

VCE Drama

2019–2023

Solo performance examination – End of year

Examination specifications

Overall conditions

The examination will be undertaken at a time, date and venue to be set annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*.

Examination time: not more than 10 minutes
(including time for preparation, performance and clearing the space)

The examination will be assessed by a panel appointed by the VCAA.

The examination will contribute 35 per cent to the study score.

Content

Students will present one solo performance selected from the prescribed structures that are set annually by a panel appointed by the VCAA and published by the VCAA in April for the year in question. The performance will draw on the key knowledge and key skills from Unit 4, Outcome 2 in the *VCE Drama Study Design 2019–2023*, and the content found in the section ‘Terms used in this study’ (pages 9–12).

Information about the characteristics and requirements of the prescribed structures is revised and published annually in the VCE Drama solo performance examination materials, which include a section on terminology.

Students must use one prescribed structure from the examination for the year in question or their solo performance will receive zero marks for each assessment criterion.

Format

The examination materials will comprise guidelines for students and teachers, 10 prescribed structures, a section on terminology and a Statement of Intention template.

Students are to select **one** prescribed structure for their solo performance examination.

Information about the characteristics and requirements of the prescribed structures will be revised and published annually in the VCE Drama solo performance examination materials.

The solo performance must be completed in **no more than seven minutes** and is required to be presented as a single uninterrupted performance.

A total of **10 minutes** per student will be allocated for preparation, performance and clearing the space. No additional time is permitted. When choosing technical aspects or production areas for their solo performance, students should be mindful of these restrictions.

Prescribed structures

Each prescribed structure is made up of the following: character, stimulus material, performance focus, performance style, convention and dramatic element, and resources. The following explanations should be used when preparing the solo performance and must be evident during the performance.

- **Character** – The character is the central focus of the performance.
- **Stimulus material** – The stimulus material(s) is the specified source(s) of information that must be used in the development of the character and must be referenced and evident throughout the performance.
- **Performance focus** – The performance focus offers information that provides a context for the character. Students are required to present this information during their performance, incorporating the specific details that are identified in the opening sentences of each prescribed structure and the three accompanying dot points. Students are not required to give each aspect of the performance focus equal emphasis during their performance. Unless otherwise indicated, aspects of the performance focus may be performed in any order. **All aspects of the performance focus must be included in the performance.** The emphasis must be on action rather than narration, i.e. 'doing' rather than 'telling'.
- **Performance style** – All performances must be eclectic in style. Students are therefore required to draw on a range of performance styles to devise performances that go beyond the reality of life as it is lived. Students may use the conventions of a number of different performance styles, drawing on drama traditions and practices as appropriate to the development of their performance. When an additional performance style is prescribed, it is explained in the prescribed structure. Each performance style has a list of dot points that exemplifies the style. Some of these aspects of the performance style must be evident in the performance and any combination of the points may be used. Additional conventions of the style may be used where appropriate. The prescribed performance style(s) must be evident throughout the performance. Students will devise a performance with a specific purpose and intention for the audience using the prescribed performance style(s). The definition of each prescribed performance style is listed at the bottom of each prescribed structure and/or in the 'Terminology' section of the examination materials.
- **Conventions** – All performances must contain transformation of character, time and place, and application of symbol. Each performance must also contain a specific convention selected from the list of eight provided each year in the examination materials. This selected convention must be integral to, and embedded in, the performance. Students may use additional conventions as appropriate.
- **Dramatic element** – One dramatic element must be selected from the list of eight provided each year in the examination materials. This selected dramatic element must be integral to, and embedded in, the performance. Students may use additional dramatic elements as appropriate.
- **Resources** – Resources will be provided to support each prescribed structure. It is recommended that all resources be considered when developing the character. The list provided is not exhaustive and students should undertake further research while developing their character(s) for the performance. Note: If a resource is also listed under 'Stimulus material', this resource must be used in the development of the performance text.

A section on terminology will be included with the examination materials. Students should consult this section for explanations of the terminology used in the examination.

Statement of Intention

Students will present the assessors with a written Statement of Intention of no more than 100 words. The purpose of the Statement of Intention is to indicate which convention and dramatic element the student has selected, as well as to highlight aspects of the student's interpretation that they would like to bring to the assessors' attention. The Statement of Intention must be completed in point form. It may include:

- an explanation/clarification of decisions made in the student's interpretation of the prescribed structure
- reasons for choices made (for example, for the use of costume, props, accent, application of symbol, etc.)
- how and where a specific convention, dramatic element or dot point is demonstrated in the performance.

Students should not merely describe their character by rewriting the performance focus. A template for the Statement of Intention will be published on the VCAA website in April for the year in question with the examination materials.

Performance examination conditions

Performance examination conditions are revised and published annually in April each year in the VCE Drama solo performance examination materials.

Assessment criteria

Students will be assessed against the following criteria.

1. Requirements of the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses compliance. Students must address all aspects of the prescribed structure to gain the maximum possible marks for this criterion and for the other criteria.

2. Development of a performance from the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate skill in using all aspects of the prescribed structure to create and develop a character(s) within a solo performance. This development also involves making imaginative choices in the shaping and realisation of the performance text.

3. Research

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate evidence of using the stimulus material and resources as well as additional research to inform their solo performance. This research should be used and should be evident throughout the performance. The performance should demonstrate both depth as well as creativity in the use of a variety of sources.

4. Use of play-making techniques

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate skill in using a range of play-making techniques to develop ideas, roles, dramatic action, story and themes in the construction of a devised solo performance. The performance should demonstrate evidence of careful scripting, editing and rehearsing to create a coherent and refined response to the prescribed structure within the allotted timeframe.

5. Use of performance styles, including the performance style(s) in the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate:

- an understanding of eclectic performance styles
- the ability to apply aspects of the prescribed performance style(s) consistently throughout the performance
- the ability to devise a performance with a specific purpose and intention for the audience using the prescribed performance style(s).

6. Use of conventions, including the convention selected for the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate:

- an understanding of transformation of character, time and place, and application of symbol
- the ability to apply each of these during the performance
- an understanding of the additional convention selected by the student
- appropriate selection of convention consistent with the overall performance and the ability to apply the selected convention during the performance
- the ability to apply other conventions as appropriate.

7. Use of dramatic element selected for the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate:

- an understanding of the selected dramatic element
- appropriate selection of dramatic element consistent with the overall performance and the ability to apply this dramatic element during the performance
- the ability to apply other dramatic elements as appropriate.

8. Use of expressive skills

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate understanding of, and skill in, the use of voice, movement, gesture and facial expression(s) to express and realise a character(s) within the context of the prescribed structure, including performance style(s) and conventions.

9. Use of performance skills

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate skill in portraying a character(s) through the memorisation of the performance text and the ability to make clear to the audience the presence of other (imagined) characters and/or objects in the space, as appropriate to the prescribed structure.

Students will be assessed on the extent to which they demonstrate understanding of, and skills in, focus, timing, energy and the actor–audience relationship throughout the solo performance.

Students should integrate these skills throughout to create a dynamic presence in the performance and demonstrate a high level of commitment in the presentation of their work.

10. Application of production areas

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate understanding of, and skill in, the selection, use and manipulation of technical aspects, such as costume, props or sound design, to add a range of meanings to their performance. The application of production areas must be consistent with eclectic theatre, the prescribed performance style(s) and the selected convention.

Relevant references

The following publications should be referred to in relation to the VCE Drama solo performance examination:

- *VCE Drama Study Design 2019–2023*
- *VCE Drama – Advice for teachers 2019–2023*
- *VCAA Bulletin*

Advice

During the 2019–2023 accreditation period for VCE Drama, solo performance examinations will be prepared according to the examination specifications above. Each examination will conform to these specifications and will test a representative sample of the key knowledge and key skills from Unit 4, Outcome 2.

A separate document containing a sample examination has been published on the 'Drama – Exams and Examination Reports' page on the VCAA website.