

Drama external assessment: Release of example instruments for the 2026 external assessment and beyond

Purpose

From 2026, Drama external assessment will no longer require schools to select and study a production from a *Prescribed recorded live performance list*. The revised format aligns with all other subjects from The Arts learning area. The conditions for external assessment in Drama will require students to respond as audience to excerpt/s of an unseen dramatic work/s under examination conditions.

Background

Two example external assessments have been developed to demonstrate two possible models of how, under examination conditions, students will:

- view short excerpt/s of recorded live performances as unseen digital stimulus
- respond to one of two unseen questions about the stimulus
- analyse, synthesise, evaluate and justify to fully answer the question and express their viewpoint in the form of an analytical essay.

Information

Each example external assessment includes:

- a Question book, including
 - two questions and contextual information for two unseen video stimulus
 - a reference list for the two unseen video stimulus, providing production details, referencing information and timecodes (note that in the external assessment for Drama, students will be provided with audiovisual (MP4) stimulus via the fileShare application (app) or on USB)
- a Response book
- an example external assessment marking guide aligned to both instruments, with a sample response provided for Example paper 1, Question 1, Stimulus 1.

Example 1 requires students to select one stimulus and one question. The examples chosen to support the analysis and evaluation must include two moments from the chosen stimulus. The

stimulus are excerpts from *Children of the Black Skirt* (RealTV) and *The Arrival* (Red Leap Theatre).

Example 2 requires students to select one question. The examples chosen to support the analysis and evaluation must include one moment from each of the two stimulus in their response. The stimulus are different excerpts from *The Arrival* (Red Leap Theatre).

These example instruments align with assessments in other Arts subjects, including:

- Dance 2024
www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/arts/snr_dance_24_ea_question_response.pdf
- Film, Television & New Media 2024
www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/arts/snr_ftvnm_24_ea_question.pdf
- Music 2023
www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/arts/snr_music_23_ea_question_response.pdf

Note:

The two example instruments do not represent the only ways that papers may be constructed.

The example stimulus are excerpts from past *Prescribed recorded live performance lists* for external assessment, provided as a guide to support teachers and students in understanding the revised external assessment format. Actual external assessment stimulus will be unseen.

What you need to do

Schools should use the example instruments to prepare students to respond to questions related to how dramatic languages are used to create dramatic action and communicate meaning within a broad range of professional recorded live stimulus.

The example instruments for Drama for 2026 external assessment and beyond are available via the [QCAA Portal](#) > Syllabuses app > All > The Arts > Drama 2025 v1.2 > View resources > Samples.

Finding out more

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