

GCSE



WJEC GCSE DRAMA

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Ready for the world.

General Specification Questions

Q: How does this specification align with the Curriculum for Wales principles and strands?

A: This specification has been designed to align with the Curriculum for Wales framework, and supports the statements of what matters, principles of progression, and specific considerations for Drama. It provides opportunities to embed cross-curricular themes, skills, and learning experiences outlined in the Curriculum. For detailed mapping, refer to Appendix A in the specification.

Q: How is the course structured in terms of assessment?

A: The course is a linear qualification with two practical non-examination assessments, Unit 1 (40%) and Unit 2 (30%) and an on-screen examination unit, Unit 3 (30%).

Q: What are, and how are the assessment objectives weighted?

A:

AO1 (20%) Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of how drama is developed, designed and performed

AO2 (45%) Develop and apply performance and/or design skills

AO3 (15%) Reflect on, analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others

AO4 (20%) Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning in theatrical designs and/or performances

Q: Can candidates resit units if they wish to improve their grade?

A: Marks for non-examination assessment (NEA) may be carried forward for the life of the specification. If a candidate resits an NEA unit (rather than carrying forward the previous NEA mark), it is the new mark that will count towards the overall grade, even if it is lower than a previous attempt (unless the mark is absent). Assessment opportunities for Unit 3 will be available in the summer series until the end of the life of this specification.

Q: When will the examinations for each unit be available?

A: Unit 3 examinations will be available annually starting summer 2027, which is when the full GCSE qualification will first be awarded.

Q: What is the grading scale and awarding process?

A: This course uses the traditional 8-point A*-G scale. Awarding follows WJEC's standard processes aligning with regulatory requirements.

Q: What is the recommended guided learning time for this course?

A: The specification recommends 120-140 guided learning hours, primarily designed as a 2-year program for learners in Years 10 and 11.

Q: Will there be SAMs to help deliver the specification?

A: The SAMs for Units 1, 2 and 3 are available from the 19th December 2024, on the [WJEC GCSE Drama website](#). These can be accessed via the Portal.

Q: Is there an optimal teaching order for these units?

A: This is a linear qualification in which all assessments must be taken at the end of the course. Unit 1 can be completed earlier in the course (for example at the end of year 10) but must be submitted at the end of the course. Unit 2 must be completed during the assessment window set by WJEC in the final year of study. Please note that NEA briefs will be published on the 1st September every year.

Q: Is there a list of specific terminology learners should be aware of?

A: There is a list of terminology in Appendix B of the specification designed to aid teachers in preparing learners for Unit 1, 2 and 3.

Q: What information is included in the Assessment Packs?

A: Sample exam questions, details of NEA tasks, mark schemes for all tasks, explanation of timings and expectations for controlled conditions, advice on the planning process, expectations for marking and moderation, assessment objectives and their breakdown across different tasks.

Unit 1: Devising Theatre Questions

Q: How do I upload candidate work for Unit 1?

A: Internally assessed NEA candidate work (Unit 1) will be uploaded through IAMIS. Your Exams Officer will be able to access a circular nearer the time which contains instructions about using IAMIS. All the written work, cover sheets, programme proforma and approval form should be uploaded along with the practical work. Guidance is also available via our website, including a step-by-step video guide: [e-Submission | WJEC](#).

Q: Is there a word count for the Reflective Log?

A: There are no restrictions on how the Reflective Log is to be submitted; meaning there is no word count and there are also no restrictions regarding the format in which the log is to be submitted. Formatting options include, but are not limited to written prose, PowerPoint presentation, vlog, blog, scrapbook etc.

Q: Will there be marking support for teachers?

A: Yes. Further guidance to support teachers marking the NEA tasks will be provided in the coming twelve months.

Q: Where can I find the Unit 1 and Unit 2 Assessment packs?

A: The assessment packs can be found on Portal. Please see the image below for guidance on how to adjust the filters.

The screenshot shows the 'Options' search interface for WJEC IAMIS. The filters are set to: Subject: Drama, Level: GCSE, Type of document: Non-Examination Assessment Task, Publication Year: 2024, Language: English, Brand: WJEC. A search bar is present with a 'SEARCH' button. Below the filters, a table displays search results. The first section is titled 'GCSE Drama - Teaching from 2025' and contains two rows of results, both for 'WJEC GCSE Drama Unit 1 NEA Assessment pack-e.pdf' and 'WJEC GCSE Drama Unit 2 NEA Assessment pack-e.pdf'. The second section is titled '3690U10-1 WJEC GCSE DRAMA NEA TASK (FOR SUBMISSION IN 2026)' and contains one row of results for '3690U10-1-010924.pdf'. A 'NEW SEARCH' button is at the bottom.

Filename	Description	Subjects	Levels	Brand	Attachments
WJEC GCSE Drama Unit 1 NEA Assessment pack-e.pdf		Drama	GCSE	WJEC	
WJEC GCSE Drama Unit 2 NEA Assessment pack-e.pdf		Drama	GCSE	WJEC	

Filename	Description	Subjects	Levels	Brand	Attachments
3690U10-1-010924.pdf	DRAMA - DEVISING THEATRE (WALES) UNIT 1	Drama	GCSE	WJEC	

Q: Where can I find the stimulus material for Unit 1 and when will it be released?

A: The stimulus will be released during the first week of September each year. The stimulus material can be found on Portal, please see the image below for guidance on how to use the filters. The stimulus material will be listed under 'Non-Examination Task' and will be available to access as a downloadable PDF.

The image shows a filter interface titled 'Options'. It contains several dropdown menus: 'Subject' (set to Drama), 'Level' (set to GCSE), 'Type of document' (set to Non-Examination Assessment Task), 'Publication Year' (set to All), 'Language' (set to English), and 'Brand' (set to WJEC). Below these is a text input field labeled 'Enter free text search'. At the bottom left is a blue 'SEARCH' button, and at the bottom right, it says 'Records found 3'.

Q: I have one candidate taking GCSE Drama – what are the options for taking Unit 1?

A: It is possible to enter for GCSE Drama if you only have one candidate taking the qualification. For Unit 1, as the minimum group size is two, the candidate can work with a non-assessed candidate, or a teacher. If your candidate wishes to work as a designer, non-assessed performers will have to perform the devised piece so that the design can be assessed in performance.

Q: What feedback can teachers provide for the practical and written work for Unit 1?

A: Teachers must see each group's piece in progress at least three times at different stages during the devising process to be able to authenticate the work. Teachers must also see one draft of the reflective log but must not provide any written feedback before the final submission.

Teachers may provide guidance and support to learners to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the requirements of the assessment, including the stimulus materials and marking grids. Teachers may advise on the suitability of the choice of practitioner/genre in combination with the chosen stimulus. Teachers may also advise on the suitability of the theatre/acting space technical equipment, rehearsal schedules, health and safety and working practices. Once work is underway, feedback must be limited to general advice about what needs to be improved. Teachers must not provide specific or detailed guidance on how to make these improvements, make creative decisions or direct. Once the work is finished and the final assessment complete, no further amendments may be made to the work.

Q: Can I have a group of 6 actors, or more than 4 designers to a group?

A: Unfortunately, the group sizes must be strictly adhered to and the maximum number of actors in one group is 5 and the maximum number of designers per group is 4.

Q: Where can I find the Unit 1 Centre Approval Form, Marksheet and Programme Proforma?

A: The relevant paperwork for Unit 1 can be found on pages 12-16 of the Assessment Pack.

Unit 2: Performance from a Text Questions

Q: How do I upload candidate work for Unit 2?

A: Externally assessed NEA candidate work (Unit 2) will be uploaded via Surpass. For more information please visit: [e-Submission | WJEC](#).

Q: How do I guide candidates on selecting an appropriate text?

A: The text selected must be different to the set text selected for study in Unit 3. Furthermore, it is important to be mindful of ensuring each candidate is exposed to a range of texts from different time periods and cultures, and texts performed in a range of styles.

Q: I have one candidate taking GCSE Drama – what are the options for taking Unit 2?

A: It is possible to enter for GCSE Drama if you only have one candidate taking the qualification. For Unit 2, as the minimum group size is two, the candidate can work with a non-assessed candidate, or a teacher. If your candidate wishes to work as a designer, non-assessed performers will have to perform the piece so that the design can be assessed in performance.

Q: Can I have a group of 6 actors, or more than 4 designers to a group?

A: The group sizes must be strictly adhered to and the maximum number of actors in one group is 4 and the maximum number of designers per group is 2.

Q: Can designers within a group of actors be assessed in the same design skill?

A: Designers within a group of actors must each be assessed on a different design skill. For example, if there are two designers within a group of 4 actors, they cannot both be assessed as a lighting designer.

Q: Is there a set amount of time candidates must spend on their pieces?

A: There is no restriction on the amount of time candidates spend on exploring, creating and developing their performance/design from a published performance piece. Candidate's work must be submitted to WJEC within the final year of the course.

Q: How are candidates assessed?

A: Please see pages 4-8 of the Unit 2 Assessment pack for full details and guidance on assessment.

Q: Should each group within my class perform from the same text?

A: It is not necessary for all learners in the teaching group to choose an extract(s) from the same performance text.

Q: Will there be any penalties applied if a candidate is under time?

A: Anything that is under the minimum time may be self-penalising. Centres and learners should note that work which is significantly short is unlikely to be awarded in the higher mark bands as there may not be enough evidence of development and/or engagement with the audience.

Q: Is there a maximum time limit for performances?

A: Maximum time limits are detailed in the Guidance for Teaching. Anything over the maximum time limit specified according to group size will not be considered during the marking process.

Q: If the viva is not assessed will there be any penalty for a candidate who does not complete it?

A: If a design candidate does not complete the Viva, this will be self-penalising and a missed opportunity to present their designs to the examiner.

Unit 3: Interpreting Theatre Questions

Q: Will the set texts stay the same as the legacy specification?

A: The set texts in the new specification will be the same as the set texts studied in the legacy specification.

Q: What are the set texts?

A: Centres should choose one option to study from the list below:

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, William Shakespeare
- *The Glass Menagerie*, Tennessee Williams
- *Blue Remembered Hills*, Dennis Potter
- *Face*, Benjamin Zephaniah
- *Lionboy*, Zizou Corder adapted by Marcelo Dos Santos
- *Resting Restless*, Bethan Marlow
- *Tuesday*, Alison Carr

Q: How has the exam changed?

A: Unit 3 is no longer a paper examination, but a 2-hour on-screen examination. The exam will still look at one set text out of a choice of seven. Learners will also respond to live theatre as they do in the current specification. However, Section B will now consist of questions based on an unseen clip from one of four genres: Naturalism, Musical Theatre, Physical Theatre or Theatre in Education.

Q: Will the unseen theatre clips be provided in English and Welsh?

A: Candidates studying through the medium of Welsh will have the same access to a Welsh language unseen theatre clip as candidates studying in English.

Q: Will a candidate studying through the medium of Welsh be able to choose between the English and the Welsh clip on the day of the exam?

A: No. Candidates will sit the exam in the language which they have been entered for assessment.

Q: Will there be resources to help with the set texts?

A: There will be a Blended Learning resource for each set text for Unit 3. More information can be found here: [FREE adaptable resources to support our Made-for-Wales qualifications](#).

Q: Can I use streamed productions (e.g. Digital Theatre+) for Unit 3 response to live theatre?

A: Centres should make every effort to provide candidates with the opportunity to see live theatre, however, if this is not possible, candidates can watch and review a digital version of live theatre, as long as the piece has been professionally commissioned and produced.

Q: Is there a suggested number of theatrical productions that candidates should view throughout the course?

A: Candidates should view a minimum of two performances (either live in person or streamed).

Q: Do candidates have to view an entire performance?

A: Yes.

Q: Will the set texts for Unit 3 be available in Welsh and where can I access them?

A: The set texts will be available in Welsh, and these can be accessed on Portal. Please contact your exams officer for a Portal login, or email portal@wjec.co.uk for support.

Q: Do candidates need to study design for Unit 3 even if they have been assessed as an actor for Units 1 and 2?

A: Candidates must study design, acting and directing in preparation for the Unit 3 on-screen exam, as there may be questions within the paper focused on design, acting or directing.

Q: Will the exam be open text?

A: Exams will be open text, meaning candidates are permitted to bring a clean copy of the set text they have studied, into the exam with them.