • There is evidence of extensive and highly effective development and refinement of skills and the piece. • The explanation is very clear and points are comprehensively explored. • Precise details are provided throughout.
3	11–15	**Good** response: • The explanations given in the Devising log evidence good skills in creating and developing ideas to communicate meaning. • There is evidence of considerable and mostly effective development and refinement of skills and the piece. • The explanation is clear and most points are explored in some detail. • A number of precise details are provided.
2	6–10	**Reasonable** response: • The explanations given in the Devising log evidence reasonable skills in creating and developing ideas to communicate meaning. • There is evidence of some meaningful development and refinement of skills and the piece. • The explanation is reasonably clear but some points are not explored. • A few precise details are provided.
1	1–5	**Limited** response: • The explanations given in the Devising log evidence limited skills in creating and developing ideas to communicate meaning. • There is evidence of little development and refinement of skills and the piece. • The explanation lacks clarity and depth. • Minimal detail is provided.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Marking the Devised performance

This is the mark scheme to be used for the Devised performance in Component 2.

There are 20 marks available. Award either 1 mark, 2 marks, 3 marks, or 4 marks for each of the following five criteria.

The assessment objective being assessed is AO2: Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance.

Mark	Level of theatrical skill	Range of theatrical skills demonstrated	Contribution to the effectiveness of the piece	Inventiveness of individual's work	Success in realising individual artistic intention*
4	**Highly competent, highly developed and sustained** use of theatrical skill.	**Extensive** range of theatrical skills demonstrated.	**Outstanding** contribution to the effectiveness of the piece.	**Highly inventive** work throughout.	**Highly successful** realisation of individual artistic intention.
3	**Developed, secure and consistent** use of theatrical skill.	**Wide** range of theatrical skills demonstrated.	**Considerable** contribution to the effectiveness of the piece.	Work has **many inventive qualities** or moments.	**Secure success** in realising individual artistic intention.
2	**Some developing competency** in use of theatrical skill, **not always sustained.**	**Fair** range of theatrical skills demonstrated.	**Some meaningful** contributions to the effectiveness of the piece.	**Some useful inventive** ideas.	**Some** success in realising individual artistic intention.
1	**Little competency and little consistency** in use of theatrical skill.	**Narrow** range of theatrical skills demonstrated.	**Little** contribution to the effectiveness of the piece.	**Little inventiveness.**	**Little** success in realising individual artistic intention.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	Nothing worthy of credit.	Nothing worthy of credit.	Nothing worthy of credit.	Nothing worthy of credit.

Component 3 - Performance

Mark scheme for the Performance of Extract 1 (20 marks) and Extract 2 (20 marks)

Band	Mark	Descriptors
4	16–20	**Excellent** contribution to performance: • An extensive range of skills are demonstrated. • Skills are deployed precisely and in a highly effective way. • Personal interpretation is entirely appropriate to the play as a whole. • Personal interpretation is highly sensitive to context. • Artistic intentions are entirely achieved.
3	11–15	**Good** contribution to performance: • Wide range of skills are demonstrated. • Skills are deployed confidently and in a mostly effective way. • Personal interpretation exhibits a good degree of appropriateness to the play as a whole. • Personal interpretation exhibits a good degree of sensitivity to context. • Artistic intentions are mostly achieved.
2	6–10	**Reasonable** contribution to performance: • Fair range of skills are demonstrated. • Skills are deployed with care and with effectiveness in places. • Personal interpretation has some relevance to the play as a whole. • Personal interpretation is sensitive to context in places. • Artistic intentions are partly achieved.
1	1–5	**Limited** contribution to performance: • Narrow range of skills are demonstrated. • Skills are deployed uncertainly with little effectiveness. • Personal interpretation lacks appropriateness for the play as a whole. • Personal interpretation lacks sensitivity to context. • Artistic intentions are achieved to a minimal extent.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Glossary

Acoustics

Act

Acting Area

Action

Apron

Antagonist

Anti-climax

Archetype

Aside

Auditorium

Backstage

Blackout

Blank Verse

Blocking

Box Set

Catharsis

Centre Stage

Character

Characterisation

Chorus

Climax

Comedy

Commedia dell'arte

Convention

Cue

Cyclorama

Dialogue

Diction

Director

Downstage

Dramatic irony

Dramatic tension

Dramatic unities

Duologue

Entrances

Exits

Exposition

Focus

Forum theatre

Fourth wall

Freeze frame

Genre

Getout

House Lights

Inflection

Mime

Minimalist

Monologue

Musicals/musical theatre

Narration

Narrative

Naturalistic

Off stage

On stage

Pace

Parody

Pathos

Pause

Physical theatre

Pitch

Plot

Prologue

Promenade

Prompt

Props (properties)

Proscenium arch

Protagonist

Proxemics

Rake

Rehearsal

Scene

Sight lines

Soliloquy

Spotlight

Stage directions

Stage left/right

Stage manager

Stalls

Stanislavski

Stereotype

Stylised

Sub-plot

Sub-text

Symbolic/symbolism

Tableau/x

Theatre in the round

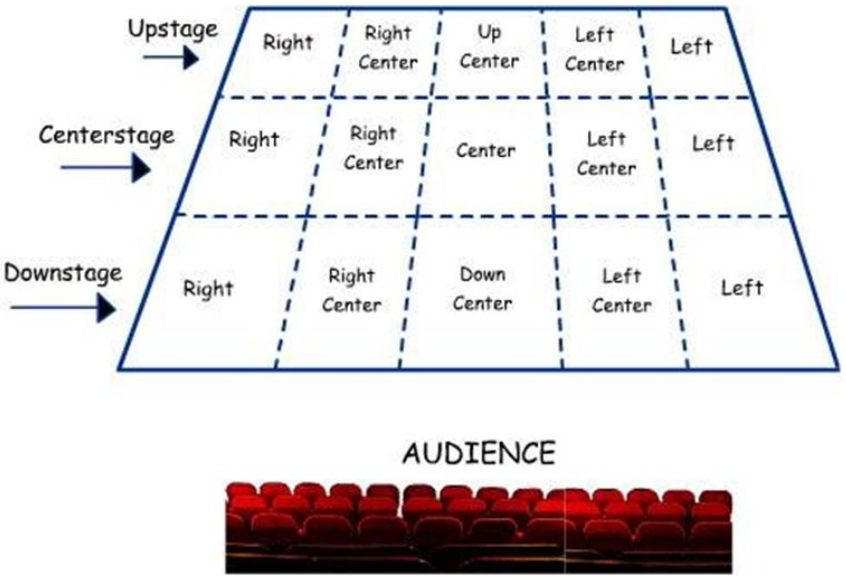
Thrust stage

Tragedy

Traverse staging

Upstage

Wings



Space for your own notes