



# VCE Theatre Studies

## 2014–2018

### Stagecraft examination – October

#### 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).

The examination will be marked by panels appointed by the VCAA.

Examination time: 12 minutes, including student entry and exit to the examination room and transition between the three stages of the examination

The examination will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

Examination conditions

- VCAA examination rules will apply.
- The examination will be conducted in a single clearly lit space.
- There will be a power outlet in the room.
- There will be two chairs in the room.
- Any other items, if required, must be carried into and out of the examination room by the student **alone** and within the allotted time.
- Students will be allocated rooms within the venue and room changes will **not** be permitted.

##### Content

The examination will draw on knowledge and skills from Unit 4 Outcomes 1 and 2 in the *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design 2014–2018*. Students will interpret a monologue from the prescribed list included in the *VCE Theatre Studies Stagecraft Examination* document published annually by the VCAA. The examination will be set by a panel appointed by the VCAA and published on the VCAA website <[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)> in April each year.

**Students must interpret a prescribed monologue or their work will receive zero marks for all assessment criteria.**

##### Overview

Students will use stagecraft (**either** Acting and Direction **or** Design – any two of make-up, costume, set pieces, properties, sound) to interpret a prescribed monologue from the current *VCE Theatre Studies Stagecraft Examination* document.

## Format

The examination will be conducted in three stages:

- Framing Statement
- interpretation
- question(s)

The three stages of the stagecraft examination will be assessed against common criteria and stagecraft-specific criteria, and a total mark will be awarded. The Framing Statement will be delivered first and will be completed in no more than 2 minutes. Students will then deliver their interpretation of the monologue in no more than 5 minutes. Assessors will then question the student for no more than 2 minutes.

For the interpretation stage of the examination, students will choose **either**

- Acting and Direction

### OR

- Design – any two of make-up, costume, set pieces, properties, sound.

The use of multimedia, including a data projector or folios, will **not** be permitted in the stagecraft examination.

Note: The audience for the interpretation is the assessors, who, in this context are fulfilling the role of ‘those the monologue interpretation is intended for’.

### Stage 1: Framing Statement

All students will deliver their Framing Statement orally. The Framing Statement will focus on the areas of stagecraft selected by the student as the basis for their interpretation of the monologue (**either** Acting and Direction **or** Design – any two of make-up, costume, set pieces, properties, sound) and explain aspects of their interpretation of the monologue. In the Framing Statement, the student will address points included in the Framing Statement section of the *VCE Theatre Studies Stagecraft Examination* document published annually by the VCAA.

A Framing Statement template will be provided with the examination document to assist students in recording notes that they may use as a prompt-sheet during the examination. The completed Framing Statement must be given to the assessors at the conclusion of the examination. Speaker’s notes, other than those on the Framing Statement, are not permitted.

The delivery of the Framing Statement should take no more than 2 minutes.

### Stage 2: Interpretation

The interpretation will draw on the knowledge and skills developed across Unit 4 Outcomes 1 and 2, and will present an interpretation of the monologue that is informed by and contextualised in relation to the scene within the play.

To interpret the monologue, the student must select **one** of the following stagecraft options:

- Acting and Direction

### OR

- Design – any two of make-up, costume, set pieces, properties, sound

The interpretation of the monologue should be completed in no more than 5 minutes.

The following table provides a summary of the requirements for each option.

Acting and Direction	Design
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• memorise the written text of the monologue</li> <li>• create an informed context. The interpretation may portray the existing context of the play or another appropriate context(s) by changing the time, place and/or culture. Students may incorporate given circumstances as appropriate to their recontextualisation.</li> </ul> <p>Notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any form of reading is considered to be outside the specifications of the task.</li> <li>• Assessors will prompt students as required. The act of prompting will not, necessarily, disadvantage a student.</li> </ul>	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interpret the monologue by demonstrating a design concept</li> <li>• apply any two of the following areas of stagecraft: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– make-up</li> <li>– costume</li> <li>– set pieces</li> <li>– properties</li> <li>– sound</li> </ul> </li> <li>• use stagecraft-specific terminology and expression</li> <li>• make direct references to the prescribed monologue, including quoting.</li> </ul> <p>Notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The design concept for the interpretation should be one that could be utilised by an actor when performing the monologue to an audience.</li> <li>• The interpretation should <b>not</b> include an explanation of the developmental process for the design.</li> <li>• Students may place greater emphasis on one area of stagecraft, but must include two areas of stagecraft within the complete interpretation.</li> </ul>
Detail of the task: Acting and Direction	Detail of the task: Design
<p>Students choosing the Acting and Direction option will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present an interpretation that includes the realisation of a unified directorial vision to convey the context(s) and intended meaning(s) of the monologue to an audience</li> <li>• perform their interpretation in the original theatrical style(s) of the playscript or in another theatrical style(s)</li> <li>• use acting skills that include the application of expressive skills, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– facial expression</li> <li>– voice</li> <li>– gesture</li> <li>– movement</li> <li>– stillness and silence</li> </ul> </li> <li>• use performance and directorial skills to interpret the monologue for an audience. This will include the blocking of the monologue and the use of verbal and non-verbal language.</li> </ul>	<p>The design concept that students demonstrate to interpret the monologue will be presented using the following structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Context</li> <li>2. Application</li> <li>3. Presentation</li> </ol> <p><b>1. Context</b></p> <p>How the design concept selected to interpret the prescribed monologue is informed by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research into the context(s) of the monologue, the scene in which it is embedded and the wider world of the playscript</li> <li>• themes, images and ideas from the monologue</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Application</b></p> <p>How the interpretation demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• application of any <b>two</b> of make-up, costume, set pieces, properties, sound</li> <li>• the relationship of the design to the theatrical style(s) of the monologue</li> </ul>

<p>As part of realising the unified directorial vision and/or to convey the context(s) and intended meaning(s) of the monologue to an audience, the student may apply other areas of stagecraft during the interpretation.</p>	<p><b>3. Presentation</b></p> <p>How the interpretation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>could be utilised by an actor when performing this monologue</li> <li>conveys the intended meaning(s) of the monologue to an audience</li> </ul> <p>The individual points within the three sections may be presented in any order. Students may also include additional information, as appropriate to their design concept. Students should note that when presenting their interpretation, the emphasis should be on showing, accompanied by verbal explanation.</p>
<p><b>Materials: Acting and Direction</b></p>	<p><b>Materials: Design</b></p>
<p>Students <b>must</b> be able to carry all materials into the examination room <b>on their own</b> and within the allotted time.</p> <p>Students are <b>not</b> permitted to bring folios into the room.</p> <p>The use of multimedia, including data projection, is <b>not</b> permitted.</p>	
<p>Students may bring into the examination room <b>items or materials</b> that will assist them in communicating the unified directorial vision and/or conveying the context(s) and/or intended meaning(s) of their interpretation.</p>	<p>Students may bring into the examination room <b>items or materials</b> that can be used to assist them with demonstrating their design concept. The items <b>must</b> only be related to their application of two areas of stagecraft (make-up, costume, set pieces, properties, sound) to interpret the monologue.</p> <p>Students need to be aware that the design (i.e. make-up, costume, set pieces, properties, sound) <b>must</b> consider the specifications of the task.</p> <p>In presenting the design, students must ensure that they clearly reference these design concepts to the text of the monologue.</p>
<p><b>Specifications: Acting and Direction</b></p>	<p><b>Specifications: Design</b></p>
<p>When interpreting the prescribed monologue, students must note that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reading or replaying previously recorded lines from the monologue does <b>not</b> constitute a performance</li> <li>all monologues may be performed by both male and female students; however, all characters <b>must</b> be portrayed in the gender as identified</li> <li>students are to deliver all spoken lines allocated to the specified character</li> <li>students are <b>not</b> to deliver lines that are omitted, including those of other characters and, in some instances, from the specified character.</li> </ul>	<p>Students must ensure that the design concept they develop to interpret the monologue is suitable for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a single clearly lit, relatively small space where no changes to the lighting grid are permitted</li> <li>an actor performing the monologue to an audience according to the specifications of the task.</li> </ul> <p>These specifications will influence the design and should be taken into account when arriving at the design concept for the interpretation.</p>

**Stage 3: Question(s)**

Following the presentation of the interpretation, students will respond to a question(s) about their interpretation of the monologue. The question(s) will allow assessors to clarify and/or seek further information about points made in the Framing Statement or the interpretation.

Assessors will question the student for no more than 2 minutes.

## Criteria

The examination will address all of the criteria. All students will be examined against each criterion in the common criteria **and** the set of criteria in the stagecraft-specific criteria related to the stagecraft they have chosen: **either** Acting and Direction **or** Design. The criteria will be applied to all aspects of the task. For assessment purposes, the interpretation of the monologue must be informed by the prescribed scene and playscript.

Although students will be assessed against individual criteria, the assessment will be based on how each criterion is achieved within the task as a whole.

Students will be assessed on the extent to which their response to the task demonstrates the following criteria:

### i. Common criteria

#### 1. Fulfilment of the requirements of the selected stagecraft task

- Framing Statement
- interpretation
- question(s)

This first criterion asks whether or not the following requirements of the task have been met.

The task requires that a student has:

- selected a monologue from the current prescribed list
- presented an interpretation of the monologue through the application of the selected stagecraft – **either** Acting and Direction **or** Design
- met the required specifications of the selected stagecraft – **either** Acting and Direction **or** Design
- orally presented a Framing Statement
- submitted a completed Framing Statement at the end of the examination
- responded to a question(s) from the assessors.

#### 2. Skill in applying research

The student is assessed on their ability to apply research skills to inform their interpretation of the monologue. This may include research into the context(s), character(s), plot, theme(s), images and ideas, influences on the playwright(s) and the theatrical possibilities (including the original ones) for the interpretation of the monologue.

#### 3. Skill in conveying the interrelationships between the monologue, prescribed scene and playscript

The student is assessed on their ability to convey the interrelationships between the monologue, the prescribed scene in which it is embedded and the wider playscript from which it is derived, and how this informs the theatrical possibilities of their interpretation.

#### 4. Skill in the development of an artistic concept for interpreting the monologue

This criterion assesses the ability of the student to develop an artistic concept, through **either** Acting and Direction **or** Design, for the interpretation of the monologue. When developing the concept, the student should take into consideration their research into aspects such as the wider context(s) of the scene and playscript, characters(s), plot and story of the monologue, intended meaning(s), theme(s), images and ideas, influences on the playwright(s) and theatrical possibilities.

## 5. Skill in conveying the context(s) of the monologue

This criterion assesses the student's ability to convey the context(s) of the monologue through their use of stagecraft.

Students may:

- interpret the monologue within its **original** context(s)

**OR**

- interpret the monologue within **another considered and informed** context(s) by changing the time, place and/or culture. Any changes to the context(s) should be informed by the immediate context of the monologue, the scene in which it is embedded and playscript from which it is derived.

For Acting and Direction, the contextual choices should be conveyed primarily through the application of acting and direction, but may be supported by stagecraft such as make-up, costume(s), set pieces, properties and sound.

For Design, the context should be conveyed through the application of design, but should take into account the specifications of the task, including that the contextual choices for the design should be suitable for an actor performing to an audience and theatrical possibilities.

## 6. Skill in applying theatrical style(s)

This criterion assesses the student's knowledge of the theatrical style(s) of the monologue and the ability to apply it/them to their interpretation. An interpretation may draw on more than one theatrical style, as well as variations on a particular style.

Theatrical styles are the practices and traditions of theatre that have come to be accepted as conventional and are particular to specific times, places, peoples and cultures. Theatrical styles influence how a monologue is interpreted. Initially, the student should research the style(s) intended by the playwright, using this as the basis for the development of the interpretation.

A student may wish to change the original theatrical style(s) from that of the original playscript. Changes to the theatrical style(s) of the monologue are permitted as long as these changes are not randomly applied, and are informed by the context(s) and the intended meaning(s) of the original text.

## ii. Stagecraft-specific criteria

### a. Acting and Direction

## 7. Skill in the use of acting and directorial choices

This criterion assesses the acting and directorial choices the student has made to interpret the monologue. Choices include character portrayal and the vision for the interpretation, taking into account the context(s), images and ideas, theatrical style(s), intended meaning(s) and theatrical possibilities.

## 8. Skill in applying acting to interpret a monologue

This criterion assesses the student's skill in applying acting to their interpretation. This includes the student's use of tension, timing and focus in the performance, informed by an understanding of their interrelationship(s). Pace, rhythm, pauses, silences, language idioms and inflections, voice projection, breathing techniques and the use of gesture all contribute to both tension and timing. Focus relates to the ability of a performer to portray and maintain a characterisation, and their ability to focus the audience on aspects of the performance. This criterion includes the student's use of expressive skills (facial expression, voice, gesture, movement, stillness and silence). Students are also assessed on their ability to use verbal and non-verbal language.

## 9. Skill in applying direction to interpret a monologue

This criterion assesses the student's ability as the director of their interpretation of a monologue. This includes their ability to establish an overall vision for the performance, including its visual look, mood and tone. Students are also assessed on their ability as a director to use the acting space and to block movements within it. Their ability to focus the audience on particular aspects of the performance is also assessed.

**10. Skill in the establishment and maintenance of an actor–audience relationship**

This criterion assesses the ability of the student to interpret the monologue for an audience by applying acting and direction. Belief, the suspension of disbelief and the effective portrayal of character are closely related to the establishment and maintenance of an actor–audience relationship. The effective use of focus, an understanding of theatrical style(s) and the impact of the use of the acting space also contribute to the actor–audience relationship.

**b. Design**

**7. Skill in the use of design choices**

This criterion assesses the design choices the student has made to interpret the monologue. Choices include the vision for the interpretation and the use of visual/aural elements, taking into account the context(s), images and ideas, theatrical style(s), intended meaning(s) and theatrical possibilities.

**8. Skill in applying design to interpret a monologue**

A theatre designer is responsible for the visual and/or aural design elements of a production. Key to this criterion is the ability of the student to apply design skills to interpret the monologue through the use of **any two** of make-up, costume, set pieces, properties, sound. The application of the design should be such that it could be utilised by an actor when performing the monologue to an audience. It should also take into account the scene in which the monologue is embedded and the wider playscript from which it is derived.

**9. Skill in demonstrating the design interpretation**

This criterion assesses the student’s ability to effectively demonstrate their design interpretation of the monologue. The student will articulate their design concept for the monologue. In doing so, they will be assessed on their ability to discuss aspects such as context(s), application and presentation of the interpretation.

**10. Skill in demonstrating the interrelationship between designer, actor and audience**

This criterion assesses the student’s ability to demonstrate how their work as a designer is linked to an acting interpretation of the monologue to an audience. The demonstration of their design ideas should be applicable to an interpretation of the monologue by an actor to an audience, within the specifications of the task. This criterion also assesses the student’s ability to demonstrate how the design will enhance aspects of the performance to an audience, such as its context(s), images and ideas, intended meaning(s), theatrical style(s) and theatrical possibilities.

## Advice

### • General

Students should **not** wear their school uniform during their stagecraft examination. Students should wear a costume or theatre blacks. Students who are presenting the Design option and select costume as one of their areas of stagecraft may choose to wear the costume or may choose to present the costume on a mannequin or other type of stand.

### • Framing Statement

The oral presentation given by the student will be guided by their response to the *VCE Theatre Studies Stagecraft Examination* document published annually by the VCAA and will focus on the area of stagecraft chosen by the student: **either** Acting and Direction **or** Design. Information about expected content for the Framing Statement will be included in the examination document.

### • Questions

The following are examples of the types of questions that could be used in the question(s) stage of the examination:

- What was one way your [use of ....] in the interpretation captured the intended meaning(s) of the monologue?
- How did your [decision to ...] in the interpretation convey the theatrical style(s) of the monologue?
- How was [this aspect of] your interpretation informed by an understanding of the whole playscript?
- What meaning(s) were you intending the audience to interpret from your use of [...]?

## The examination room

The size of the room will vary depending on the venue; however, rooms are usually relatively small. The room will have normal lighting. The lighting state in the room cannot be altered. Rooms will have a variety of floor coverings. Some rooms may be carpeted and others will have wooden or tiled floors. Students are **not** permitted to change their allocated room. This constraint needs to be taken into consideration when they are preparing for the examination, whether they have chosen Acting and Direction **or** Design.

Each room will have an electrical power point and two chairs. Tables will **not** be provided.

## Materials

1. The examination will be conducted in a single clearly lit space. No changes to the lighting grid are permitted.
2. Whether students have chosen Acting and Direction **or** Design, they must be able to carry all properties into the examination room on their own, without any assistance.
3. Two chairs will be provided in the examination room for students to use in the examination if they wish. Any additional properties, if required, must be carried into the examination room and set up by the **student alone** and within the allotted time.
4. In the examination room, the health and safety of both students and assessors is paramount. Students are advised that they must not endanger, or be seen to endanger, either themselves or others. Students are **not** permitted to bring into the examination room:
  - any objects or substances, including aerosols, deemed harmful, hazardous or illegal
  - actual or imitation weapons of any description, including swords, daggers and knives of any type
  - open flames, including candles and matches.

Students are **not** to use any materials, objects or substances in their performance that may cause, or that may be seen to cause, injury to themselves or others. Great care must be taken to ensure that the use of any item is not seen as hazardous by the assessors. In some cases, an object, material or substance that may be considered safe by the student may, in the actual performance, be considered hazardous. Consequently, students should give careful thought to the selection of properties and set items. Students are advised that if the use of any material, object or substance is deemed by any assessor to

be potentially dangerous or hazardous, the student will not be allowed to use it. The decision of the assessors will be final.

Care must also be taken to ensure that the examination space is not damaged in any way. Students must ensure that any properties, set items, costumes (including footwear), etc. do not, in any way, cause damage to the examination space. Students are responsible for the cleaning up and removal of any materials they bring into the space by the end of their allotted examination time.

### **Monologue interpretation**

For the Acting and Direction option, some of the directorial choices of the interpretation of the scene may not be apparent in the performance of the monologue. Rather, they may play an important role in the processes used to develop the interpretation of the monologue.

In recontextualising the monologue, any changes to the context(s) should be appropriate for the selected monologue, the prescribed scene in which it is embedded and the wider context(s) of the playscript.

### **Time allowed for the examination**

There will be 12 minutes for the entire examination. Students will spend no more than 2 minutes presenting the Framing Statement and no more than 5 minutes presenting the monologue interpretation. There will be 2 minutes for the question(s) stage of the examination. The remaining 3 minutes will be used for entry and exit to the examination room, and transition time between the three stages of the examination.

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# VCE Theatre Studies

## Stagecraft examination

### FRAMING STATEMENT

Students must present each of the three assessors with this written Framing Statement (about 250–300 words) highlighting the key influences on their stagecraft interpretation.

**Student number**

**Monologue number**  **Character**

**Stagecraft option** *(Tick the appropriate boxes.)*

**Acting and Direction**  **Design**  *(Any two of the following)*

- Make-up**
- Costume**
- Set pieces**
- Properties**
- Sound**

**KEY INFLUENCES ON STAGECRAFT INTERPRETATION** *(about 250–300 words)*

Students may reference any of the following: contextual background, research, stagecraft application, theatrical style(s), decision-making, theatrical possibilities, intended meaning(s), themes, images and ideas.

