An Introduction to Eduqas GCSE Drama

Spring 2026



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Overview of the Specification

The Eduqas Drama GCSE consists of three separate components:

Component 1: Devising Theatre (40% of qualification)
Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated

Component 2: Performing from a Text (20% of qualification)
Non-exam assessment: externally assessed by a visiting examiner

Component 3: Interpreting Theatre (40% of qualification)
Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

Assessment Objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for this specification. Learners must:

AO1 (20%)

Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance

AO2 (30%)

Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance

AO3 (30%)

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed.

AO4 (20%)

Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

Component 1: Devising Theatre

Component 1: Overview

Internally assessed, externally moderated by WJEC
Work submitted to WJEC by end of March (usually Year 11)
The centre can choose the date for the assessment

Learners:

- Create, develop and perform a piece using the techniques of a theatre practitioner/ characteristics of a genre of their own choice
- Use a stimulus supplied by WJEC from a choice of four

Groups should consist of between **2-5 acting candidates** with up to **4 additional design candidates**, each working on a different design skill. The performance should be between 5-16 minutes, depending on the number of performers.

Learners must:

- realise their performance/design (centres must record the work)
- produce a portfolio of supporting evidence (750-900 words)
- Evaluate their performances (supervised conditions – 1 hour 30 minutes).

Component 1

Stimuli set by WJEC Eduqas (these are for assessment and submission in 2026 only):

1. *'All the world's a stage and all the men and women are merely players; They have their exits and their entrances and one man in his time plays many parts.'* (As You Like It – William Shakespeare)

2. *Bohemian Rhapsody* (Song – Queen)

3. *'Never let the truth get in the way of a good story.'* (Quote – Mark Twain)

4. 'Suburban Dystopia' (Image – Florian Kriechbaumer)



Step 1: Devising

Choosing a genre/practitioner

- Ensure that each group chooses only one practitioner/genre. Do not allow them to mix and match a variety of practitioners/genres.
- Ensure learners have a clear understanding of their chosen practitioner/genre.
- Learners should choose between 4-6 techniques (where applicable) which they feel reflect their understanding of the style and enhance their piece.

Rehearsal Process

- We recommend between 5-6 weeks rehearsal period although there is no time limit.
- Learners should review their use of the practitioner/genre techniques and assess how effective they are in performance.
- Encourage learners to watch each others' work and give constructive feedback. Ask them to look at both the acting and the design elements, where applicable.
- Encourage learners to record all stages of the process, using any means appropriate, in preparation for their supporting evidence portfolio.

The Portfolio of Supporting Evidence

The portfolio of supporting evidence is based on the rehearsal process and should focus on **three** key stages:

1. how ideas have been researched, created and developed in response to the chosen **stimulus**

2. how ideas from the **chosen practitioner/genre** have been incorporated in the piece to communicate meaning

3. how ideas have been **developed, amended and refined** during the development of the devised piece.

- Learners are encouraged to keep a record of their decisions throughout the rehearsal process. However, the final portfolio should **not** be a diary of the rehearsal process. Only key ideas/decisions should be included.

The Portfolio of Supporting Evidence

- The portfolio of supporting evidence can be presented via a variety of means but there are strict word/time considerations that should be adhered to:

- Written commentary/prose: 750 – 900 words (250 - 300 words for each section)
- Blog: 750 – 900 words
- Audio commentary and audio-visual: 4 – 7 minutes (in total)

- **One mark must be deducted for each complete 100 words over the 900 word maximum. One mark must be deducted for each complete minute over the 7 minute maximum.**

- It is very unlikely that work which is significantly under the word count/time will be sufficiently developed to be awarded a mark in the highest band.

The Portfolio of Supporting Evidence – Additional Illustrative Material

Examples could include:

- ❑ Stage 1: a copy of the song lyrics (if chosen as the stimuli) with key words highlighted and ideas written alongside
- ❑ Stage 2: a mind map incorporating the main techniques/ characteristics of the chosen practitioner or genre
- ❑ Stage 3: images from the rehearsal process.

- Further suggestions can be found on page 8 of the specification.

Step 2: Realising

- Learners should realise their piece of theatre within a live performance. The length of the performance piece depends on the number of actors in the group:

  - ❑ 2 actors: 5-10 minutes
  - ❑ 3 actors: 7-12 minutes
  - ❑ 4 actors: 9-14 minutes
  - ❑ 5 actors: 11-16 minutes

- Each actor must interact with other performers and/or the audience **for a minimum of five minutes**.

- Minimum requirements for design candidates (page 9 of specification).

Step 3: Evaluating

- Learners evaluate the **final performance or design** under supervised conditions.
- They have **1 hour and 30 minutes** to complete the task.
- They must complete the following **three** main sections:

    1. An analysis and evaluation of **either** their interpretation of character/role **or** their realisation of design in the final performance.
    2. An analysis and evaluation of how **either** their performance skills **or** design skills contributed to the effectiveness of the final performance.
    3. An analysis and evaluation of their individual contribution to the final performance, indicating how effectively they fulfilled their initial aims and objectives (referring back to stimulus and practitioner/ genre).

- Learners may have access to **two sides of A4** in bullet point notes when writing the evaluation. The notes **must** be handed in with the evaluation.

Component 1: Assessment (AO1 20%, 30 marks)

AO1: ***create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for performance.***

This is assessed through the portfolio of supporting evidence.

There are separate assessment grids for performing and design.

Learners are assessed on:

- ❑ The quality of their ideas created in response to the stimulus
- ❑ Their use of relevant techniques/characteristics associated with the chosen practitioner/genre
- ❑ Their ideas regarding the development and refinement of their work during the rehearsal process
- ❑ their individual contribution to the rehearsal process.

Component 1: Assessment (AO2 10%, 15 marks)

AO2: a*pply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance*

This is assessed through the final performance/design.

There are separate assessment grids for performing and design candidates.

Learners are assessed on how well they realise their artistic intentions through:

- ❑ application of performance/design skills
- ❑ interpretation of character/scene including implementation of relevant aspects of the chosen practitioner/genre
- ❑ individual contribution to the final performance.

Component 1: Assessment (AO4 10%,15 marks)

AO4: ***analyse and evaluate their own work (and the work of others).***

This is assessed through the evaluation.

There are separate assessment grids for performing and design candidates.

Learners analyse and evaluate the final performance/design.

They do **not** need to analyse and evaluate the process of creating and developing the piece.

Learners are assessed on their analysis and evaluation of:

- ❑ their application of design/performance skills including successful and unsuccessful aspects of the piece
- ❑ their interpretation of their own character/design was realised in the final performance
- ❑ their individual contribution to the final performance including how effectively they fulfilled their initial aims and objectives (referring back to stimulus and practitioner/genre).

Component 2:
Performing from a Text

Component 2 – Requirements

- Externally assessed by a visiting examiner between January and May
- Performance of 2 extracts from the same text
- Centre choice of text (must contrast with their Component 3 text)
- Learners may choose to act or design for this component, regardless of what they opted for in Component 1
- Timings are dependent of the numbers of performers in the group:
    - ❑ Group of two actors: 5-10 minutes
    - ❑ Group of three actors: 7-12 minutes
    - ❑ Group of four actors: 9-14 minutes

  All performers must have a minimum of 5 minutes performance time
- **2-4 actors** per group with up to **two** additional design candidates, each offering a **different** design skill

Component 2 – Selecting Suitable Texts

- Learners are required to study **two** 10 minute extracts, within the context of the whole text, from **one** performance text of their own choice.

- A list of suitable texts is provided in Appendix B of the specification. However, learners may choose a different text.

- The text must be one which has been professionally commissioned **and/or** professionally produced.

- It is not necessary for all learners in the cohort to study extracts from the same performance text. Centres should guide learners to choose texts which suit their interests, abilities and the combinations of learners within each group.

Component 2 – Selecting Suitable Texts

Component 3 text	Playwright, time period and theme which must be avoided
Macbeth (1606)	**Playwright**: William Shakespeare **Time period:** 1590 - 1625 **Theme**: Ambition and its consequences, loyalty and fate
An Inspector Calls (1945)	**Playwright**: J.B. Priestley **Time period**: 1930 - 1955 **Theme**: Social responsibility and class
Find Me (1977)	**Playwright**: Olwen Wymark **Time period**: 1970 - 1990 **Theme**: Society's attitude towards mental health issues
Noughts & Crosses (2001)	**Playwright**: Malorie Blackman **Time period**: 1990 - 2010 **Theme**: Racism and discrimination
Refugee Boy (2001)	**Playwright**: Benjamin Zephaniah **Time period**: 1990 - 2010 **Theme**: The effects of war and separation
I Love You Mum – I Promise I Won't Die (2014)	**Playwright**: Mark Wheeller **Time period**: 2000 - 2020 **Theme**: Risks of drugs, peer pressure and the impact of loss
The IT (2018)	**Playwright**: Vivienne Franzmann. **Time period**: 2010 onwards **Theme**: The effects of social anxiety on young people

Component 2 – Preparing For Performance (Performance candidates)

- Learners must create a performance or design using sections of text from **both** of the 10 minute extracts. This may be split equally between the two sections or in any other way as chosen by the centre.

- The text may be edited/cut but must not contain any additional dialogue or characters.

- The performance may contain monologues but cannot consist solely of monologues.

- Learners may multi-role when it is a feature of the style of the extract.

Component 2 – Preparing For Performance (Design Candidates)

- Designs should complement the text and also show consistency and/or progression in the content. For example:
  - a full costume change might not be necessary, but the addition of an item to show a change in circumstance/time might well be appropriate;
  - a lighting designer might change the colour to reflect a different time of day;
  - a sound designer might modify the settings to reflect a change of mood
  - a set designer might alter small details to indicate the passing of time.

- For design candidates, please see minimum requirements (page 14 of the specification)

Component 2 – Artistic Intentions

- All learners must submit an Artistic Intentions form to the examiner prior to the performance. The examiner will contact the centre in advance of the examination to discuss appropriate arrangements.

- These intentions are not assessed but are necessary to assist the examiner in assessing the performance or design.

- They may be presented as bullet points or continuous prose. It is key that they relate to both extracts.

- There are separate Artistic Intentions forms for performance and design candidates. Design candidates can also submit additional illustrative material to support their intentions. Teachers must authenticate design candidates' artistic intentions to verify that the work is the sole work of the candidate.

Component 2 – Assessment

The component assess A02:

Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance

The component is marked out of 60.

Three key areas will be assessed:

- Application (30 marks)
- Interpretation (20 marks)
- Contribution (10 marks)

Component 3: Interpreting Theatre Written examination

Component 3: Interpreting Theatre (40% of qualification)

Written examination 1 hour 30 minutes – 60 marks

Section A: Set Text
45 marks
A series of questions on **one** set text from a choice of seven.

Section B: Live Theatre Review
15marks
One question from a choice of **two** requiring analysis and evaluation of a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course.

Section A Set Texts

From first teaching from September 2022 onwards and first assessment in 2024, the following set texts will be assessed:

Macbeth	William Shakespeare
An Inspector Calls	J.B. Priestley
Find Me	Olwen Wymark
Noughts & Crosses	Malorie Blackman (adapted Sabrina Mahfouz)
Refugee Boy	Benjamin Zephaniah (adapted Lemn Sissay)
I Love you Mum – I Promise I Won't Die	Mark Wheeller
The IT	Vivienne Franzmann

Assessment of Set Text

Section A (45 marks) (AO3):

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed

- a series of questions assessing knowledge and understanding of an **extract** from the set text. Questions will have tariffs between 1-15 marks. (30 marks)

- **one** question assessing knowledge and understanding of the **wider** text Learners will be asked to choose an extract(s) of their choice and must opt for a different extract from that used for the extract based questions. (15 marks)

Developing Skills

Learners should approach the texts in a practical manner. During the course they should have experienced practical work as:

- Actors
- Designers
- Directors

Activities such as:

- Mini performance projects
- Hot-seating / improvisation / thought tracking
- Viewing productions / live theatre
- Workshops / presentations / pitching design ideas

could help in developing these key skills.

Section B - Response to Live Theatre

Section B (15 marks) targets AO4:

Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others

- **One** question, from a choice of two, assessing analysis and evaluation of a given aspect of a live theatre production (15 marks).

Learners will be expected to analyse and evaluate how meaning is communicated through the role of theatre markers. Learners must consider the role of the:

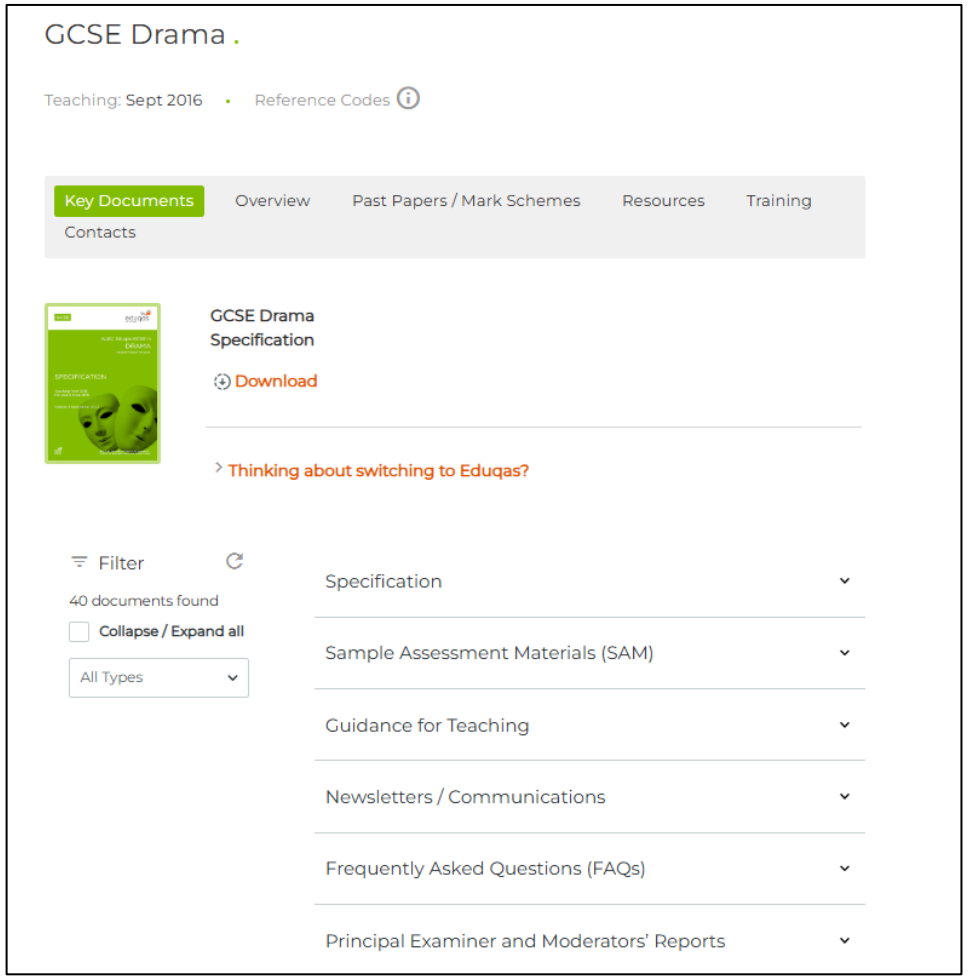
- actor
- designer
- director

Learners must also consider their own reaction and response and that of the audience.

Resources

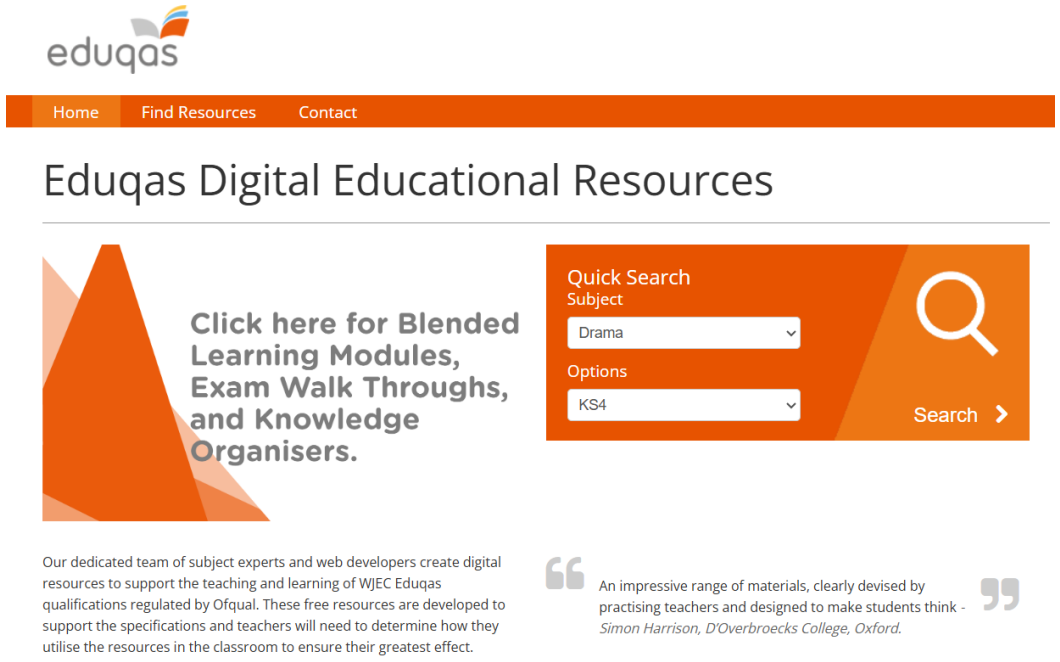
- Qualification Page
- Digital Resources
- Knowledge Organisers
- Exam Walkthroughs
- Portal

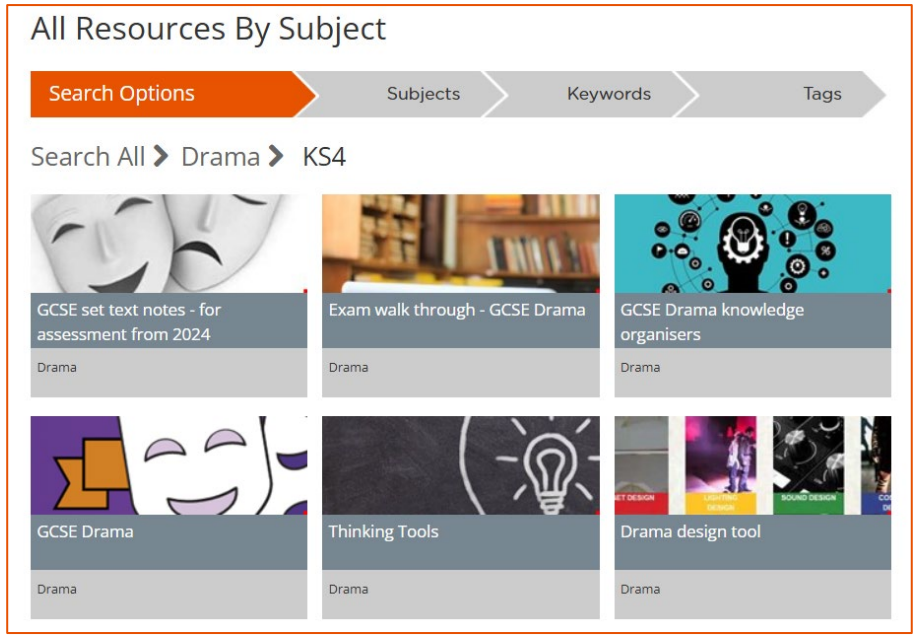
Eduqas GCSE Drama Qualification Page



- Specification
- Guidance for Teaching
- Past Papers & Mark Schemes
- Principal Examiners' Reports
- Training
- Digital Resources
- Plus, much more

Digital Resources





Component 3 Set Text Notes

GCSE set text notes - for assessment from 2024

Drama
KS4 >

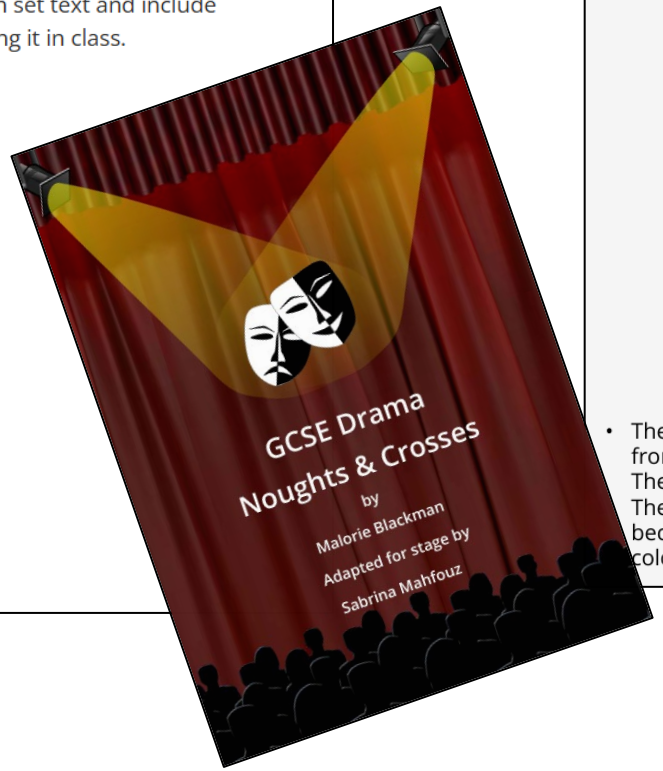
Resources to support Component 3: Interpreting Theatre.

The resources provide teachers with an introduction to their chosen set text and include background information on each set text and approaches to teaching it in class.

Set texts Component 3 student focused Drama

Files

- An Inspector Calls
- Find Me
- I Love You, Mum - I Promise I Won't Die
- Macbeth
- Noughts & Crosses
- Refugee Boy
- The IT



Original Staging Conditions

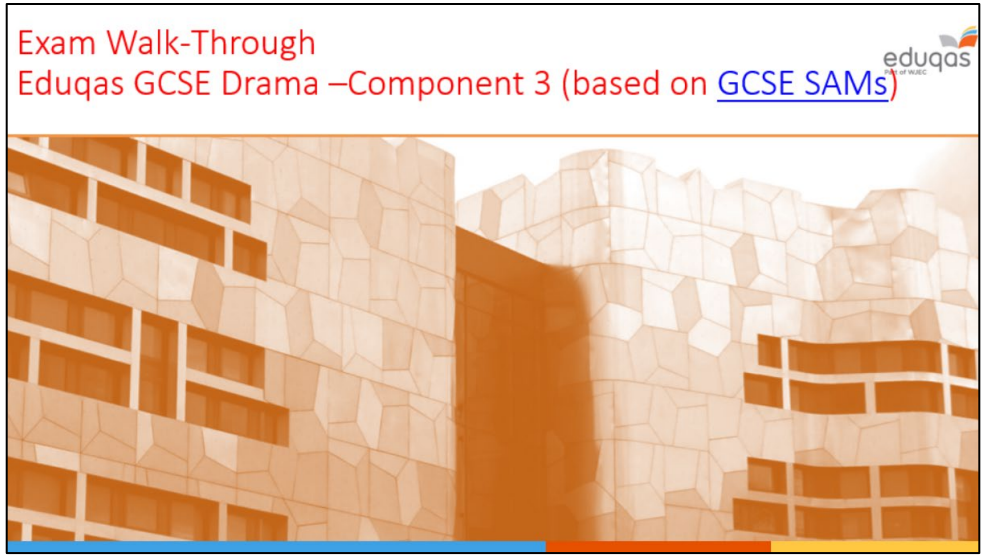
- The play was first performed by Pilot Theatre on 1st February, 2019, at Derby Theatre.
- The theatre has two theatre spaces. *Noughts & Crosses* was staged in the main auditorium, which has seating for up to 530. It has an **end-on stage**.



- The set, designed by Simon Kenny, created a dystopian reality. A series of panels morphed from walls to apertures to cupboards. This structure was constantly folding and changing. The panels would suddenly transform into banks of video screens or live TV transmissions. The set created a recognisable world but also another, parallel world. Chairs and tables became mirrors. Barricades represented chaos as violence erupted. The predominant colours were red tones:

Knowledge Organisers and Exam Walkthroughs





Summary of resources

Location	Resources
GCSE Drama subject page > Key Documents	• Specification • Guidance for Teaching • Principal Examiner & Moderators' Reports • FAQs, Key Dates, Newsletters • NEA forms and processes documentation
GCSE Drama subject page > Past papers	• Past papers and mark schemes
GCSE Drama subject page > Training	• Upcoming Professional Learning events • Materials from previous events are available on Portal*
Digital resources page of our website	• Set Text Notes • Exam walkthrough • Knowledge organisers • Drama Design Tool
Portal (registered centres have access - login required from exams officers) *	• Past Papers and mark schemes • Resources from past PL events • Exemplar materials • Stimulus for Component 1



Centre Networking Map



[Eduqas GCSE, AS and A Level Drama Centre Networking Form]

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Our annual programme is published and open for bookings in the Summer term:
GCSE Drama | Eduqas

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Materials from previous courses can be found on the Portal.

Contact us:

Drama Subject Team:

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