

LEAVING CERTIFICATE · ORDINARY LEVEL · SAMPLE PAPER 2 · 2027

Drama, Film and Theatre Studies

Total marks

300

Duration

2h 30m

Sections

A · B · C

About this document

A practice marking scheme produced by SimpleStudy to help students and teachers prepare for the Leaving Certificate examination in Drama, Film and Theatre Studies.

Not an official State Examinations Commission document.

Marking Scheme

This marking scheme accompanies SimpleStudy's Sample Paper 2 (Ordinary Level) in Drama, Film and Theatre Studies. It is intended to support candidates and teachers preparing for the Leaving Certificate examination in this subject. It is not an official State Examinations Commission document.

General Marking Guidelines

- Accept all reasonable responses not explicitly listed in this scheme; the indicative content is not exhaustive.
- Award marks for relevant content even if poorly expressed; do not penalise spelling or grammar unless meaning is unclear.
- Where a candidate contradicts themselves, award the lower mark.
- Where a part requires a named performance, film, focus of study or example, no marks are awarded for that element without one.
- For labelled diagrams and 'identify' parts (stage positions, camera shots), credit accurate labelling and correct identification.
- For parts based on a stimulus image, credit any valid reading the candidate substantiates from the image; the indicative readings below are guidance, not the only acceptable answers. Note figure locations: **Figure A** (*Bram Stoker's Dracula*) is printed in the **main examination booklet** at Question 1(a); the prescribed-text still images **Figures B1–B3** (Question 3(a)) and **Figures C1–C3** (Question 4(a)) are on the separate **Paper X** colour insert.

Paper Structure

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
Section A	Compulsory Questions. Answer all parts of Question 1 and Question 2.	100
Section B	Exploring Drama, Theatre and Film. Answer Question 3 (Prescribed Drama/Theatre) and Question 4 (Prescribed Film). Each carries 80 marks.	160
Section C	Reflecting and Responding. Answer Question 5(a) or 5(b).	40

Grading Descriptors (extended-response parts)

- **High (H):** Clear, accurate and relevant; the point is developed and supported by a specific reference to a performance, film, scene or example.
- **Mid (M):** Generally accurate and relevant; some development; reference present but more general than specific.
- **Low (L):** Partially accurate or relevant; little development; vague or no specific reference.

Note on mark splits: the paper prints only the totals for Question 1 (60) and Question 2 (40). The internal splits shown for Question 1(a)–(f) and Question 2(a)–(b) are indicative, set to reconcile to those printed totals; examiners should apply the bands holistically.

Section A

100 marks

There are two questions in this section. Answer all parts of Question 1 and Question 2.

Question 1 (60 marks) — Answer ALL parts

Indicative internal split (reconciling to the printed total of 60): (a) 12, (b) 9, (c) 12, (d) 12, (e) 9, (f) 6.

(a) **Figure A** (*Bram Stoker's Dracula*, Columbia Pictures, 1992 — printed in the **main booklet**). The lighting and sharp shadows dominate the scene. (i) Name **one** lighting effect used in Figure A. (ii) How would you recreate this effect? Explain with reference to **two** examples from the image. (12 marks)

(i) Name one lighting effect – 3 marks. (ii) Recreate it + explain with two examples from the image – 9 marks (roughly 3 for method + 3 per substantiated example). Credit any valid reading of the actual still.

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
(a)(i) 3 marks	<p>Name one lighting effect (accept any valid reading of the image):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-key / chiaroscuro lighting — strong contrast between bright highlights and deep shadow. • Hard, directional key light — a single sharp source casting the bold, defined shadows on the wall. • Side / low-angle lighting — light from one side or below, throwing long, dramatic shadows. • Cast / projected shadow — the enlarged shadow of a figure used for menace. • Pools of light / candlelight — warm practical sources (the candle, the red robe lit) against surrounding darkness. <p>Award 3 for any one correctly named lighting effect.</p>	3
(a)(ii) 9 marks method + 2 examples	<p>Recreate the effect (3) + two substantiated examples from the image (3 + 3). Indicative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method — place a single hard key light (e.g. a spotlight/lamp) low or to one side, keep fill light minimal so shadows stay sharp, and use a practical source (candle) to motivate the look. • Example 1 — the large dark shadow cast on the map behind the figures: position the light so the actor's shadow falls boldly on the rear wall. • Example 2 — the bright red robe and lit face against the gloom: angle the key to pick out one figure while the surroundings fall into shadow. <p>Accept any two valid examples the candidate reads from the image and links to a recreation method.</p>	9

(b) Explain any **three** of the following terms as they apply in film or theatre: **Scene, Genre, Treatment, Relaxed screening/performance.** (9 marks)

Any three terms — 3 marks each (3 × 3 = 9). Award up to 3 for a clear, accurate explanation of each chosen term. Mark the best three if more are attempted.

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
(b) 9 marks 3 terms × 3	<p>Indicative explanations (any three):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scene — a unit of continuous action in one place/time within a play or film; a section of the story between transitions. • Genre — a category or type of film/theatre defined by shared conventions, subject matter or style (e.g. comedy, tragedy, horror, the Western). • Treatment — a short prose outline of a proposed film/production describing the story, characters, tone and approach before a full script is written. • Relaxed screening/performance — a presentation adapted for audiences who would benefit from a less formal environment (e.g. softer sound/lighting, freedom to move or make noise, often for neurodivergent or sensory-sensitive audiences). <p>Award 3 marks for each of the best three explanations.</p>	9

(c) Imagine you are a theatre director showing conflict between two people on stage using blocking. (i) What does **blocking** mean? (ii) How would you use blocking to represent the conflict? (iii) What should a director consider when blocking? (12 marks)

(i) Define blocking – 3. (ii) Use blocking to show conflict – 6. (iii) Considerations when blocking – 3. Total 12.

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
(c)(i) 3 marks	<p>Indicative: blocking is the planned movement and positioning of actors on stage — where they stand, move and relate to one another and to the set during a scene.</p>	3
(c)(ii) 6 marks	<p>Indicative ways to show conflict through blocking (any reasoned approach, with development):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place the two actors far apart or on opposing sides of the stage to suggest division and tension. • Have one advance while the other retreats, or use levels (one higher) to signal a power imbalance. • Use direct face-to-face confrontation, invading personal space, or turning backs to show rejection. • Use diagonal or oppositional lines and changing distance to make the conflict build visually. <p>Award up to 6 for a clear, developed use of blocking that visually conveys conflict.</p>	6
(c)(iii) 3 marks	<p>Indicative considerations (any valid points): sightlines and the audience's view; the size/shape of the acting space and the set; safety; the meaning/subtext to be conveyed; balance and stage picture; entrances/exits and focus.</p>	3

(d) A character, lit by a single streetlight, stands alone in a dark alley. (i) Use the storyboard to outline how you would create tension in this scene. (ii) Explain how your storyboard creates tension. (12 marks)

(i) Storyboard outline creating tension – 6 (credit the labelled/described frames — shot choices, framing, movement).
(ii) Explanation of how it creates tension – 6 (banded). Total 12.

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
(d)(i) 6 marks storyboard	<p>Indicative tension-building choices to credit in the storyboard frames:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shot types — a wide/long shot to isolate the lone figure, then closer shots to build unease. • Framing/angle — high angle to make the character vulnerable, or off-centre framing and deep shadow. • Lighting — the single streetlight as a pool of light surrounded by darkness. • Movement/pace — slow reveals, a sudden cut, or something/someone entering the frame. • Sound cues noted — silence, footsteps, or a sudden noise (if indicated). <p>Credit a clear, ordered storyboard (sketched or described) that uses film technique to build tension.</p>	6
(d)(ii) 6 marks banded	<p>Explain how the storyboard creates tension, banded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H (5–6): clear explanation linking specific frame/technique choices to the tension created. • M (3–4): some explanation; choices identified but development general. • L (0–2): assertion with little or no explanation. 	6

(e) Identify **three** responsibilities of a stage manager. (9 marks)

3 marks per valid responsibility × 3 = 9.

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
(e) 9 marks 3 × 3	<p>Indicative responsibilities (any three):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running the show — calling cues (lighting, sound, scene changes) during performances. • Coordinating rehearsals — recording blocking and keeping the prompt copy / the book. • Communication — acting as the link between the director, cast, crew and designers. • Managing backstage — organising props, scene changes, entrances/exits and the running order. • Scheduling — keeping time, calling actors, and ensuring health and safety backstage. <p>Award 3 marks for each of any three valid responsibilities.</p>	9

(f) A flashback is a transition to an earlier time that interrupts the normal chronological order of events. Why are flashbacks used in film/theatre? (6 marks)

Award up to 6 for a clear explanation of one or more reasons flashbacks are used, with development (roughly 3 + 3 for two developed reasons, or a single well-developed reason).

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
(f) 6 marks	<p>Indicative reasons (any developed points):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give the audience backstory — revealing past events that explain a character’s present situation or motivation. • To build understanding/empathy — showing what shaped a character so the audience sees them differently. • To create suspense or revelation — withholding then disclosing key information at a dramatic moment. • To make connections between past and present, or to explain a mystery. • To vary the structure/pace of the storytelling and add emotional depth. 	6

Question 2 (40 marks) — Unprescribed focus of study — Answer ALL parts

Candidates may **not** refer to any play or film prescribed for examination in 2027 in this subject or any other Leaving Certificate subject. ‘Characteristic’ = one or more features, conventions or techniques. Indicative internal split: 20 + 20.

(a) Unprescribed Drama/Theatre: name your unprescribed focus of study; identify **one characteristic** of it that appealed to you and explain **why** you found it appealing, supported by examples from **at least one** performance, scene or extract you explored. (20 marks)

Name focus of study – 4; identify one characteristic – 4; explain why it appealed + support with examples – 12 (banded). No marks for the unprescribed-focus elements if the focus named is in fact a 2027-prescribed text.

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
(a) 20 marks name + characteristic + why	<p>Name focus of study (4): any valid unprescribed genre/period/style/form in theatre, e.g. Greek tragedy, commedia dell’arte, Theatre of the Absurd, Naturalism, Brechtian epic theatre, melodrama, physical theatre, pantomime.</p> <p>Identify one characteristic (4): a feature/convention/technique genuinely associated with the named focus (e.g. for Brechtian theatre — direct address / placards; for physical theatre — ensemble movement).</p> <p>Explain why it appealed, with examples (12), banded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H (9–12): clear explanation of why the characteristic appealed and its effect, anchored in a specific named performance/scene/extract the candidate explored. • M (5–8): some development; reference more general than specific. • L (0–4): assertion with little development or reference. 	20

(b) Unprescribed Film: identify your unprescribed focus of study; name **one characteristic** of it that appealed to you and explain **why** you found it appealing, supported by examples from **at least one** clip or extract you explored. (20 marks)

Name focus of study – 4; name one characteristic – 4; explain why it appealed + support with examples – 12 (banded). Same band boundaries as 2(a).

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
(b) 20 marks name + characteristic + why	<p>Name focus of study (4): any valid unprescribed film genre/period/style/movement, e.g. film noir, German Expressionism, the Western, the musical, Italian neorealism, the French New Wave, documentary, science fiction, the slasher.</p> <p>Name one characteristic (4): a feature/convention/technique genuinely associated with the named focus (e.g. for the Western — wide landscape shots; for film noir — low-key lighting and voiceover).</p> <p>Explain why it appealed, with examples (12), banded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H (9–12): clear explanation of why the characteristic appealed and its effect, supported by a specific named film/clip/extract. • M (5–8): some development; general reference. • L (0–4): assertion, minimal reference. 	20

Section B

160 marks

Answer Question 3 (Prescribed Drama/Theatre) and Question 4 (Prescribed Film). Each question carries 80 marks and is assessed holistically against the four criteria below.

Assessment Criteria (Questions 3 and 4)

Criterion	Descriptor	Max	Band Marks
Knowledge & Understanding	Relevant knowledge of the focus of study and the designated performance/film; understanding of the form, genre or style and appropriate subject terminology.	30	H: 25–30 M: 16–24 L: 0–15
Discussion & Explanation	Clear explanation/discussion of the characteristics or aspects asked for and their effect; relevant points developed; the candidate's own opinion where required.	28	H: 24–28 M: 15–23 L: 0–14
Supporting Reference	Specific reference to the designated performance/film and, where required, to at least one other performance/film within the focus of study.	14	H: 12–14 M: 7–11 L: 0–6
Communication	Clarity of expression; logical structure; coherent response.	8	H: 7–8 M: 4–6 L: 0–3

Total = 80. Apply holistically: place the response in a band for each criterion, then award a mark within the band.

Question 3 — Prescribed Drama/Theatre (80 marks) — Answer 3(a) OR 3(b)

Answer one option only — 3(a) or 3(b). If a candidate answers more than one, mark the best-attempted and ignore the rest. In 3(b) the candidate ticks (i), (ii) or (iii). Use the criterion grid above.

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
3(a) 80 marks (i) + (ii)	<p>Still image for your focus of study in prescribed drama/theatre — Figure B1, B2 or B3 on Paper X. Award against the grid across the whole response.</p> <p>(i) Name your focus of study in prescribed drama/theatre. Discuss the interaction between at least two characters in the appropriate image, based on the actors' use of movement / spatial awareness and gesture.</p> <p>(ii) Discuss the interaction between the same two (or two different) characters at another moment in the set play, based on the actors' use of movement / spatial awareness and gesture.</p> <p><i>Figure locations on Paper X: B1 — Mosquitoes (Lucy Kirkwood, dir. Rufus Norris); B2 — The Shadow of a Gunman (Sean O'Casey, dir. Garry Hynes, Druid); B3 — Tóraíocht (Philip Doherty, dir. Mikel Murfi, Fíabín sa Taibhdhearc). Credit any valid reading of movement, spatial relationships and gesture the candidate substantiates from the image.</i></p>	80

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
3(b)(i) 80 marks Non end-on theatre staging	Set Play: <i>Mosquitoes</i> (Lucy Kirkwood, dir. Rufus Norris for The National Theatre; style: non end-on theatre staging). Reward: two directing techniques the candidate would use when directing a non end-on staging piece, each with the reasons why ; supported by reference to the designated performance of <i>Mosquitoes</i> and one scene/extract from another performance in this focus of study. Award against the grid. <i>Examiner note: the paper assigns Mosquitoes (Lucy Kirkwood, dir. Rufus Norris) to this drama option and labels it 'non end-on theatre staging'. The prescribed Verbatim Theatre set play in Circular 0061/2025 (26 August 2025, which replaces 0002/2025) is Home (National Theatre, 2013; written & directed by Nadia Fall). Mark the candidate against the production named in the paper, but be aware of this discrepancy.</i>	80
3(b)(ii) 80 marks Tragicomedy	Set Play: <i>The Shadow of a Gunman</i> (Sean O'Casey, dir. Garry Hynes for Druid; genre: tragicomedy). Reward: two directing techniques the candidate would use when directing a tragicomedy, each with the reasons why ; supported by reference to the designated performance of <i>The Shadow of a Gunman</i> and one scene/extract from another performance in this focus of study. Award against the grid.	80
3(b)(iii) 80 marks Non-naturalistic production elements	Set Play: <i>Tóraíocht</i> (Philip Doherty, dir. Mikel Murfi for Fíbín sa Taibhdhearc; style: non-naturalistic production elements). Reward: two directing techniques the candidate would use when directing a piece using non-naturalistic production elements, each with the reasons why ; supported by reference to the designated performance of <i>Tóraíocht</i> and one scene/extract from another performance in this focus of study. Indicative non-naturalistic elements: mask work, oversized/puppet props, ensemble playing multiple roles, physical/aerial sequences, stylised staging. Award against the grid.	80

Question 4 — Prescribed Film (80 marks) — Answer 4(a) OR 4(b)

Answer one option only. In 4(b) the candidate ticks (i), (ii) or (iii). Use the criterion grid above.

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
4(a) 80 marks props + costume	Still image for your focus of study in prescribed film — Figure C1, C2 or C3 on Paper X. Name your focus of study in prescribed film and explain the role of props and costumes in the prescribed film, using one example for props and one example for costume from the appropriate still image, and one example for props and one example for costume from another moment in the film. Award against the grid. <i>Figure locations on Paper X: C1 — Jaws (1975); C2 — An Cailín Ciúin (2022); C3 — Past Lives (2023). Require both a props example and a costume example tied to the image, and both tied to another moment in the film.</i>	80
4(b)(i) 80 marks Style: Spielberg — Jaws	'Is location used effectively to set the scene?' — Focus of study: Style (the directorial style of Steven Spielberg); Film: <i>Jaws</i> . Require the candidate's reasoned response with at least two examples from <i>Jaws</i> and one example from another film in this focus of study. Indicative: the seaside town and crowded beach establishing vulnerability; the open water/boat isolating the characters; location used to delay and heighten the threat. Award against the grid.	80

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
<p>4(b)(ii) 80 marks Genre: European Art Cinema — <i>An Cailín Ciúin</i></p>	<p>‘Is location used effectively to set the scene?’ — Focus of study: Genre (European Art Cinema); Film: <i>An Cailín Ciúin</i> (dir. Colm Bairéad). Require a reasoned response with at least two examples from <i>An Cailín Ciúin</i> and one example from another film in this focus of study. Indicative: the rural farm and landscape conveying isolation and quiet; real locations and natural light shaping mood and realism; setting reflecting the child’s inner experience. Award against the grid.</p>	<p>80</p>
<p>4(b)(iii) 80 marks Genre: Romance — <i>Past Lives</i></p>	<p>‘Is location used effectively to set the scene?’ — Focus of study: Genre (Romance); Film: <i>Past Lives</i> (dir. Celine Song). Require a reasoned response with at least two examples from <i>Past Lives</i> and one example from another film in this focus of study. Indicative: Seoul vs New York settings marking the passage of time and distance; specific city locations underscoring connection and separation; space and place used to convey longing. Award against the grid.</p>	<p>80</p>

Section C

40 marks

Reflecting and Responding. Answer Question 5(a) or 5(b). Assessed holistically against the four criteria, scaled to 40 marks.

Assessment Criteria (Question 5)

Criterion	Descriptor	Max	Band Marks
Knowledge & Understanding	Relevant knowledge of the named live performance/screening attended and of the production aspects discussed.	15	H: 13–15 M: 8–12 L: 0–7
Reflection & Explanation	Quality of personal reflection and reasoning; clear connection between the chosen aspects/changes and the candidate's own experience of the production.	14	H: 12–14 M: 8–11 L: 0–7
Supporting Reference	Specific reference to the named performance/screening (5a) or to the named production attended (5b).	7	H: 6–7 M: 4–5 L: 0–3
Communication	Clarity, structure and coherence of the response.	4	H: 4 M: 2–3 L: 0–1

Total = 40.

Question 5 (40 marks) — Answer 5(a) OR 5(b)

Part	Acceptable Answer(s)	Marks
5(a) 40 marks two aspects	<p>Name a live theatrical performance OR a cinema screening attended during the course, and describe your experience of the production based on TWO of: light, choreography, props, costume, the performance of an actor (candidate ticks).</p> <p>A specific performance or screening must be named; if none is named, cap at the Low band. Reward a developed description of the candidate's experience grounded in two of the listed aspects, with specific reference to the named work. Mark the best two if more are attempted.</p>	40
5(b) 40 marks (i) + (ii)	<p>Reflect on your visit to the theatre during the course. Answer parts (i) and (ii).</p> <p>(i) Identify the production attended and outline three reasons why your experience does or does not make you want to attend more live theatrical performances. <i>Reward identification of the production and three developed reasons.</i></p> <p>(ii) Imagine you are the director of that production: identify two changes you would make and explain why. <i>Reward two clear changes, each with a reasoned justification.</i></p> <p><i>A specific production must be named; if none is named, cap at the Low band. Apply the grid holistically across (i) and (ii).</i></p>	40

Paper total: Section A (100) + Section B (160) + Section C (40) = **300 marks**.

This marking scheme is indicative. Examiners should use professional judgement and credit all reasonable responses not listed here. Indicative answer content for image-based and prescribed-text parts should be checked by the examiner

against the candidate's actual reading and against the current SEC specification (Circular 0061/2025). Prepared by SimpleStudy for study purposes; not an official State Examinations Commission document.