

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF GRADE RELATED CRITERIA  
IN SIXTH FORM CERTIFICATE DRAMA**

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### NOTE

The 1992 Resource Book referred to in the report is available from the Education Department, University of Canterbury.

## ABSTRACT

With the co-operation of a number of teachers throughout the country, this project developed, trialled and evaluated two parallel sets of grade related criteria for use in the assessment of Sixth Form Certificate Drama. The writing of the criteria occurred in 1990, while 1991 was devoted to trialling the statements drafted, and evaluating their usefulness as a form of achievement based assessment.

A questionnaire sent to all 25 teachers who had taken part in the trial elicited substantial support for this method of assessing drama, although reservations were expressed about the wording of the draft sets. Grade related criteria were seen by teachers as a valid and valuable tool in assessment, having positive effects for teachers and students alike on the curriculum and classroom practice. They were considered to provide more precise and transparent evaluation than norm-referenced assessment, and there was emphatic support among project participants for their future development. The need for further training in the use of grade related criteria was commonly felt, and most participants in the project made gains in their professional development as a result of their involvement with it.

The project recommends that a single set of grade related criteria be developed and trialled on a national level, with adequate support provided by (a) teacher relief for inservice teacher training, (b) the development of suitable moderation procedures, and (c) the writing of a comprehensive resource book.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

A number of factors in the short history of drama as a Sixth Form Certificate subject suggest the possibility of widespread disparateness and inconsistency in its teaching.

Drama has not existed for long as a full curriculum subject. More than a third of all secondary schools now offer Sixth Form Certificate Drama, but this expansion has occurred over a relatively short period of six years since Sixth Form Certificate replaced University Entrance, with little guidance from the Department or Ministry of Education, or the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

The writing of a course statement (Department Education, 1989) provided some assistance to teachers wanting direction. However, it still remains in draft form, and was developed after a number of schools had had their individual Sixth Form Certificate Drama courses established and approved by the Department. In the absence of clear course models or a commonly-agreed curriculum, drama has grown because many of the individual teachers with an enthusiasm for production have wanted to teach it in class time, and schools have been keen to meet the needs of their students for a broad range of Sixth Form Certificate courses.

Many who teach Sixth Form Certificate Drama as a stand-alone subject with its own content, practices and forms of expression, still teach English, for although many schools offer Sixth Form Certificate Drama, few offer enough courses at other levels to allow drama teachers to specialise exclusively in their subject. Drama teachers may have a background in amateur or, more rarely, professional theatre, perhaps studied drama as part of their university degree, and will frequently have been responsible for the most common form of school drama activity, the annual production or drama club.

Add to this the fact that most schools have a *single* drama specialist, who will tend to teach in isolation from drama colleagues in other schools, and therefore ignorance of what they are doing, and it could reasonably be expected that there would be great diversity in the teaching of the subject, from the initial definition of what drama is, to methods of its assessment.

Increasing this tendency to divergence is the effect which a single individual, often bringing expertise from overseas, can have on educational practice in New Zealand. For example, during visits to this country in the 1970s and 1980s Dorothy Heathcote, an English theorist and practitioner of drama, had considerable influence on the practice of drama in some areas of New Zealand. Emphasising the value of improvisation and rôle-play, Heathcote is little concerned with performance to an audience. To her, the essence of drama is experience. It is a technique, a way of learning about a subject, about others, and, most important of all, about oneself.

If Heathcote is at one end of the drama in education spectrum, a course devoted exclusively to rehearsing and performing plays would be at the other. There would seem, on the face of it, to be some tension between the philosophical bases of the two approaches.

It also seems likely that the limited opportunities available for teacher preservice and inservice training may affect the nature of curriculum drama. Drama courses are offered at all the metropolitan universities, varying from the solidly academic focus of the University of Canterbury (where Drama developed as an offshoot of literature courses), to Auckland University's full-time one-year postgraduate diploma. A specialist degree in drama is now offered by Victoria University. There is, however, no degree or diploma course in drama in education, although various related papers can be taken as part of the ASTU course.

In 1992, the Christchurch College of Education will introduce a "teaching subject" course in drama in education for secondary trainees, and similar work is done in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North and Wellington, but there is still a significant gap between training and

experience, felt as acutely by those embarking on their teaching careers, as those presently working in provincial schools.

Few advisory positions in secondary drama in education exist and there seems to be relatively little impending change by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority to the draft nature of the existing course statement. How drama at sixth form level will fit into the new framework of senior secondary education also remains to be seen.

However, it is clear that a degree of consistency is desirable, to legitimise the existence of drama as a curriculum area, to ensure the establishment of national standards in the subject, and so continue its growth. So there is a disjunction between the history of drama as a sixth form subject, and the need for a common core of subject definition, teaching content and practices, and assessment procedures. This problem is central to the development at a national level of any areas of the Sixth Form Certificate Drama course.

Nevertheless, despite the factors already discussed which suggest a discontinuity of experience so overpowering that any attempt to seek common ground would be futile, my own experience as a drama teacher led me to believe otherwise. I suspected that the field of drama in education might not be quite the chaos of disparate realities which it could be imagined.

The efforts of national and regional networks of drama teachers (like the New Zealand and Canterbury Associations for Drama in Education) to share information and assist in the professional development of their members provided many opportunities for theoretical and practical convergence. National subject conferences also showed that despite different philosophies, drama teachers could talk to each other and be understood.

The formal and informal discussion, the sharing of ideas and booklists, the distribution of resources and lesson plans, the participation in a subtle process of influence and counter-influence, which typically occur in drama in education workshops offered a possible model for the subject at a national level. For although teachers come to such workshops with markedly different levels of skill, background and experience, they seem to be able to draw eclectically on the range of dissimilar influences set before them, and incorporate them without difficulty into their own programmes.

Even given the possibly greater influence of Dorothy Heathcote in the North Island, it seemed likely that because in many schools curriculum drama developed from performance drama such as the major production, or work of the drama club, drama performance would provide a component of Sixth Form Certificate Drama.

Despite the divergent forces, then, it seemed reasonable to hope that a common core of assumptions about drama in education's content, values and purpose could be agreed upon. Were that so, it seemed possible that assessment, a major issue which all teachers - whatever the emphases of their respective courses - agreed needed more development, could be a fruitful area for research.

The major point of dissatisfaction among drama teachers is the method by which the end-of-year grades for Sixth Form Certificate Drama are awarded. Under the current system, a notion of "general ability" is derived from the best of the students' grades gained for often-unrelated (and norm-referenced) School Certificate subjects, because drama does not exist as a School Certificate subject. This notional grade provides the student's contribution to the school's pool of Sixth Form Certificate grades.

One consequence of the existing system is that a school with a high number of academically successful School Certificate students will be able to offer better Sixth Form Certificate grades than another with fewer such students, regardless of the comparable quality of the teaching or learning which their Sixth Form Certificate Drama courses provide. Another result is the perception that practical subjects like drama, which tend to have total student numbers of less than twenty per sixth form course, are unfairly treated under the present system compared with



subjects having larger student populations. Drama teachers commonly complain that the grade pool does not reflect the quality of learning manifested in the courses they teach, despite the option provided by the Ministry to bargain for higher grades to suit individual students of exceptional ability.

So, if drama teachers are unhappy with the effects of a norm-referenced origins of the grades they must apply, might there be a better system available? One which more precisely describes what goes on in drama classes, which is clearer to teachers, employers and parents, and fairer to the students? One which can be applied on a national basis, yet provide enough malleability to fit the shape of individual courses wherever they are positioned on the continuum from drama as self-development to drama as a performance art?

Grade related criteria would seem to provide such a system.

Grade related criteria are descriptions of achievement at different grade levels. Operating as behavioural benchmarks for analysing a student's performance, they are a form of *achievement based assessment*, a method of arriving at grades which describe what the students can do rather than simply compare them with their peers. Student performance is assessed in relation to a set of specified objectives or 'criteria', which are developed for a number of 'aspects' at five levels of achievement. Each level of the criteria specifies a grade, valued one to five: hence, the term 'grade related criteria'. (Gilmore, 1991, 7.)

Thus grade related criteria represent a systematic and transparent way of making judgements about student performance. Although judgements of student achievement underlie norm-referenced achievement, they are often hidden and therefore tend to vary from one assessor to another.

The development of grade related criteria for Sixth Form Certificate Drama fits in with the shift from norm-referenced to achievement based evaluation which is occurring in many Sixth Form Certificate subjects. Recent investigations have been undertaken on different moderation procedures for English, Biology, Geography, Physical Education, Home Economics, Practical Art, and French at this level, and these New Zealand developments are part of a wider international trend towards this form of assessment.

In Scotland and Queensland, for example, grade related criteria provide a substantial component of achievement based assessment. The Queensland Board of Senior Secondary Studies uses criterion-based assessment exclusively for drama courses (Thomas, 1990), and grade related criteria also provide the approach for assessing standard grade English at foundation, general and credit levels in Scotland (Scottish Examination Board, 1984).

There are also some more general reasons for developing grade related criteria, to do with the place of drama in the formal curriculum of New Zealand secondary schools. Grade related criteria are potentially of considerable value in maintaining the development of a relatively new subject - development which might be threatened by any future shift "back to the basics".

Four years ago, while in the United Kingdom on a study tour organised by the British Council, I gained the impression that although drama had achieved widespread popularity with students and parents, it had nevertheless failed to sell itself to those who made the decisions. Given the demands of the Conservative educational policies for greater accountability and a "return to the basics", the accretion of power to the centralised bureaucracy, and the adoption of a core curriculum mandatory for all secondary schools, drama was exiled into the wilderness of optional subjects. As a consequence, its hours in many schools' timetables were severely curtailed, and drama was thereby removed from the experience of many students. With the concurrent establishment of teacher contracts stipulating the number of contact hours with students, even out-of-class drama, formerly an important part of the life of many schools, has withered and often died out completely.

The lesson of the United Kingdom is clear. If curriculum drama is to have a place in New Zealand schools, it must feature ways of assessment which *manifest* the quality of the teaching and learning the subject entails. Because they make transparent the key objectives and learning outcomes demanded by the subject, grade related criteria seem to be, potentially, a tool useful in achieving this aim.

There are reservations to this support for grade related criteria, however.

At present, Sixth Form Certificate is still locked into a system of norm-referenced assessment, and until that changes, anyone who uses grade related criteria will be providing more information than the qualification needs, and in a form which it cannot use. However, although one could rightly draw from the use of grade related criteria an inference of philosophical opposition to norm-referenced assessment, the two can, and in practice do, co-exist.

A more significant objection has to do with the ability of grade related criteria to define the *essence* of drama. It may, indeed, be impossible to devise criteria (or, for that matter, even objectives or aims) which get to the heart of what goes on in a drama class. It seems clear that things like personal growth, creativity and generosity of spirit are impossible, and some might say impertinent, to pin a number to, despite the fact that many drama teachers feel that they are the most important things to come out of work in drama class. Because they may be very difficult to measure, they may be impossible to assess in the behavioural environment within which grade related criteria operate.

The issue of validity is a complex one, but equally necessary to confront in the development of grade related criteria, which should be specific but not inflexible. Criteria must be detailed and comprehensive enough to describe the important things learnt in drama, but without imposing a single approach which might narrow the range and variety of the subject as it is presently taught. Grade related criteria are valid descriptors of learning only insofar as they reflect what actually goes on.

So, given the background to the development of drama as a Sixth Form Certificate subject, the impression that there might be reasonable degree of commonality to its definition, the level of dissatisfaction with present systems of assessment, and the model which grade related criteria offers, this project's objectives were defined as informing teachers about what grade related criteria were, guiding them through the development of a set for Sixth Form Certificate Drama, and trialling the resulting statements through one year's course in a variety of schools.

With the co-operation of a number of teachers throughout the country, this project developed and trialled *two* parallel sets of grade related criteria. The writing of the criteria occurred in 1990, while 1991 was devoted to trialling the statements drafted, and evaluating their usefulness as a form of achievement based assessment.

## CHAPTER TWO

### OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

From the outset, the project aimed at comprehensiveness and inclusivity. Given drama's short history in the curriculum at the sixth form level, it made little sense to approach only a few individual teachers to take part in the trial. The contribution of all teachers, regardless of their level of experience, was considered valuable to the project, which cast its net widely to ensure broad representation and input. A conscious effort was made to contact teachers throughout the country, in provincial and urban areas, in co-educational and single-sex schools, in schools of different sizes, both state and private.

The project was based on the distribution of information by post to individuals and satellite groups operating throughout the country. To start with an invitation was mailed to all schools offering Sixth Form Certificate Drama informing teachers of the project and inviting those who wished to do so to take part. From that list the satellite groups were set up, group leaders chosen, and meetings organised in the different centres.

These groups provided the core of participants through the two years of the project, but individuals elsewhere in the country also contributed on their own to both the development and trialling of the criteria. Some participants dropped out because of changes of job and pressure of work, but most of those involved in 1990 continued for 1991. As well as those who participated actively, a further nine asked to continue receiving all information. All participants were surveyed at the end of 1991, to evaluate the criteria which had been trialled.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF GRADE RELATED CRITERIA IN 1990

#### Method

Invitations were sent out early in 1990 to all schools in New Zealand offering Sixth Form Certificate Drama, sketching the process of taking part in the project, and inviting the teachers to do so (Appendix 1). Three options for participation were available: as part of a satellite group, which involved a series of at least five meetings to devise criteria; as an individual drafting the criteria alone; and as an individual who did not want to take part in the writing of the criteria, but who wished to trial them during 1991 in his or her own class. Nineteen teachers chose the first option, three the second and fifteen the third.

A forty-five minute videotape was recorded in which a basic position paper was presented clarifying what grade related criteria were, arguing for their introduction, and suggesting a method of writing them. (The position paper, in Appendix 2, had been delivered to a local Christchurch meeting of drama teachers.) The information was presented in video form rather than on paper because I wanted to personalise the research, and not overwhelm the potential participants with too much written material at its outset. A copy of the video was sent to all interested individuals and satellite groups, the latter of which, based in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, subsequently held a series of meetings in the third term. All involvement took place in the participants' own time and required considerable commitment.

At the first writing session, groups looked critically at the objectives from the draft course statement (Appendix 3), seeking to draw from them their interpretation of what the essential *aspects* of the course were. This intermediate step was essential. There had to be a way of bridging the gap between objectives and criteria because the existing objectives are not written behaviourally, and do not manifest the equal balance of skills, knowledge and attitudes officially recommended by the Ministry.

The three satellite groups operating in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch arrived at different solutions to the task of selecting the aspects common to the draft course objectives, but all settled on about ten in total.

The Christchurch group's guiding principles were:

Aspects should be evenly balanced between knowledge, skills and attitudes, and limited to ten.

There should be a clear division between those aspects which deal with knowledge, skills and attitudes: neither they nor the criteria they generate should overlap.

Aspects should be as content-free as possible, and applicable to all areas relevant to the aspect.

Aspects should not define course structure: it is impossible through them to *explicitly* cover everything done in the course, but the final set of aspects should be applicable to as many as possible of the experiences which the course provides.

It should be possible to use the same aspect, and criteria which flow from it, to assess the students in different ways: an aspect should not suit only one form of assessment.

Aspects should be behaviourally measurable.

The Auckland group, like some of the individuals who contributed to the process of writing, considered that the first statement was too rigid, and that a balance of knowledge, skills and attitudes could be achieved without necessarily organising the aspects in this way. In any case, other subjects like English have drafted criteria which do not fit into such a neatly tripartite pattern.

Both opinions seemed valid.

Having devised a set of aspects, the groups split that list into related sections and dealt with each area at a separate meeting, usually held on a weekly basis until the task was complete.

At the meetings, some of the satellite groups set out a *scaffold* for each aspect, to help establish what the different levels for the criteria meant. The first task in establishing a scaffold was to identify the key features of the aspect, positioning them as column headings on the top line of the scaffold in order of increasing difficulty, or, as seemed to happen in practice, in order of their performance. (This was often reflected in a pattern of receiving, processing and applying.) The example of a scaffold given in Figure 1 deals with *Knowledge of the Dramatic Process*.

**KNOWLEDGE OF THE DRAMATIC PROCESS**

	<i>RECOGNISE</i>	<i>UNDERSTAND</i>	<i>APPLY</i>
<i>GRADE ONE</i>	SOME IDEAS	ATTEMPTS TO UNDERSTAND	
<i>GRADE TWO</i>	↓	UNDERSTANDS	SOMETIMES
<i>GRADE THREE</i>	A RANGE OF IDEAS	↓	APPLIES
<i>GRADE FOUR</i>	A COMPLEX RANGE OF IDEAS	SYNTHESISES	APPROPRIATELY
<i>GRADE FIVE</i>	↓	↓	APPROPRIATELY AND CONSISTENTLY

**FIGURE 1** *Scaffold example*

By reading along each line of the scaffold, the wording for each level of criteria was established. This scaffold resulted in the set of criteria shown below.

#### KNOWLEDGE OF THE DRAMATIC PROCESS

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Recognises some ideas and attempts to understand them.	Recognises some ideas, <i>understands</i> them <i>and some-times applies</i> them.	Recognises <i>a range</i> of ideas, understands them <i>and applies</i> them.	Recognises a <i>complex</i> range of ideas, <i>synthesises</i> them and applies them <i>appropriately</i> .	Recognises a complex range of ideas, synthesises them and applies them <i>appropriately and consistently</i> .

Those groups working on the criteria received copies of the drafts being produced elsewhere, but felt that once they had begun building on their own foundation, they should continue in the way that made most sense to them. The process of writing criteria led to some modification of the initial list of aspects, as headings which covered similar areas were deleted, and areas not covered at first were included by the creation of new aspects.

#### Results: the parallel sets of criteria

Six sets of criteria were developed to varying degrees of completeness by project participants. Although organised differently, they still had a strong common core of assumptions about what drama is, how it may be taught, and what its central educational outcomes should be. These assumptions were generally arrived at independently of the draft course statement, but reflect similar values. From the six sets offered, two were chosen for trialling, generated by the Auckland and Christchurch satellite groups. They are included in this report (Appendices 4 and 5) with explanatory comments provided by the authors.

It should not be inferred from the fact that two sets were chosen that the contributions of others have been ignored. Indeed, that the ideas they expressed were generally related to one or the other of the contrasting approaches exemplified by the Auckland and Christchurch groups, validates the development of two parallel sets of criteria for the trial.

#### Discussion

The process of writing the criteria was found demanding and enjoyable in equal measure by those who undertook it. As assessment provides a focus for all parts of a course, from philosophy to practical details of record-keeping and grade-handling, discussion about the wording of criteria necessarily brings all of these elements into sharp relief. Reflection on teaching content and practice, the sharing of ideas and the challenging of preconceptions, contributed markedly to the professional growth of project participants.

It was intended at the project's outset that the wording produced by the groups and individual criteria writers would be synthesised into a single set. It soon became obvious, on reading the progress reports of the groups as they developed their sets, that this would be impossible. Although both sets of criteria chart the same educational topography, they do so from different vantage points, and so the perspectives are correspondingly incompatible. For example, the substance of Auckland's criterion A1, *Personal Skills*, is also found in the Christchurch set, but defined there as an attitude, and spread across criteria B8, B9 and B10.

The conceptual framework of the two sets is different both in their definition of terms, in the division of the major areas, and in the balance of improvisation versus performance. All of these matters reflect the place of the contributing teachers' Sixth Form Certificate Drama courses on the drama in education continuum referred to earlier.

At the risk of over-simplification, the following elements seem to be held in common by the two sets of criteria:

- self-expression,
- performance art (student-centred, this element concentrates on the performer, and includes voice and movement),
- technical skill,
- knowledge,
- analysis and appreciation,
- the use of language in its receptive and expressive forms.

From a strictly rational point of view, it would have been preferable to trial one set of criteria only, because true comparability of results would be possible only under such a method. However, it is clear from the way that the sets of criteria do not mesh precisely that the writing of such a set would have required a series of combined meetings of the Christchurch and Auckland satellite groups, something beyond the resources of the research budget.

In any case, this project's research is not "hard" in terms of providing an objective measurement of the trial's outcomes, but merely samples opinions of those who have taken part. Given the degree of imprecision which this introduces into the findings, it is possible to argue that the trial of two parallel sets of criteria doesn't necessarily unbutton an already rather loose research project any further than would the trial of a single set.

In addition to the elements common to both sets trialled, another important approach in the wider drama in education experience, particularly at primary schools, sees drama as a learning medium, applicable to any subject. This view is not explicit in either set of criteria, because it could in fact refer to the whole of the Sixth Form Certificate Drama course, but also because its model does not particularly fit the secondary-school framework of specialist teaching. The project's focus was exclusively on the teaching of drama within the specialist Sixth Form Certificate course.

The place of knowledge in Sixth Form Certificate Drama is a slightly contentious matter, for while it forms a major component of the Christchurch set, it is not explicit in the Auckland statements. In the wider world of drama in education, knowledge forms an important part of tertiary study which integrates practice, theory and history. (This is especially so of the subject at university level in North America.) To what degree this should be reflected in the subject at secondary-school level will have to be dealt with by the Ministry should it go ahead with the development of criteria for Sixth Form Certificate Drama.

The experience gained in other subjects for which the Ministry has mounted formal development schemes suggests that grade related criteria are used best by those who have tried to write them. Having to wrestle with the wording, to argue about what a given statement really means, to focus on what things are most important about the subject, is commonly thought to be a very good background to a successful trial. This matter is dealt with in the analysis of the questionnaire.

Those participants who wished to trial their own set of criteria because they preferred it to either of the sets offered, were encouraged to do so, on the basis that there was still valuable common experience to share on such things as grade aggregation, task design, assessment exemplars, reporting, and so on. The findings in the questionnaire would tend to support this, for useful responses were indeed made by those who had trialled only some parts of the two sets of criteria.

## THE TRIAL OF GRADE RELATED CRITERIA IN 1991

### Method

A Resource Book was distributed at the end of 1990 for use in the following year. Based in part on the format of the Geography resource book (Department of Education 1989), it sought to explain how criteria could be trialled during 1991. However, it would be read and used by those who had not taken part in any of the writing of the criteria, and so also had to provide some general background to the project to enable those participants to take part with some knowledge.

A major section of the Resource Book dealt with the presentation and explanation of the parallel sets of criteria. Participants were recommended to choose whichever set they thought would be most applicable to their course and trial that one only during 1991. Those involved in the writing of the criteria, as expected, generally opted for their "own" set, while the other participants were encouraged to examine the sets with some care, choosing whichever seemed to fit the organisation, teaching approach and school assessment procedures which applied to the individual.

A reasonable match between teachers' existing current system and the proposed set of criteria was recommended, drawing on the degree of philosophical resonance between what they considered important and the inferences which could be drawn from the proposed sets. It was suggested that some, or many, parts of the existing course might need to change with the use of grade related criteria, and the experience of the English trial was mentioned: early attempts to plaster grade related criteria over an existing programme structure led to serious problems.

In the Resource Book, a number of guidelines were set out to do with the topics of course organisation; the application of the criteria; task design; recording, reporting and summative assessment; individual assessment records, end-of-year aggregation and assessment procedures; ways of arriving at end-of-year grade levels for profiles (including a recommendation that teachers use typicality rather than numerical averaging to help create the global mark required by the process of means analysis to which all Sixth Form Certificate courses are subject); and profile writing. The major task for triallists throughout the year was to apply the criteria to their individual courses, and design new task sheets to effect this.

Several mailouts were arranged during the year to keep teachers in touch with each other, but this process proved a little less successful than originally hoped. With the exception of those working in the Auckland and Christchurch groups, little material was provided for collation and distribution. However, what was produced was interesting for the variety of approaches to task design, and for the way in which the criteria were reworded to fit particular assessment activities.

In the third term, a questionnaire was devised and distributed to all those who had registered an interest in continuing to work on the project (Appendix 6), accompanied by a fifteen-minute audiotape guide to the questions (Appendix 7). This guide was produced for the same reason as the videotape which introduced the project: to provide a personalised way of explaining the questionnaire, and make the process of filling it out more interactive. As the analysis of the questionnaire responses show, this experiment seems to have worked.

A new resource book was edited and distributed to all those who returned the questionnaire, summarising the findings of this report, reproducing relevant sections of the 1990 resource book, and containing a much-expanded section of assessment exemplars which had been contributed by project participants during the year. Copies were also sent to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Ministry of Education, relevant advisors and lecturers at the Colleges of Education, the New Zealand Association for Drama in Education, and the Canterbury Association for Drama in Education.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESULTS: ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was distributed to all in the project who had received information, not just those who had been active in the satellite groups. The responses thus encompass a wide range of experience, from teachers most intimately involved to those who used the criteria only a little. (This disparity of experience is discussed where it has a bearing on the responses which have been made). In total, 15 out of 25 returned filled-in questionnaires. The ten who did not respond had generally been involved in the trial as "sleeping partners", receiving information but not contributing actively.

#### Section 1: Background information

##### Teaching experience

Little centralised information exists on who teaches Sixth Form Certificate Drama, so it was interesting to compare the amount of participants' teaching experience at the secondary level with that specifically involved with curriculum drama. The largest group in the sample have taught in secondary schools for more than fifteen years, but Sixth Form Certificate Drama for only the last five (Figure 2). As Sixth Form Certificate has only been in existence since 1986, few schools had offered it before then as a formal part of the sixth form curriculum.

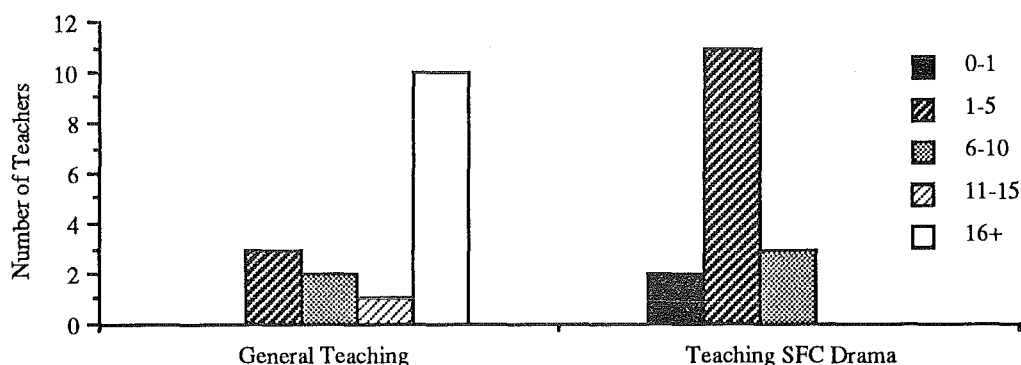


FIGURE 2 *Number of years' teaching experience*

One implication for the project of this high degree of teaching experience is that problems encountered in establishing and using grade related criteria could not be regarded as due to teacher inexperience or lack of skill in the fundamental processes of teaching.

This level of familiarity with the teaching process independent of drama may, however, change in the future. As the first of those initial Sixth Form Certificate Drama students graduate from their university drama departments and complete their college of education courses, they will win specialist drama teaching positions. Specialist training in drama assessment and the use of grade related criteria will then be essential, something discussed more fully in response to later questions.

##### Level of training and experience in assessment

Teachers were asked whether they felt their level of training and experience in assessment was adequate for the use of grade related criteria. Confidence and support for this statement seemed to go hand in hand, with ten out of the fifteen respondents considering their level of training and experience adequate for their involvement in the trial. Those without regular peer contact,



however, felt less confident. The chance to talk over matters with fellow drama teachers was considered as important by those able to do so, as those without such support. In some small schools difficulties were further compounded by there being no staff experience of grade related criteria in any subject to draw on.

Inservice training was called for, and one proposal suggested the establishment of a diploma or degree in drama in education (perhaps as part of a B.Ed. or Dip. Ed. course) to provide preservice training.

## Section 2: Support and/or resources available for making decisions about assessment

Figure 3 summarises the kinds of support and/or resources available to participants in making decisions about assessment. All teachers reported having support of some kind available to them, although the limited number of drama advisors in the areas where triallists were teaching meant that only one got such assistance. As this was not a formal Ministry-operated trial, it is not surprising that no Ministry officials were involved.

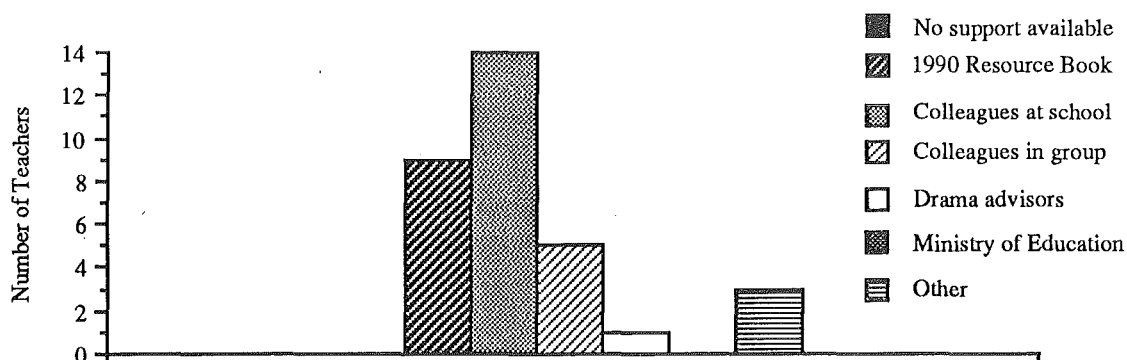


FIGURE 3 *Kinds of support/resources available*

The Resource Book proved to be of use to a majority of those who took part in the trial, and colleagues at school were a considerable source of information, but otherwise experience varied considerably. Those teaching in the country who found it difficult to make contact with other drama teachers often felt quite isolated. This was, however, minimised where expertise was available in the use of grade related criteria for other subjects - English and geography were mentioned as being of particular value. The advice of the school staff member responsible for co-ordinating sixth form certificate marks proved helpful on a number of occasions, and New Zealand Theatre Federation adjudicators were invited in to help the moderation process in one course.

Nine out of fourteen teachers felt that the support available was adequate. However, those unprepared for the use of grade related criteria reacted forcefully in their written comments. Professional isolation is clearly a considerable problem for those who have little contact with their drama teaching colleagues, and it is a matter which must be considered should grade related criteria be instituted on a formal basis. This issue is explored more fully later.

### Section 3: The grade related criteria

#### The set of grade related criteria used

Teachers were asked to indicate which set of criteria they used in 1991 (Figure 4).

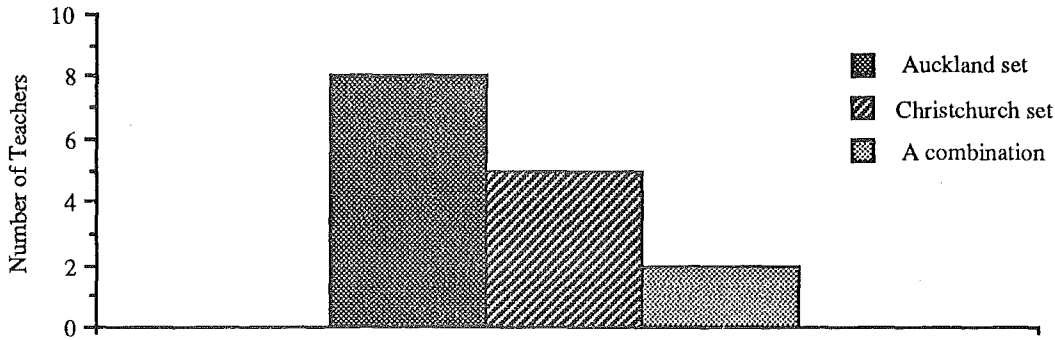


FIGURE 4 *The set of grade related criteria used*

The Auckland set was used more widely than the Christchurch set. Two teachers used a combination. This more widespread use of the Auckland set is partly a reflection of geography, for in Auckland seven teachers wrote criteria, while three worked in Christchurch. (Not all of the writers of the Auckland set took part in the full trial, however, due to changes in teaching positions.) It also reflected what the resource book was at pains to suggest - that teachers assess the degree of resonance between their existing course structure and aims, and the sets of criteria on offer.

Those who had taken part in the drafting of the criteria, and were familiar with their wording and background found it easier to use them than those who had played no part in the process of writing. It is difficult to strike the right balance between comprehensiveness and comprehensibility, for the more specific the criteria are, the more complex is their language. "Only connect" would be an apposite subtitle to any account of the process of writing sets of grade related criteria, for the problem of bridging the gap between the experience of drama and its definition is an acute one, made all the more demanding by the absence of a widely-trialed and agreed course statement.

The existing draft course statement came in for some criticism, because it does not appear to reflect the balance of knowledge, skills and attitudes recommended by the Ministry of Education as a principle of curriculum development; because of the slippage between the stated aims and objectives; and because the objectives are not consistently stated in a behavioural way.

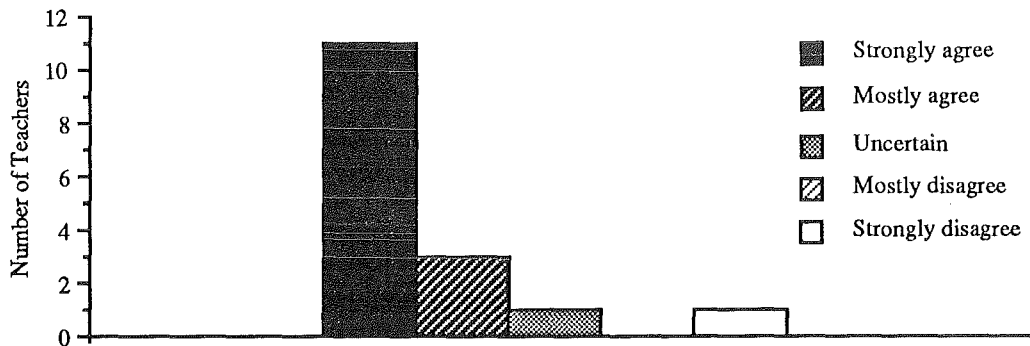
It is hardly surprising, then, that those not privy to the debate which was integral to developing the criteria, found it difficult to interpret the resulting statements precisely. The formality and abstruseness of the wording came in for particular criticism from two such teachers, who reworded and simplified the sets they used.

There seemed to be little significant difference between the responses of those who used the different sets of criteria, although the written comments about the Auckland set are slightly more astringent than those about the Christchurch set.

#### Specific responses to the experience of using grade related criteria

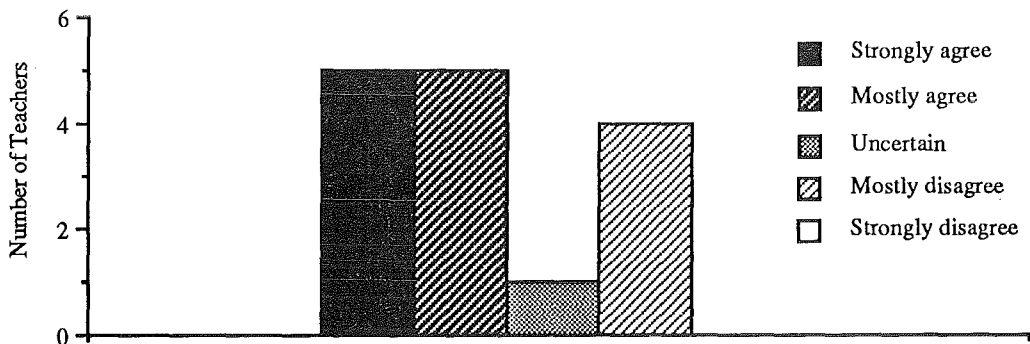
Teachers were asked to respond to a number of statements related to the use of grade related criteria. They are summarized in Figures 5 to 11.

There was much agreement with the statement that grade related criteria are appropriate for teaching and assessing drama (Figure 5). Whatever the level of difficulty experienced by triallists, most felt that moving towards a system of grade related criteria was a good thing. Those who supported the idea did so strongly: "Levels of achievement enable learning goals to be set and students to know what skills they are focusing on", "Drama should have the same status and rigour as other subjects - [The use of grade related criteria] helps objectivity", "I found that using the criteria really helped me to focus on what I was assessing".



**FIGURE 5** *That grade related criteria are suitable for teaching and assessing drama*

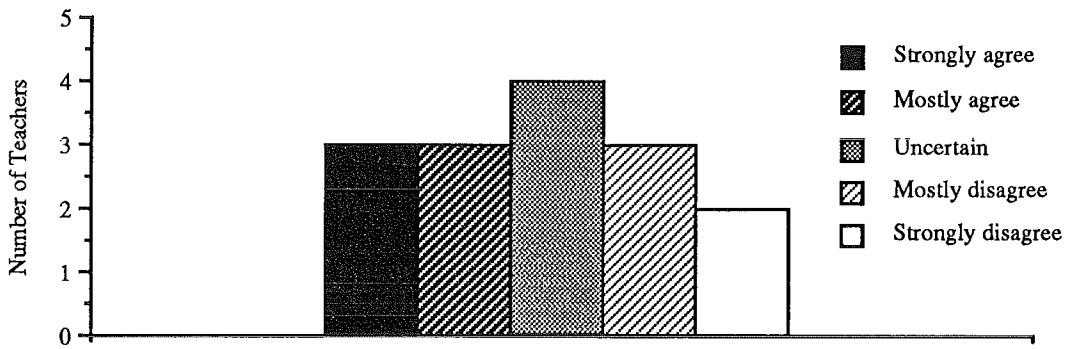
However, in the responses to the following statements it is clear that there is less consensus on the wording, format and organisation of the sets of criteria trialled in the project. Ten agreed, and four disagreed, with the statement that teachers would readily understand the criteria (Figure 6).



**FIGURE 6** *That the set of grade related criteria used would be readily understood by teachers.*

The written comments reflected concerns about the forms of language of the trialled sets, the amount of experience the individual teacher had of using grade related criteria in any form, and the amount of preparatory work and training which had to be undertaken for their valid application. One who agreed with this statement felt that "teachers are becoming increasingly aware of this type of assessment". On the other hand, those who disliked the existing wording expressed their criticism trenchantly: "What I used in term one was hopeless... the language was far too complex... wording too awkward, too specific, with too much jargon".

Predictably, the level of favour with the wording considered from the students' point of view (Figure 7 overleaf) was less than for teachers, reflecting the greater demands for simplicity which learner-based statements must reflect if they are to be understood.

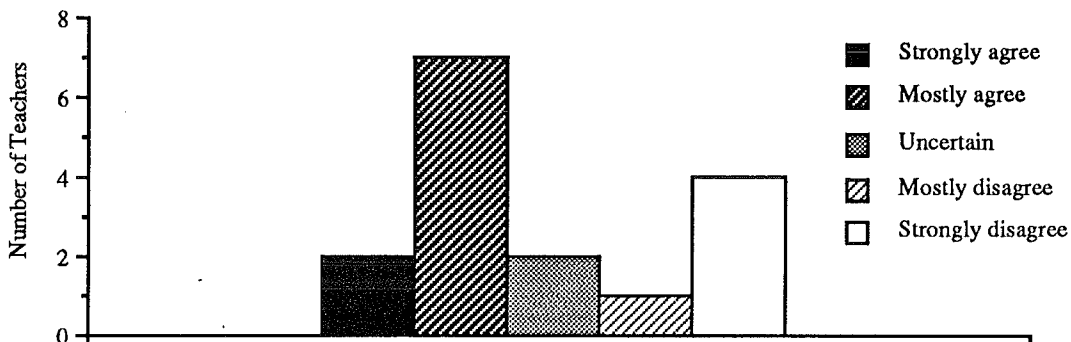


**FIGURE 7** *That the set of grade related criteria used would be readily understood by students.*

Although none of one respondent's "students... expressed any concerns" and others felt that the need for further explanation was a good feature of the criteria because "it helps students clarify their own goals, and gives them meaningful targets to aim at"; some plangent criticism was levelled towards the existing wording, which was described as "far too complex", "confusing", and depending for comprehension too much "on the individual [student's] language skills".

Those aspects which are more practical, and therefore measurable, were more easily understood, but the less behavioural aspects proved opaque, being more difficult to quantify and define. Simplification of the wording would be a solution to some of these difficulties, according to a number of participants.

Perceptions of whether or not grade related criteria created administrative problems were interestingly varied (Figure 8), reflecting, perhaps an imprecise question, but also the variation from school to school in assessment, professional support and administration procedures.



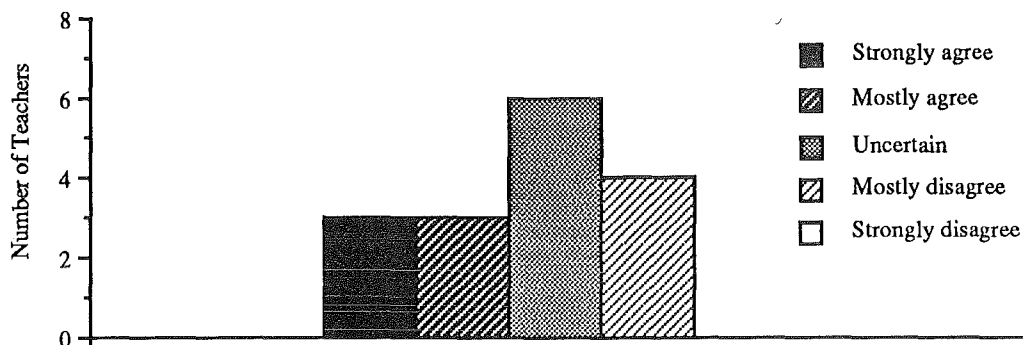
**FIGURE 8** *That the use of grade related criteria created no administrative problems.*

Nevertheless, nine teachers agreed either strongly or mostly, almost twice the number who disagreed. Practical problems - the amount of written assessment, the number of pieces of paper the system requires - were uppermost in some respondents' minds, while the broader issues of integrating an achievement based system of assessment with the norm-referenced framework of Sixth Form Certificate Drama were key matters for others.

One wrote that "the paramount problem is having to use the descriptors to generate marks to make a norm-referenced list", while another had no problems: "My school accepts my decisions. I rank the students and apply for grades. There are a few difficulties in translating

from [grade-related] levels to a percentage". A clear inference of support for the idea of making the sixth form award a truly achievement based one, could be taken from the responses.

The largest individual group of respondents was uncertain about whether or not grade related criteria would be readily applied by teachers in a consistent way (Figure 9).



**FIGURE 9** That grade related criteria would be applied by teachers in a consistent way

Where a problem with was perceived to exist, it centred on the *interpretation* of the statements used in the criteria. Those who are removed from contact with fellow-teachers felt this difficulty keenly: "As I am a teacher in isolation,... this assessment is necessarily more subjective". One considered that the criteria in their existing form were "too wordy and open to interpretation", another that "discussion and contact between teachers is needed to come to commonly-accepted standards".

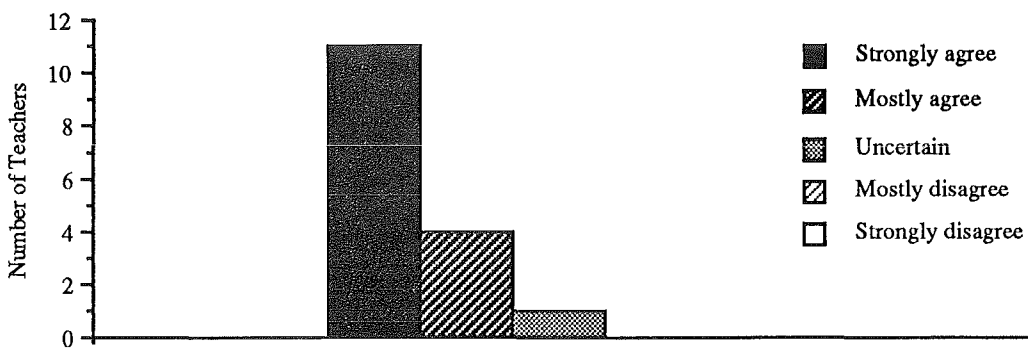
One respondent put forward the interesting view that the more technical and detailed the criteria used in the trial were, the more exact could be their use. He considered that it would be difficult to ensure the consistent use of generalised and non subject-specific criteria. This conflicts with the common suggestion that the criteria should be simplified, reflecting the challenge facing all writers of criteria; of how to convey the "specialness" of their subject without using prohibitively "specialist" language.

This point is taken up in "An Evaluation of the Sixth Form Certificate English Moderation Trial":

In achievement-based assessment, it is important that the criteria reflect all the objectives of the curriculum. The main danger is either producing too many criteria for practical application or in wording the criteria in ways that are too general or 'fuzzy' to be clearly interpreted... To avoid the danger of the criteria being too broad or fuzzy, it became clear that supporting materials (explanatory notes, definition of terms, exemplars, assessment tasks, etc) are essential as mechanisms to define key terms and provide explanations and illustrations of the skills being described in the criteria. (Gilmore, 1991, 89 - 90.)

This finding from the English trial has important messages (which feature in the recommendations) for the future process of developing the formalised set of grade related criteria for drama.

Some of the ambivalence of respondents to the previous statement explains the very strong support expressed for teachers liaising with each other to ensure they are using grade related criteria consistently (Figure 10 overleaf).

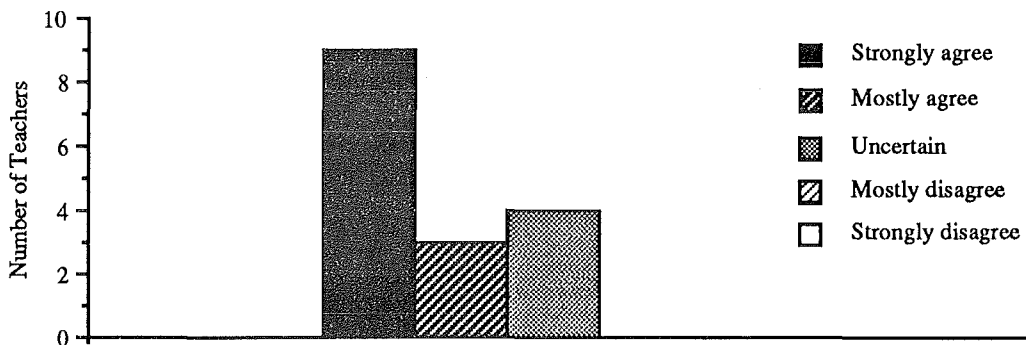


**FIGURE 10** *That grade related criteria would require liaison among teachers for them to be used in a consistent way*

The process of working in a collegial manner, sharing ideas, assessment resources and methods was vigorously endorsed: "absolutely", "it would be very productive", "a support and discussion group is a must!", "standard ideas need a standard interpretation". These opinions were as common to those who had taken part in a satellite group as to those who had worked alone.

Those reservations which were expressed had to do with the practicality of the meetings, and how much time it would involve. It is appropriate here, perhaps, to note why some teachers approached at the start of the project were reluctant to take part. An Auckland member of the New Zealand Association for Drama in Education declined to take part in the trial because the resources of the Research Affiliate Scheme did not allow for the provision of teacher relief. She stated that the group to which she belonged had "always supported the principle that curriculum development and assessment development work should be fully funded and paid for by the Department of Education/Ministry of Education". This matter is discussed in the recommendations.

Those who had taken most active part in the trial strongly agreed that grade related criteria would require worked exemplars, resource material and explanatory notes to enable them to be used consistently (Figure 11). "Point me in the direction of the perfect exemplar" wrote one, while another declared "there is a desperate need for this kind of material. The problem about drama is actually being able to write it down on paper". Many considered it a logical extension of liaison between teachers, essential to the inter-school moderation of grades, and the standardised use of the criteria.



**FIGURE 11** *That grade related criteria would require worked exemplars, resource material and explanatory notes to enable them to be used in a consistent way.*

## Section 4: The effects of grade related criteria on curriculum and classroom practice

### Curriculum

Teachers were asked whether or not the grade related criteria trialled provided an adequate coverage of the draft national course statement. The kinship between individual Sixth Form Certificate Drama courses and the draft national course statement is a loose one, more like a marriage of convenience than a blood-relationship. A number of teachers had referred to it only briefly in establishing their own courses, some professed complete ignorance of it, and the reaction "I stick to my own statement which has been approved by the Ministry" was not uncommon: among this group, none found any difficulty moulding the criteria to fit the course statement. However, all 12 of those familiar with the national course statement seemed happy with the relationship between it and the criteria they used in the trial.

Two related questions were posed- whether or not the grade related criteria could be applied flexibly enough for teachers to run their courses as they wished, and whether their use required significant change to their courses. As might be expected, they elicited almost a mirror-image response. Ten agreed with the first statement, and the same number disagreed with the second. Conversely, four disagreed with the first statement, and five agreed with the second. Those happy that the criteria could be applied flexibly obviously did not need to undertake radical course reconstruction. However, most participants who commented felt that they had been led by the criteria to be more critical and evaluative of their own programmes. One statement - "Grade related criteria pointed out imbalances in my own course" - was echoed by those of others.

Even teachers who were confident about the construction of their own courses felt, as one wrote, that the use of the criteria "just made me more aware of what I was doing". And where changes had to be made, they were characterised positively: "[grade related criteria] result in a totally different focus on learning".

Eleven respondents agreed that the use of grade related criteria led to more effective assessment, while only two disagreed. The work which has gone into the trial has been justified by this degree of consensus, something confirmed by the written comments: "Yes, because the students had the grade related criteria in their books from week one and knew what was being looked for", "most definitely - students and teachers are much more aware of what is being assessed and the various levels of achievement that are possible. There is much more striving by student and teacher", "it has sharpened up my grading process", "this [form of assessment] is more truthful, realistic and easier for students to see the results of their input", "I was able to be much more specific in my assessments rather than largely using impression marking".

The degree of specificity of the trialled criteria appealed to many participants, although a caution was sounded by one writer: "Grade related criteria made explicit the basis on which the students were judged, but the [judgements made under the] old forms of assessment would have been pretty much the same".

Twelve respondents felt that the use of grade related criteria lead to more effective reporting to students, while two disagreed. The way in which students were informed of their progress and final level of achievement was clearly a good feature of the trial to most participants, for similar reasons as those expressed above: "Yes. I'm about to write profiles for my 19 students. My summaries of their strengths will draw directly on the grade related criteria descriptors", "Their words were already there to help with what needed to be said. Also it was an outside judgement which the students knew was being applied elsewhere in the country too", "Discussions are more specific".

Nine agreed, and four disagreed, that the use of grade related criteria led to more effective reporting to parents. By-now familiar criticism was voiced of the wording of the criteria. It

would seem that teachers did not necessarily quote the criteria verbatim, but modified them according to need. "For parent reports [the original form] started to sound too airy-fairy", "Parents are not *au fait* with this type of reporting". They were commonly used as guidelines for reports, rather than providing the exact wording.

The challenge for the next stage in their development - the wording of a new set of criteria - will lie in finding the balance between being general enough to be understood, and detailed enough to have meaning for the subject.

A number of other effects of the use of grade related criteria on respondents' teaching of the curriculum were noted, especially the amount of effort it takes to set up a new programme of assessment. One respondent felt there was "so much more work to do in preparing task and assessment sheets without any training". Conversely, the good effects, which included "a clear direction for students with better objectives and learning outcomes", "letting students know in advance what expectations are for them makes it easier for them to prepare", and helping a teacher to "look at the curriculum, assess what it is I need to teach and concentrate on to achieve a result!" were a powerful incentive for some teachers to use the criteria.

Naturally enough, those Sixth Form Certificate Drama teachers who ran courses at other levels of the school had most to say about the effect of their experience of grade related criteria on drama programmes at other levels in the school. The success of the trial is reflected in their intention to apply the criteria - or simplified versions of them - in assessing their other classes: "It's given me a focus for producing assessment for juniors", "I used it with my seventh form and they appreciate the reference comments they get", "the spillover effect in F3 - F5 drama has already begun", "they are being used at HSC and F5 level, and next year with the F3 and F4 classes", "I'd like to see the criteria developed for a F7 Bursary course".

### Classroom Practice

There was considerable agreement that grade related criteria encouraged better teaching (11 "yes", 3 "no") and learning (10 "yes", 3 "no"), for the reasons like those articulated in earlier answers: "It should and it will", "More awareness of goals", "it brought the grading process into clearer focus", "it gives the teacher a focus on what to look for in a drama class".

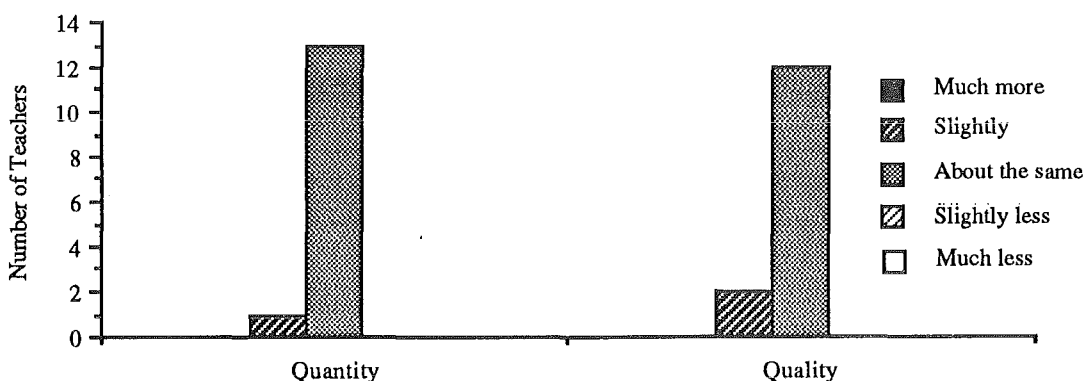
One respondent was emphatic in her support: "Most definitely. Students were much more aware of the shifts they needed to make because I would focus on the aspects and ask them to predict what would happen then ask what they needed to do to improve. This was done physically on an achievement line in the room - all very honest. It worked well."

In ten out of the fifteen courses the balance of skills and knowledge required of students remained unchanged under the trial.

Opinion diverged a little more on the effect of grade related criteria on student motivation. Some teachers were very keen on the results: "Yes, especially in the areas which were more practical - the [students] could readily improve and they all did", "the motivation was better because students could see what was required and how it would be assessed", "they were more aware of where their grade would come from"; others less sure. Some of them felt that drama students, being quite highly-motivated already, had been little-affected by the change. One comment read "I can honestly say that the class of '91 was very much like the previous four ones - enthusiastic, keen to get on with the subject, and not very concerned with how it is being assessed".

The effect of grade related criteria on the quality and quantity of work students are required to do is charted in Figure 12. For most teachers, both the quantity and quality of work students were required to do remained unchanged when 1991's trial group was compared with those taught in earlier years.





**FIGURE 12** *The extent to which the use of grade related criteria changed the quantity and quality of work students are required to do*

A number of benefits were seen to accrue to teachers who had trialled the grade related criteria. Greater direction to planning was mentioned by one writer, easier assessment by another, who suggested that it was the result of the increased amount of preparation required. The same theme was expressed by others who also felt that it made assessment easier or more exact: "[because] it has helped me frame clearer goals and assessment tasks", "I'm able to break down a task into its component parts more readily", "[it's given me] more confidence in the relevance, balance and consistency of my assessments, the creation of a more balanced course, assessment targetted more to objectives", "clarity of thought, ability to mark more objectively, to explain marks more, to have a balanced programme", "it brought the grading process into clearer focus", "more organised and fairer assessment", "Requires more preparation, but the added planning makes assessment much easier".

The response to the suggestion that students have benefitted from an assessment programme using grade related criteria was overwhelmingly positive, showing a close connection to the support explicit in other answers: "They appreciate the more open, less mysterious style of assessment", "higher student achievement, [students] more focused on the aspects, motivation level higher, greater self-determination", "helps students chart their course more accurately", "confidence in marks given, ability to challenge marks, more guidance for improvement", "being able to see how they are performing and exactly which skills are developed and which need more attention", "Goals are clearly defined, levels of skill established, and students know what is expected of them", "clearer insight into what's required of them".

It is interesting that one teacher answered "[the students] have enjoyed being part of an experimental process organised by the University of Canterbury as it made them feel important". This answer unwittingly contains a useful caution to accepting unreservedly the findings of the questionnaire expressed so far in this report. Any intervention conducted as a part of a research programme can have a positive effect on those taking part, regardless of the specific nature of the research: something which needs to be borne in mind when assessing the validity of this project.

Among the disadvantages for teachers of using grade related criteria, lack of time is consistently mentioned: "Time-consuming. It requires close liaison with others", "few resources, huge time commitments and a feeling that I was at sea with what I was doing", "time required to make up marking guides, along with lack of expertise in doing so", "time taken to grade and record, uncertainty at times as to whether or not I've done the right thing, sheer terror that the final marks won't be easy to translate!", "time".

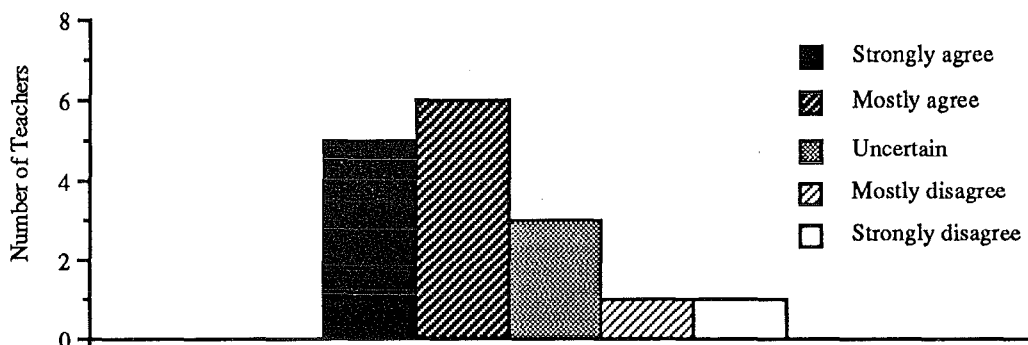
The complaint expressed elsewhere of having to operate an achievement based assessment within a normative system resurfaced: "We are still only playing at grade related criteria when the current norm-referenced system still operates". Specific problems which could have been clarified in group discussion also cropped up: "it's sometimes hard to differentiate between

grade descriptions eg does anyone do anything always? What's the difference between understands and clearly understands?" On the other hand, one teacher found it difficult to list disadvantages: "I haven't found any. It did take time and effort setting it up - but it's great".

Disadvantages to students of an assessment programme using grade related criteria reflected a similar range of concerns as the previous comments: "Given the norm-referenced framework for Sixth Form Certificate grades, a student could legitimately say 'It doesn't matter if I strive for high grade related criteria, I'll still end up with a grade six, for most of my class weren't particularly high in the School Certificate stakes'", "aspects were rather too dense and sophisticated, too many and the students got a bit lost", "unless grade related criteria are carefully presented, students find the ideas confusing and simply turn off", "little difference. They do feel safer, though, with the old form of assessment, and see this as a fairly subjective judgement".

### The future of grade related criteria

Most teachers either strongly or mostly agreed that all drama teachers would respond positively to the use of grade related criteria (Figure 13). The few written comments included the reservations clearly stated elsewhere about the existing wording of the criteria.



**FIGURE 13** *That all drama teachers would respond positively to the use of grade related criteria*

Without exception, respondents strongly (eleven) or mostly (five) supported the suggestion that inservice training would be required for drama teachers to enable them to use grade related criteria successfully: "it's essential, plus regular follow-up", "I feel I would be lost without having had the group discussions".

The benefits of grade related criteria were seen by all teachers to outweigh the initial increase in administration, assessment and teaching workload which their introduction entailed.

"Questionnaire fatigue" which had led to increasingly brief comments being made in response to the last few questions was now shrugged off as respondents stated in painstaking detail the kind of support (in terms of materials, personnel, resource book etc) which would be required for grade related criteria to be used successfully. Common requests were:

- a moderation panel and establishment of moderation procedures

"Each area should have its own drama panel which meets regularly, preferably in school time, when drama classes can be observed in action. We desperately need the reinstatement of a national co-ordinator whose task it is to keep all SFC drama teachers in touch with developments", "resource person who could help with problems, in each locality and at least [be] in contact with everyone by phone".

- ❑ inservice training

One respondent supported this strongly, adding "that teachers go through the process is really important, [they should cover the] general philosophy of achievement-based assessment". Another considered that "the most important assistance would be in the form of courses where we go through the assessment process", and there was lively support for "classroom visiting, interschool observation and recording" and its associated "peer assessment - seeing other teachers use [criteria] successfully in a real classroom situation".

- ❑ a network of specialist advice

"Help from expert teachers" was sought, as well as from "advisors". "Meetings with other teachers" provided essential "support".

- ❑ a comprehensive resource book

The resource book should include "samples", "task sheets", "assessment guides", "report samples", "layouts of grades", "mark sheets" and related material.

- ❑ a set of exemplars of student achievement at different grade levels, perhaps in video form.

One teacher felt that this was necessary "so that students know how to get the best grades", another that in a practical subject, "videos demonstrating grade five performances in particular skills" would be especially useful.

### Preferred form of moderation

The form of moderation teachers would prefer, were achievement based assessment eventually introduced for drama, is not a matter dealt with in any depth by the project (as it really represents a later stage in the use of grade related criteria). However, it seemed useful to gauge responses to a very important area of the eventual use of grade related criteria. Most teachers thought that some form of moderation would be necessary, with the strongest support stated for consultation between teachers in neighbouring schools (Figure 14 ).

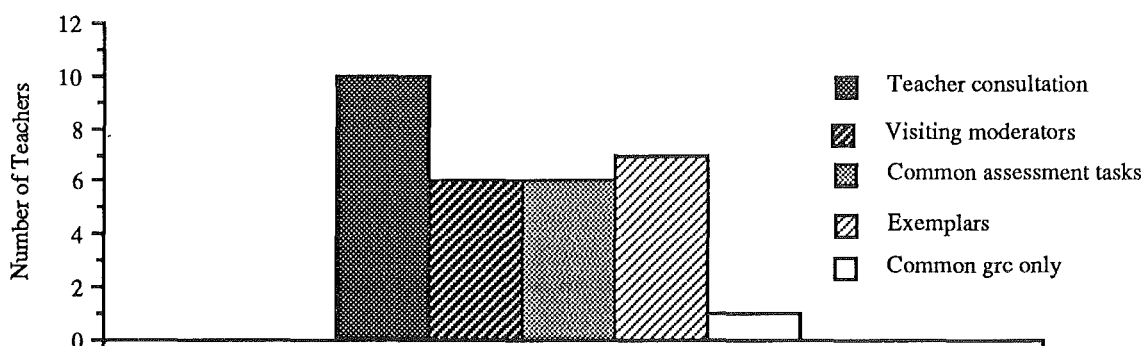


FIGURE 14 Preferred form of moderation

One teacher considered that "'teachers in neighbouring schools' sounds informal. They need the status of a formal panel, with an appointed panel leader, responsible to a national co-ordinator". A national moderator was called for by several writers, although one felt that such "co-ordination between schools is very difficult". If grade related criteria are to be used in the future, a system of moderation will be essential. Considerable thought must be put into this topic, based on the extensive Ministry experience of moderating other practical subjects.

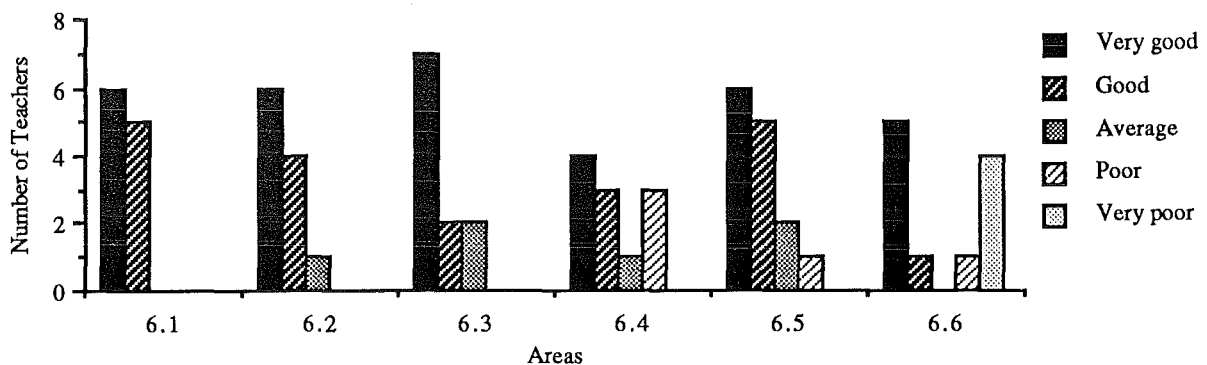
## Satellite group meetings

These occurred at least five times in 1990, during the development of the criteria, and also in 1991, when two a term were recommended to keep group members informed about the progress of the trial and continue writing task sheets using general criteria applied to specific assessment activities. Satellite groups operated in Auckland and Christchurch for the two years, and in Wellington for 1990.

Eight of the 15 respondents had taken part in satellite group meetings - although five more who did not return questionnaires had participated to some degree in them as well. All the teachers who indicated a response to the question about benefits of group meetings felt that they would be a useful basis for future training. The major benefits of group meetings were said to include: "Company, a chance to think, a sense of achievement", "discussion of drama", "sharing problems, resources, supporting group members' efforts, encouraging trying new ideas and sharing them".

## Section 5: Evaluation of areas of the development project.

Teachers were asked to evaluate a number of areas relating to the research development project. These are summarised in Figure 15.



**FIGURE 15** Evaluation of areas of the project

- 6.1 Quality of information offered: initial letter of invitation, mailouts, etc.
- 6.2 Quality and usefulness of the resource booklet.
- 6.3 The use of audio and videotapes to supplement written material.
- 6.4 Amount of information shared about overall progress of project.
- 6.5 Value of the project in your continuing professional development.
- 6.6 Value of the project in making contact/becoming aware of neighbouring teachers of drama.

There was enthusiastic support for most aspects of the operation of the development project, although some reservations were expressed about the amount of information shared about the project's overall progress: a reflection of the limited number of exemplars provided by participants in the middle term of 1991.

Some teachers made very little contact with neighbouring drama teachers because there were none, especially in provincial areas. However, the general reaction, and timbre of the written comments, was gratifyingly positive, testifying to the professional growth resulting from a project which has depended so heavily on the dedication of a large group of teachers.

## Discussion

The quality of teacher involvement in the trial was satisfyingly high, both in terms of number of teachers participating actively, their sustained effort over a long period of time, and the inherent value of their contributions to the process of writing, trialling and evaluating the criteria. The questionnaire responses contain thoughtful, specific and perceptive evaluation of the project, and the tenor of the emendations justifies the project's decision to draw on the experience of all teachers who wished to take part.

My belief that it is wrong to consider that only a few selected drama teachers are guardians of the lamp of knowledge - experts in their field - would seem to be confirmed by the trial. The contribution of those with long experience of teaching drama has indeed been crucial to the project's completion, but so, too, has the input of those newer to the subject.

The responses of the participants often reveal the sense of achievement which was felt in the amount of professional growth which was made, whether as a member of a satellite group or for activity undertaken alone. Reflection and analysis are easily squeezed out of the daily routine of drama teaching, but they are indispensable to the maintenance and development of a new subject.

A very high degree of approval for the development of criteria as an assessment tool was evident from the responses to the 1991 part of the trial, although reservations were expressed about the wording of the existing sets. Many detailed suggestions for the effective introduction of grade related criteria into the teaching of drama were made, and teachers expressed a high level of satisfaction with their own involvement in the project.

Drama teachers operate under considerable pressure, given their widespread involvement in theatre production, which devours time at a rate which is arguably greater than for any other "extra-curricular" school activity. It would therefore have been desirable to provide some compensation by way of meeting time. From my experience of this trial, funding for teacher relief (for the twin purposes of teacher training and the ongoing development of task design) is critical to the successful introduction of achievement based assessment on a national scale. This matter is discussed in the recommendations.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSIONS

The imagined "chaos of disparate realities" proved illusory. Although there is clearly no single approach to teaching Sixth Form Certificate Drama, project participants found little difficulty in communicating across the barriers of their own experience, philosophy and teaching environments.

These elements were commonly held to be important in Sixth Form Certificate Drama courses.

- self-expression,
- performance art (student-centred, this element concentrates on the performer, and includes voice and movement),
- technical skill,
- knowledge,
- analysis and appreciation,
- the use of language in its receptive and expressive forms.

On them, a national set of grade related criteria should be based.

The specific project objectives of developing, trialling and evaluating two parallel sets of grade related criteria were achieved, and in the teacher evaluation, substantial support for this method of assessing drama was the result. Although reservations were expressed about the wording of the draft sets, grade related criteria were seen by drama teachers as a valid and valuable tool in assessment.

Emphatic support was given for their future development at a national level. However, there were concerns about the practicality of their introduction. These concerns apply both to the immediate task of developing grade related criteria, but also to the long-term implications of their use.

Inservice training done in time provided by the funding of teacher relief was seen as the foundation on which all future changes in assessment should be built - the phase of writing and trialling a national set of criteria, the establishment of interschool moderation, initial training and continuing professional development of all drama teachers.

Further specific suggestions to be acted on include the commissioning of a comprehensive resource book, videos of assessment exemplars, and a programme of public information so that the changes to assessment be widely understood.

All project participants were teachers currently in employment, and their comments naturally reflect this. However, preservice training should not be ignored. Although a number of Colleges of Education provide some drama in education courses for their trainees, there is as yet no postgraduate diploma or degree course in drama in education. Given the growth in drama throughout the school system, such a lack should be remedied.

The recommendations which follow are intended to be of use in the future development of achievement based assessment for drama.

## **Recommendations**

1. That a single set of grade related criteria be written to apply at a national level, based on the work done in this project.
2. That this set of criteria be written simply, but still be specific enough to satisfy the differing emphases of the Sixth Form Certificate Drama courses throughout the country.
3. That the process of writing and trialling the criteria provide for the input of teachers from throughout the country.
4. That inservice training be provided on a continuing basis for teachers to learn how to use grade related criteria in the assessment of drama, and that teacher relief funding be allocated for this.
5. That a system of moderation for achievement based assessment in Sixth Form Certificate Drama be developed and thoroughly trialled before its introduction.
6. That a comprehensive resource book be developed for guiding teachers in the consistent application of grade related criteria. Such a book would include worked exemplars for assessment activities, task sheets which include applied criteria, report profiles, student records, common assessment tasks, and explanation of the agreed moderation procedure.
7. That an assessment video be created, containing trialled exemplars of student achievement at different grade levels.
8. That panels of expert teachers be established for each region of New Zealand, providing professional guidance and support in assessment for their colleagues.
9. That a programme of public information be established for achievement based assessment, and the use of grade related criteria, to explain to parents and employers the shift in assessment procedure and philosophy.
11. That Colleges of Education include in their drama in education courses training in achievement based assessment practices.
12. That the feasibility of a diploma or degree course in drama in education be explored.

## GLOSSARY

### ACHIEVEMENT BASED ASSESSMENT

Assessing student performance in relation to specified criteria.

### AGGREGATION

Combining assessment results to give a final grade for a particular aspect, or combining the aspects to give the necessary global mark required for the existing end-of-year SFC award.

### AIM

A teacher intention. Typically uses "grand" language to encompass the broad themes underlying the curriculum.

### ASPECT

A discrete component which derives from course objectives. One set of criteria is developed for each aspect.

### ASSESSMENT

The measurement of student performance.

### ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

The most basic level of grade related criteria in action: assessment activities, with associated marking schedules and student information, which employ grade related criteria in a way integral to their construction and operation.

### CURRICULUM DRAMA

Drama taught within the formal school timetable.

### DRAMA IN EDUCATION

A general term encompassing all drama experience in an educational setting. It has four main divisions:

- 1 drama as a learning medium (applicable to any subject).
- 2 drama as a form of self-expression (as in the approach of Dorothy Heathcote).
- 3 drama as a performance or theatre art.
- 4 drama as a body of knowledge (with its own conceptual framework).

### EVALUATION

Making judgments about the effectiveness of a process or activity or course - eg of alternative teaching approaches in relation to course aims and objectives.

### FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

A form of assessment which is used to determine progress through the year, intended to provide the student with information on a continuing basis about his or her progress.



## GLOBAL MARK

Derived from the balanced and weighted grades the student has achieved through the year, this mark is used for the means analysis which the school operates across the full sixth form group to determine how that year's pool of Sixth Form Certificate grades is to be apportioned.

## GRADE RELATED CRITERIA

Descriptions of achievement which define standards at different grade levels. They operate as behavioural benchmarks for describing a student's performance.

## NORMATIVE OR NORM-REFERENCED ASSESSMENT

Assessment which ranks the student against his or her peer group.

## OBJECTIVE

A desired learning outcome. Learner-based, behavioural (and therefore observable), derived from an aim.

## REPORTING

The provision of information about a student's achievements. Can include reports, student profiles, testimonials, references and certification.

## STUDENT PROFILE

A form of end of year reporting which spells out achievement levels more clearly than a single comment or grade. Particularly useful for fulfilling the conflicting aims of existing Sixth Form Certificate assessment: profiles can report in detail on the student's achievement at particular levels, while a separate global mark is used to allot the grade pool applicable for Sixth Form Certificate.

## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

A form of assessment which is used to determine final marks for the year's course.

## TASK DESIGN

The process of applying the generalised criteria to particular assessment activities. This often involves rewording the original statements to fit the specific activity being assessed.

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## APPENDIX 1: INITIAL LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

(Sent to all schools in New Zealand offering SFC Drama)

### GRADE-RELATED CRITERIA IN SIXTH FORM CERTIFICATE DRAMA

A RESEARCH AFFILIATE PROJECT  
Education Department University of Canterbury

5 June 1990

Dear SFC Drama Teacher

I have been granted a position under the Research Affiliate Scheme run by the Education Department, University of Canterbury, to undertake research during 1990 into the assessment of Sixth Form Certificate Drama.

I would be very keen to have your help and involvement in the exercise.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The development, trialling and assessment of grade-related criteria for use in Sixth Form Certificate Drama courses.

#### PROJECT TIMETABLE

Presentation of position paper at New Zealand Association for Drama in Education regional meeting, Hagley High School library, Wednesday 27 June, 4.00pm - 5.30 pm.

Four weekly meetings in the third term, 1990.

Two assessment meetings in the third term, 1991.

At the introductory meeting, a position paper will be presented setting out reasons for introducing grade-related criteria into the teaching of drama for Sixth Form Certificate, and placing the project within a context of similar developments in other areas of the curriculum. The purpose of this paper will be to answer the questions "What are grade-related criteria?", "Why should we use them?" and "How do we go about writing them?"

The third-term meetings will involve a panel of local teachers developing a set of grade-related criteria for trialling at Sixth Form Certificate level in 1991. Other panels may operate on a satellite basis elsewhere in the country.

Concluding meetings at the end of 1991 will assess the criteria and modify them where necessary.

## PROJECT INVOLVEMENT

This could happen in three ways:

1. Taking part in the second and third-term meetings, and trialling and assessment of criteria.
2. Taking part in a satellite group located outside Christchurch. This would work best where there were several teachers in one area who would like to work together on the project, participating fully in its progress.
3. Taking part in only the trialling of the criteria.

Should you be interested in any of these options (2 and 3 would, I imagine, be of most interest to teachers unable to come to the Christchurch meetings), or would like to know more about the project, I would be very pleased to hear from you.

Yours sincerely

Paul R Bushnell

Phone (03)667-001 Extension 8208

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**YES, I AM INTERESTED IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT ON GRADE-RELATED CRITERIA IN SIXTH FORM CERTIFICATE DRAMA.**

NAME

HOME ADDRESS

PHONE

SCHOOL

FAX NO (IF KNOWN)

I WOULD PREFER:

OPTION 1

OPTION 2

OPTION 3

MORE INFORMATION

SEND TO PAUL BUSHNELL, RESEARCH AFFILIATE, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT,  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY, PRIVATE BAG, CHRISTCHURCH.

## APPENDIX 2: POSITION PAPER

POSITION PAPER  
GRADE-RELATED CRITERIA  
IN SIXTH FORM CERTIFICATE DRAMA

PAUL R. BUSHNELL  
27 JUNE 1990

In this position paper, I've set myself the challenge of answering three questions about Grade-related criteria:

1. What are they?
2. Why should we introduce them into the assessment of Sixth Form Certificate Drama?
3. How do we create them?

I'd like to answer the first question very briefly, and then return to it in some detail after considering some of the broader reasons for supporting the introduction of grade-related criteria, or GRCs, as they are known.

Grade-related criteria are a form of **achievement based assessment**, a method of arriving at grades which describe what the students can do rather than simply comparing them with their peers.

We'll come back to this definition later, but I'd like to now examine the second question I mentioned: Why should we introduce GRCs into the assessment of Sixth Form Certificate Drama?

A blunt response would be one which asked "Are you happy with the current system of assessment?", to which the reply from most drama teachers would be "No." The existing system of assigning grades based on a notion of "general ability" derived from the best of the students' grades gained for School Certificate (because drama does not exist as a School Certificate subject) is generally considered of doubtful educational validity.

We also know that the end-of-year grades which we habitually assign in fact bear little relationship to what actually goes on in a course, and that the system lends a quite spurious air of legitimacy and authenticity to the grades it produces. Furthermore, it takes on trust the quality of the teaching and learning which it is meant to accurately describe.

The consequence? A school with a high number of academically successful students will be able to offer better SFC grades than another with fewer such

students, regardless of the quality of the teaching or learning which their two SFC Drama courses offer.

If we want an end to the unfairness of School Certificate moderation of Sixth Form Certificate grades, then we must have some other form of assessment ready to take its place. I don't believe that these changes will be long delayed, for the educational hierarchy has, in the current jargon, been "signalling" its intentions with some clarity.

It is very likely that some form of achievement based assessment will be instituted for all Sixth Form Certificate courses. The Board of Studies has declared its support for for this form of evaluation, and the *Learning and Achieving* report into assessment, curriculum and qualifications proclaims it as the way of the future.

The subject of my research affiliateship at the University of Canterbury - which involves developing grade-related criteria for SFC drama - is based to some degree on the methods already used to produce them for SFC Geography, Physical Education, Practical Art, Biology, French, Home Economics and English. Similar developments are currently in train for Art History.

The tired old phrase about New Zealand once having led the world, does, in fact, seem to have some merit in this small area, for my bibliographical research has uncovered a limited range of relevant literature published on this area of assessment. Of the huge outpouring of educational writing done in the United States, very little deals with any kind of achievement based criteria, and the only significant schemes of work I have seen come from the Scottish education system. There, for example, Grade-related criteria are used in the assessment of senior English.

So, we are ploughing in a relatively new field. (That shouldn't alarm us unduly, however. We shouldn't fear that grade-related criteria are the evaluative analogue of open-plan classrooms, or other educational innovations acknowledged with hindsight to be ill-considered and poorly-resourced.) The Ministry of Education has commissioned the creation of Grade-related criteria in the subjects already noted, and is offering cautious support to this research scheme, with the proviso that the New Zealand Educational Qualifications Authority will make an executive decision about the likely form of schemes of assessment in SFC Drama.

However, neither the NZQA nor the Ministry will have any direct involvement in this endeavour - placing the onus on those of us participating to make it rigorous, substantial and comprehensive enough to ensure that it will not simply be shelved.

That possibility is a risk with independent projects of this kind - yet it also allows us the freedom to, for example, look critically at the draft course statement objectives and to expand them as necessary while writing the criteria which flow from them. I'm sure that it will happen in our local group, and I welcome the

opportunity it presents for us to exert some influence on the shape of future course statements for SFC Drama.

(It may be that this influence will come too late to affect the publication of the course statement in its final form. It is, you may recall, currently a draft only. So be it. Our deliberations will still not have been in vain, for they might play their part in the next revision, and perhaps the modelling of the seventh form course statement.)

The general thrust of this development fits in with the shift - as lethargic as any tectonic plate moving beneath the earth's crust, but just as profound, and just as permanent - from comparing students' achievements with those of their peers to measuring students' achievements against a set of established bench-marks; in other words from norm-based to achievement based evaluation

Before I begin to talk in detail about what grade-related criteria are, and how we write them for drama, I'd like to consider a few more general reasons for introducing them.

The first relates to the still-tenuous hold which drama has on the formal curriculum. Those of us lucky to teach in schools which encourage the performing arts may be running courses from the third to the seventh form, which is the situation at Linwood High School, where over 200 students are taking dance or drama as part of their formal timetable. Not everyone is as fortunate, however.

As I see them, grade-related criteria are a form of buttressing vital for a relatively new subject. Developments in education in the United Kingdom show clearly that there is a risk for Drama in not being well enough prepared to withstand the winds of political change. (This view may be unnecessarily alarmist, for a newspaper recently reported that the opposition spokesman on education Lockwood Smith proposed the abandonment of scaling of School Certificate marks, as he is under the impression that doing this will "make all fair." Nevertheless, we cannot afford to be complacent about the future of an activity which, a decade ago, was not a part of the curriculum.)

Two years ago, while in the United Kingdom on a study tour organised by the British Council, I saw something of the demoralisation of the secondary schools at first hand. The Inner London Education Authority, which had built, staffed and co-ordinated some quite superb drama centres, at which lively, scholastically-challenging and engaging courses were run for schoolchildren from all over London, was being dismantled and the future of the centres was uncertain.

Although drama had achieved widespread popularity as a subject which was taught in many schools, it had nevertheless failed to "sell itself" to the public, which proved quiescent when the Thatcherite demands for "greater accountability" and a "return to the basics" began to bite. The result? With the accretion of power to the centralised bureaucracy, and the adoption of a core curriculum mandatory for all secondary schools, drama was exiled into the

wilderness of "optional subjects," its hours in the school week severely curtailed, and thereby removed from most students' experience.

Not, like French, one of the core subjects because it was perceived as "soft" and lacking in intellectual and educational rigour, drama now occupies a minor place in the curriculum, jostling for attention with a number of other hitherto "legitimate" subjects. Given the concurrent establishment of teacher contracts stipulating the number of contact hours with students, even out-of-class drama, formerly an important part of the life of many schools, has withered and often died out completely.

This has happened in part because those responsible for the development of drama as a subject had allowed the public, and politicians, the luxury of ignorance. The lesson of the United Kingdom is clear. If drama is to have a permanent place as a subject in New Zealand schools, it must feature ways of assessment which manifest the quality of the teaching and learning the subject entails.

We all know from personal experience what richness drama offers, how it creates a sense of shared endeavour, how it challenges individuals to grow at their own rate while still being part of a group, how it leads students to learn deeply about themselves and others, how it involves all participants in striving together for standards of excellence, how it intensifies learning about other ages, times, and civilisations, but we have still to convince others of the same viewpoint. They will not be our students, nor probably their parents, but they do include those who consider drama merely "showing-off," or a form of curricular self-indulgence diverting attention from the proper business of schooling.

We should not assume that such critics have appeared on the scene only recently. In 1854 a newly-published novel opened with the following speech, addressed to a room of schoolchildren and their schoolmaster:

'Now what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them. This is the principle on which I bring up my own children, and this is the principle on which I bring up these children. Stick to Facts, sir!'

The extract is taken, of course, from Dickens's *Hard Times*.

The second more general reason for introducing grade-related criteria has to do with fashion. There are cycles in educational theory and practice. It seems axiomatic that every generation of teachers and administrators feels the need to devise "new" ways of organising the schooling of the children for whom they are responsible.

If this is one of those facts of life, we have to acknowledge it. We must, for the sake of our subject and students, adopt the current jargon, invest it with our meaning, and use it. To do so is not to be hypocritical, but to be responsive to the



winds of change as they eddy through the educational system. It does not mean that we are compelled to distort or misrepresent our subject, just to present it in ways which are difficult for the beady-eyed "back to the basics" brigade to counter.

This process is neither terrifying nor difficult.

Think, for example, of the current concern for "accountability" - drama courses which have a performance component are by their nature subject to close scrutiny, to accountability of the most public kind. Think of "transparency" - an economic term which can be fruitfully applied to methods of assessment predicated on teaching which involves a close relationship between objectives, activities and assessment. It will not be difficult for drama teachers to isolate a wide range of activities for assessment, for that of course is how the subject is practised.

Think, also, of the educational prescription which requires that we take note of three areas of learning in our course modelling and assessment: knowledge, skills and attitudes. Drama does not share the difficulty of the "harder," more academic subjects in adopting this way of looking at itself. The emphasis on **process** which is integral to any teaching of this practical subject means that creating grade-related criteria for all three areas will be absorbing, rather than impossibly arduous.

So, in summary, grade-related criteria are the means to several ends, which in their turn can be viewed as either intrinsically good, or necessary evils for the protection and nurturing of the subject. Either way, they are probably going to be the future method of assessment, and it will be politically advantageous for it to be noticed that we are "up with the play" in their creation and use. The idealists and the cynics among us thus have equally compelling reasons for approving of the project.

You've heard me use the term grade-related criteria a lot during this talk, so you'd be justified in wanting to know what they are in some detail, now that I have set out the arguments for their introduction.

They are, as I have mentioned, a form of **achievement based assessment**. Despite the slippery nature of this phrase, the idea underlying it is straightforward. It means comparing the students' achievement against a standard, rather than what their peers can do.

The idea is straightforward, but putting it into practice is a little less so. Because much of our experience of assessment is norm-based, from the days when we sat PATs in primary school to this month's job of providing rank lists to help "sort the kids out" for grades used in the writing of senior reports, much of our thinking about assessment follows the same path.

Under the new system, our energy will go not into ensuring a "good spread" of marks for the year, but rather into using **benchmarks** for assessment. The words they contain will clearly define what achievement means at a particular level - in

fact, clearly enough to be used and understood by the student, teacher, parents and potential employers.

Grade-related criteria provide those benchmarks.

Instead of a report form stating that Anna has received a middling grade, signifying that compared with other students she has performed "competently" in Biology, it would define one of the skill areas of the subject as the aspect "Planning an Investigation." That being so, she would receive the following comment:

*GRADE 3: Presents a developed plan which could lead to a feasible investigation*

Were she a bright student with flair for this skill, she might get a different comment:

*GRADE 5: Presents a logically developed plan which is feasible, shows flair and ingenuity, and leads to a valid conclusion.*

If, on the other hand, she had limited skills at planning an investigation, she might elicit this comment:

*GRADE 1: Presents some ideas which could lead to a plan.*

Faint praise, indeed! A glance at some of the criteria for other subjects will suffice to show how they grow in complexity as they rise through the grades. Home Economics, which treats the interpretation of results as one of the aspects of knowledge provides the following "run" for this aspect:

*GRADE 1: Makes basic interpretations of results.*

*GRADE 2: Makes basic interpretations of results and identifies relationships.*

*GRADE 3: Interprets and analyses results, identifies relationships, and draws conclusions consistent with the facts.*

And so on with grades four and five. In a similar way, the aspect of personal performance in Physical Education is defined as the five steps you see in the list shown, from:

*GRADE 1: Can perform simple prescribed skills.*

to

*GRADE 5: Can complete a range of complex skills showing a wide repertoire of actions which are consistently performed with technical accuracy.*

In English, the aspect of roleplay provides the following range of grades:

*GRADE 1: Begins to use skills.*

*GRADE 2: Begins to combine skills for a purpose and adopt role.*

*GRADE 3: Combines skills for a purpose and adopts role with occasional lapses but achieves some credibility.*

*GRADE 4: Combines a variety of skills for a purpose, sustains role and achieves credibility.*

*GRADE 5: Shows confidence and control in integrating a variety of skills for a purpose, sustains a commitment to role and achieves thorough credibility.*

So, we've looked at some examples of what Grade-related criteria are. I'd like now to sketch the possible process of developing them, so that you know what your commitment is, should you wish to be on the panel of local teachers working on the project. It will involve meeting over a series of four two-hour meetings in the third term.

#### **SHOW TRANSPARENCY:**

<b>SIXTH FORM CERTIFICATE DRAMA DRAFT COURSE STATEMENT OBJECTIVES</b>
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**STUDENTS SHOULD:**

1. SHOW GROWTH IN SELF-CONFIDENCE, INDEPENDENCE, ADAPTABILITY AND SELF-DISCIPLINE IN A RANGE OF SITUATIONS
2. GAIN CONFIDENCE IN SHARING, EXPLORING AND EXPRESSING THEIR OWN IDEAS
3. USE LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS, BOTH VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL, WITH INCREASED CONFIDENCE AND COMPETENCE IN A RANGE OF CONTEXTS
4. SHOW CULTURAL AWARENESS AND TOLERANCE, AND AN ABILITY TO WORK CO-OPERATIVELY, IMAGINATIVELY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH OTHERS
5. SHOW UNDERSTANDING OF AND SENSITIVITY TOWARDS THE CONTRIBUTION OF BOTH MAORI AND PAKEHA TO THE CULTURE OF AOTEAROA
6. EXPLORE AND DEVELOP NON-RACIST AND NON-SEXIST ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR
7. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN LEARNING
8. EVALUATE THEIR OWN LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT
9. PRESENT COURSE WORK IN A VARIETY OF APPROPRIATE AND IMAGINATIVE FORMS
10. PARTICIPATE IN AND UNDERSTAND THE PROCESSES OF DRAMA AND DRAMATIC CONVENTIONS SUCH AS IMPROVISATION AND WORKING IN ROLE
11. WATCH, APPRECIATE AND EVALUATE LIVE PERFORMANCES

At the first meeting, we look critically at these objectives from the draft course statement, seeking to define what the essential **aspects** of the course are.

Now, I don't want to overburden you with the jargon used in this process, but it is worth, I think, clarifying this word **aspects**. The technical definition of an aspect is:

*a discrete component which derives from course objectives.*

That seems more or less clear - the abstraction of a single idea from the objectives - but we should note that there is more than one way of getting from the course objectives to the aspects:

1. *One objective becomes one aspect.*
2. *One objective becomes a group of aspects.*
3. *A group of objectives becomes one aspect.*
4. *A feature common to a group of objectives becomes one aspect.*

I don't want to muddy the waters unduly by exploring this topic at any depth now, as it is really of importance only to the panel, but it will need to be considered by those taking part.

So, let's presume that the aspects have been formulated at that first meeting, for which the participants have prepared by reading the background package which I am gathering together now. With say, nine, aspects, derived from that first meeting, we split that list into the areas of knowledge, skill and attitudes, dealing with each area at a separate meeting.

#### **SHOW TRANSPARENCY:**

<b>DEVISING CRITERIA</b>
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1. **FIRST CATCH YOUR ASPECT. THEN IDENTIFY ITS KEY FEATURES (BEST DONE BY THINKING OF WHAT VERY CAPABLE STUDENTS CAN DO).**
2. **RANK THEM IN A HIERARCHY.**
3. **POSITION THEM AS COLUMN HEADINGS ON THE TOP LINE OF THE SCAFFOLD IN ORDER OF INCREASING DIFFICULTY.**
4. **DEFINE AT WHAT GRADE LEVEL EACH OF THE FEATURES WILL BE LOCATED AND WRITE THEM IN.**
5. **REPHRASE WHAT YOU READ ACROSS EACH LINE AS A SENTENCE.**
6. **BINGO! YOU NOW HAVE GRADE-RELATED CRITERIA FOR AN ASPECT. TAKE A BOW AND GO ON TO THE NEXT ONE.**

EXAMPLE OF A SCAFFOLD

ASPECT: RESEARCH SKILLS

	RESEARCHES INFORMATION	PROCESSES INFORMATION	DRAWS CONCLUSIONS	EVALUATES RESEARCH METHOD USED
GRADE ONE	SOME INFORMATION	ATTEMPTS TO PROCESS		
GRADE TWO	INFORMATION	PROCESSES	DRAWS	
GRADE THREE	FROM RELEVANT SOURCES	APPROPRIATELY	↓	
GRADE FOUR	↓	APPROPRIATELY AND LOGICALLY	VALID CONCLUSIONS	
GRADE FIVE	↓	↓	↓	EVALUATES

At each of those meetings, we set out a **scaffold** for each aspect, to help us establish what the different grades for the criteria mean. The first task is to identify the key features of the aspect, best done by thinking of what very capable students can do. After ranking them in a hierarchy, we position them as column headings on the top line of the scaffold in order of increasing difficulty.

The scaffold example shown deals with the aspect *Research Skills*. Along its top runs the list *Researches Information, Processes Information, Draws Conclusions, and Evaluates the Research Method Used*. This is a hierarchy, with each behaviour building in complexity on the one which precedes it along the line. That done, we define at what grade level we would expect each of the behaviours to be located, and write them onto the grid. Then, by reading across each line, we have the the basis for a sentence defining what each criterion means at each grade.

Grade One tells us that the students can

*research some information and attempt to process it.*

Grade Two that they can

*research information, process it, and draw conclusions.*

Grade Three that they can

*research information from relevant sources, process it appropriately and draw conclusions.*

Grade Four that they can

*research information from relevant sources, process it appropriately and logically and draw valid conclusions.*

Grade Five that they can

*research information from relevant sources, process it appropriately and logically, draw valid conclusions, and evaluate the research methods used.*

So you see the pattern.

By the end of the four weeks of meetings, I will have assembled all the material relevant into a reference file, and give it to each participant in the scheme with copies of the criteria formulated for them to trial in their schools during 1991. (A separate but related package to do with assessment procedures, curriculum issues and resources mentioned during the course of the discussions will accompany this.)

After the trial of the criteria during 1991, the panel will reconvene in the third term to evaluate the scheme and rephrase the criteria as necessary. The concluding report I write, which will contain copies of the criteria, will be issued to all participants as well as the Ministry of Education, The Board of Studies, the NZQA, and NZADIE for publication in abridged form. Full credit will be given to those who have participated in the project, and letters of thanks will go to the principals and Boards of Trustees so that they are aware of the work the panel members have done.

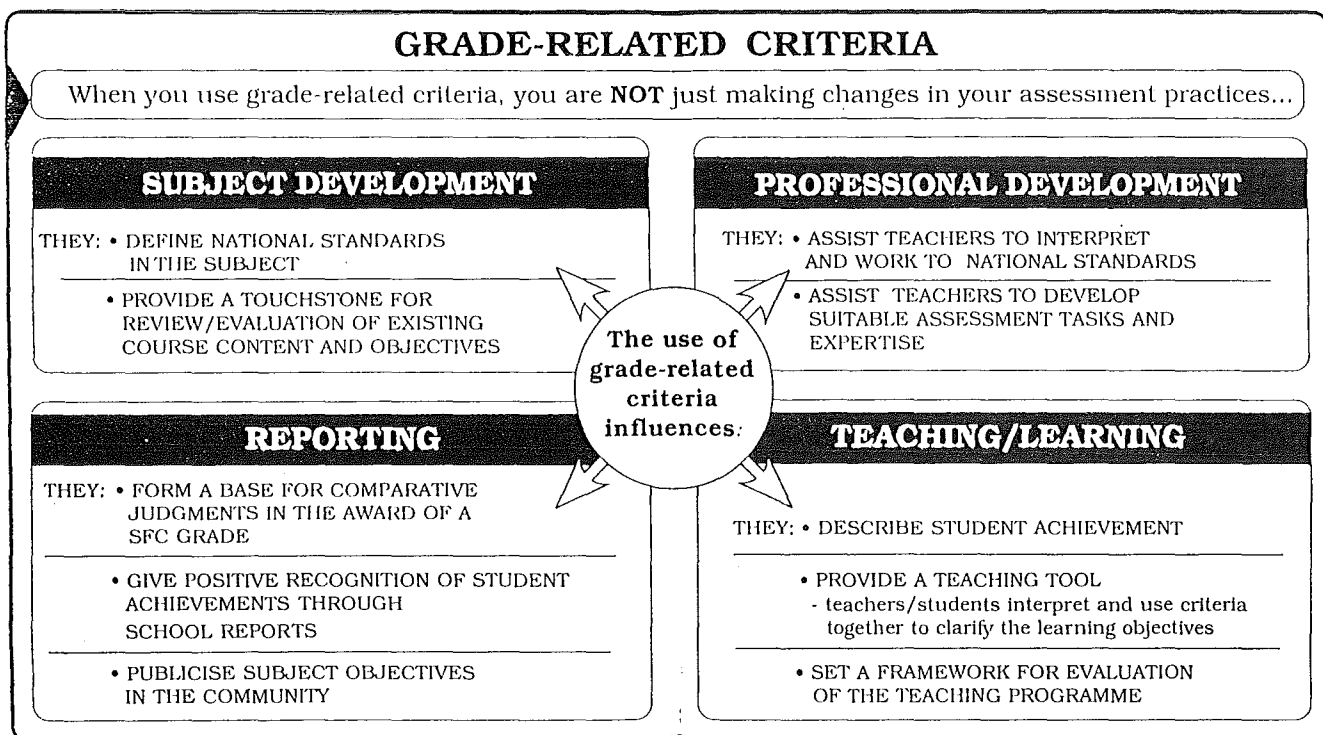
Now, despite my rather one-sided advocacy, I must concede that grade-related criteria are not the answer to all our prayers. At present, Sixth Form Certificate is still locked into a system of norm-referenced assessment, and until that changes, the use of GRCs will simply mean that we are providing more information than the qualification needs, and in a form which it cannot use.

However, although one could rightly draw from the use of GRCs an inference of philosophical opposition to norm-referenced assessment, the two can in practice co-exist. They do so in all the subjects like Physical Education and Home Economics mentioned earlier. Taking part in this trial will not mean jettisoning all our familiar evaluation procedures, but simply sharpening and defining many of them more clearly, for our benefit and that of our students.

I've mulled over the possible effect of this project to narrow and restrict a subject one of whose strengths is its diversity and flexibility. Won't GRCs institute a repressive orthodoxy? I think it might happen, but as long as the objectives are broad enough - and they certainly are in the draft course statement - the criteria they generate should be inclusive enough for all teachers to use them happily, whatever the individual emphases of their courses.

In any case, teachers will be free to use the criteria in their own way for assessment. If, say, the skills area is particularly important in one course, there is no reason why its teacher shouldn't give that area greater emphasis during assessment. Grade-related criteria are simply a tool to make evaluation more accurate, and are not necessarily prescriptive. If there is any shift towards greater uniformity as a result of their introduction, it's more likely to be a result of the informal sharing of ideas which will inevitably occur among teachers getting together and talking about the subject.

**SHOW TRANSPARENCY:**



Grade-related criteria should ideally provide a means of measuring attainment so consistent that any teacher would define a given level of achievement in the same way. Well, it's pretty obviously unrealistic to expect that to happen, but I firmly believe that it's still worthwhile trying to write them. Although there will be problems in their development and use, they do not outweigh the benefits. I see these including:

a higher profile for the subject as the process confers greater academic respectability on it.

a clearer idea for the teachers involved in the project about what each of us is doing in drama, achieved through the requirement to analyse and discuss what aspects of drama are central to its assessment

recognition by the Ministry of Education that teachers of drama outside Auckland have something to contribute.

more assured, specific and valid report comments.

a sense of shared endeavour as we work together on something to do with a subject we love.

I hope that you will feel interested enough to join the project. I think that the meeting schedule is a realistic one, but not too onerous. Its activities are quite tightly focused, involving a happy blend of philosophical thinking and practical talk, and unlikely to descend into mere waffle. If you wish to take part, I'd be very happy to receive a return from you. Thank you.



### **APPENDIX 3: SIXTH FORM CERTIFICATE DRAMA COURSE STATEMENT**

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Students should:

show growth in self-confidence, independence, adaptability and self-discipline in a range of situations.

gain confidence in sharing, exploring and expressing their own ideas.

use language and communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, with increased confidence and competence in a range of contexts.

show cultural awareness and tolerance, and an ability to work co-operatively, imaginatively and constructively with others.

show understanding of and sensitivity towards the contribution of both Maori and Pakeha to the culture of Aotearoa.

explore and develop non-racist and non-sexist attitudes and behaviour.

take responsibility for their own learning.

evaluate their own learning and achievement.

present coursework in a variety of appropriate and imaginative forms.

participate in an understand the processes of drama and dramatic conventions such as improvisation and working in role.

watch, appreciate and evaluate live performances.

## APPENDIX 4: THE AUCKLAND SET OF CRITERIA

### A1: PERSONAL SKILLS

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Demonstrates some growth in confidence.	Demonstrates <i>increasing</i> confidence <i>and is sometimes flexible.</i>	Demonstrates <i>steady growth</i> in confidence <i>and self-discipline;</i> sometimes demonstrates <i>initiative</i> and flexibility.	<i>Demonstrates confidence</i> and self-discipline; <i>frequently</i> demonstrates initiative and flexibility.	Demonstrates confidence and self-discipline; <i>consistently</i> demonstrates initiative and flexibility.

### A2: GROUP SKILLS

GRADE ONE	GRADE TWO	GRADE THREE	GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE
When directed, works as part of a group; is sometimes receptive to the ideas of others; recognises the issues of culture and gender.	<i>Is able</i> to work as part of a group, and is sometimes receptive to the ideas of others <i>and</i> the issues of culture and gender.	<i>Willing</i> to work as part of a group and <i>sometimes shows facilitative skills,</i> usually <i>accepts the contributions</i> of others and <i>shows awareness</i> of the issues of culture and gender.	<i>Works well</i> in group situations and <i>often</i> shows facilitative skills; usually <i>accepts, builds on</i> skills; <i>and is sensitive</i> to the contributions of others <i>and</i> to the issues of culture and gender.	<i>Works effectively</i> in <i>all</i> group situations and demonstrates <i>highly-developed</i> facilitative skills; <i>always</i> <i>accepts,</i> builds on and is sensitive to the contributions of others; <i>addresses</i> the issues of culture and gender sensitively.

### A3: LANGUAGE SKILLS

GRADE ONE	GRADE TWO	GRADE THREE	GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE
Makes some attempt to communicate, begins to use language appropriately, and understands text with guidance.	<i>Shows increasing confidence</i> in communicating, <i>occasionally uses</i> language appropriately and <i>usually understands text.</i>	<i>Usually</i> communicates <i>competently,</i> uses language appropriately <i>in a number of contexts,</i> <i>sometimes listens actively,</i> and <i>usually interprets text and subtext.</i>	<i>Communicates</i> competently, <i>usually</i> uses language <i>effectively and confidently</i> in a range of contexts, <i>usually</i> listens actively, and <i>interprets</i> text and subtext <i>competently.</i>	Communicates <i>with skill and , perception,</i> uses language effectively and confidently in a range of contexts, listens actively and interprets text and subtext <i>perceptively.</i>

*Language* includes:

- verbal and non-verbal language
- written and spoken language
- structure - linking ideas, reasoning, coherent argument
- register - language appropriateness, audience awareness, sensitivity, (learns lines?).

Although this aspect may also be assessed in the English programme, it is a vitally important by-product of any drama course and a powerful reason for many pupils choosing a drama option.

#### A4: VOICE TECHNIQUES

GRADE ONE	GRADE TWO	GRADE THREE	GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE
Attempts to understand some ways of using voice.	<i>Has some understanding of, and attempts to demonstrate, some ways of using voice.</i>	<i>Usually understands and demonstrates appropriate ways of using voice.</i>	<i>Understands and demonstrates appropriate ways of using voice with some skill, capturing the essence of the rôle.</i>	<i>Clearly understands and demonstrates appropriate ways of using voice, with some skill and creativity, consistently capturing the essence of the rôle.</i>

*Rôle* includes: person, object, or atmosphere.

*Voice* includes: tone, breath control, clarity of diction, emphasis, expression, volume, pitch, pace, pausing, projection, appropriate register.

#### A5: MOVEMENT TECHNIQUES

GRADE ONE	GRADE TWO	GRADE THREE	GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE
Attempts to understand some ways of using movement.	<i>Has some understanding of, and attempts to demonstrate, some ways of using movement.</i>	<i>Usually understands and demonstrates appropriate ways of using movement.</i>	<i>Understands and demonstrates appropriate ways of using movement with some skill, capturing the essence of the rôle.</i>	<i>Clearly understands and demonstrates appropriate ways of using movement with some skill and creativity, consistently capturing the essence of the rôle.</i>

*Movement* includes: body movement, gesture, facial expression, use of space, fluency, timing, rhythm, posture, stillness and motion, pace, dynamics.

#### A6: AWARENESS AND USE OF DRAMATIC CONVENTIONS

GRADE ONE	GRADE TWO	GRADE THREE	GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE
Attempts to understand some elements of dramatic conventions.	<i>Has some understanding and attempts to use elements of dramatic conventions.</i>	<i>Usually understands and uses appropriate elements of dramatic conventions.</i>	<i>Understands and uses appropriate elements of dramatic conventions with some skill.</i>	<i>Clearly understands and uses appropriate elements of dramatic conventions, with skill and creativity.</i>

This aspect deals with the development of a range of skills and techniques with which the student learns to explore his or her own ideas.

Dramatic conventions include:

improvisation, rôle play, flashback, asides, narration, voice-over, soliloquy; theatre style - melodrama, absurdist, surrealist, etc. and related theatre-historical matters.

## A7: RESEARCH

GRADE ONE	GRADE TWO	GRADE THREE	GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE
Demonstrates limited knowledge and identifies components.	Demonstrates <i>some</i> knowledge, identifies <i>some</i> major components, <i>demonstrates some thought</i> .	Demonstrates <i>adequate</i> knowledge, identifies <i>major</i> components, demonstrates <i>reasonable</i> thought processes and <i>develops some ideas</i> .	Demonstrates <i>comprehensive</i> knowledge, identifies <i>and usually analyses</i> major components, demonstrates <i>thorough</i> thought processes, and develops some <i>sound</i> ideas.	Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge, identifies and <i>analyses</i> major components, demonstrates <i>innovative and perceptive</i> thought and develops <i>sound</i> ideas.

Research allows the student to explore the traditions, cultural bases and history of different forms of theatre.

## A8: RECORDING AND REFLECTION OF DRAMATIC PROCESS

GRADE ONE	GRADE TWO	GRADE THREE	GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE
Requires assistance, gives some personal reaction.	<i>Demonstrates some organisational ability, gives personal reactions.</i>	Demonstrates some <i>imaginative</i> and organisational ability, <i>thoughtfully evaluates</i> .	Demonstrates <i>imaginative, original</i> and organisational ability, <i>thoughtfully evaluates</i> .	Demonstrates <i>outstanding</i> imaginative, original and organisational ability, <i>perceptively and reflectively</i> evaluates.

This aspect relates to the writing of a record of the drama process.

## A9: TECHNICAL SKILLS

GRADE ONE	GRADE TWO	GRADE THREE	GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE
Attempts to use appropriate technical skills with guidance.	<i>Has some understanding of</i> and attempts to use appropriate technical skills.	<i>Usually</i> understands <i>uses</i> appropriate technical skills.	<i>Understands</i> and uses <i>with some competence</i> appropriate technical skills.	<i>Clearly</i> understands and uses <i>with some competence</i> appropriate technical skills.

This set of criteria is applicable to the following areas:

Managerial skills	Theatrecraft	Theatre conventions
Front of house	Design/produce/use	Design/produce/use
Publicity	Set	Masks
Prompt	Lighting	Puppets
Stagemanager	Sound	Clown
Director	Costume	
Producer	Makeup	
Choreographer	Props	
Musical director		

## A10: PERFORMANCE APPRECIATION

GRADE ONE	GRADE TWO	GRADE THREE	GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE
Gives information about the performance.	<i>Demonstrates some understanding and appreciation of performance.</i>	<i>Demonstrates understanding and appreciation of the genre and conventions of a performance, and begins to evaluate it.</i>	<i>Demonstrates understanding and appreciation of the genre and conventions of a performance, evaluates it showing some awareness of its purpose and content.</i>	<i>Demonstrates a high level of understanding and appreciation of the genre and conventions of a performance, evaluates it showing critical awareness of its content and purpose.</i>

This aspect could involve watching live performances in various modes such as traditional and contemporary Maori and European theatre, women's theatre. It should enable the student to reflect, through the means of a journal or specific assignments, commitment to the Performing Arts and critical perceptiveness.

## APPENDIX 5: THE CHRISTCHURCH SET OF CRITERIA

### B1: KNOWLEDGE OF THE DRAMATIC PROCESS

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Recognises some ideas and attempts to understand them.	Recognises some ideas, <i>understands</i> them <i>and some-times applies</i> them.	Recognises <i>a range</i> of ideas, understands them <i>and applies</i> them.	Recognises a <i>complex</i> range of ideas, <i>synthesises</i> them and applies them <i>appropriately</i> .	Recognises a complex range of ideas, synthesises them and applies them <i>appropriately and consistently</i> .

This refers to a continuum of knowledge from:

1. How a play is typically put on. Basic knowledge to do with the division of responsibilities backstage, how the rehearsal process operates, the relationship between actor and director, the transition from idea to actuality (covering the student's own experience of working with scripted and improvised performances), and the acquisition of a rudimentary stage vocabulary.
2. A deeper understanding about how the approaches of actors, directors, designers etc employing different methods may be dissimilar.
3. A comprehensive knowledge of how and why this varies in different periods of history, in different cultures, and for different forms of society.

And, as is fitting in a practical course, it is assessed by the student's ability to relate it to his or her own experience.

### B2: KNOWLEDGE OF DRAMATIC MODES AND GENRES

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Recognises some ideas and attempts to understand them	Recognises some ideas, <i>understands</i> them <i>and some-times applies</i> them.	Recognises <i>a range</i> of ideas, understands them <i>and applies</i> them.	Recognises a <i>complex</i> range of ideas, <i>synthesises</i> them and applies them <i>appropriately</i> .	Recognises a complex range of ideas, synthesises them and applies them <i>appropriately and consistently</i> .

Dramatic mode: Realism, Naturalism, Expressionism, Symbolism, Absurdism, Surrealism, Allegory, Poetic Drama etc.

Dramatic genre: Tragedy, Comedy, Tragicomedy, Musical, Melodrama, Farce, Improvised drama, contemporary Maori theatre, Epic theatre, well-made play, Feminist theatre, Satire, satyr play, Morality play, Mystery play, Miracle play, Burlesque, Masque etc.

This aspect covers text, which seems to be ignored by the draft objectives, but is broader, too. It includes, knowledge of theatre history, plays and playwrights, styles of theatre design, performance conventions, etc as a necessary part of knowing about the genre. In a drama course, it is essential that knowledge of Greek plays, for example, be informed by theatre history.

Assessable by the student's ability to identify and/or utilise this knowledge.

### B3: SKILL AT ROLE/CHARACTERISATION

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Begins to adopt rôle.	<i>Adopts</i> and <i>attempts to develop</i> rôle.	<i>Adopts, develops</i> and <i>portrays</i> rôle <i>with some credibility and sustains it some of the time</i> .	<i>Adopts</i> and <i>develops</i> rôle <i>fluently</i> , <i>portrays</i> it <i>with credibility</i> , and <i>sustains it most of the time</i> .	<i>Adopts</i> and <i>develops</i> rôle <i>fluently</i> , <i>portrays</i> it <i>with a high degree of credibility</i> , and <i>sustains it almost all of the time</i> .

As applicable to improvisation as scripted work, this skill is at the heart of drama, and can be assessed in those practical activities which involve acting. When used to assess scripted drama, it assumes growth in knowledge of text and subtext, objectives, super-objectives etc.

#### B4: SKILL AT USING VOICE

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Tries to communicate some ideas and feelings with voice.	<i>Communicates some ideas and feelings, and uses some vocal techniques.</i>	Communicates some ideas and feelings, <i>selecting from a range of vocal techniques and applying them to rôle or performance space.</i>	Communicates <i>ideas and feelings, selecting appropriately</i> from a wide range of vocal techniques and applying them to rôle and performance space.	Communicates ideas and feelings <i>effectively</i> , selecting appropriately from a wide range of vocal techniques and applying them <i>confidently</i> to rôle and performance space.

A specific skill area which is readily assessed from work done individually, as part of a group, and in performances for others. Note that we have eschewed "verbal communication" and similar phrases. Technical aspects of voice production do not depend on the use of words alone, and to tie the assessment to use of dialogue is too narrow.

This aspect could be applied to these elements of voice production:

breathing, articulation, projection, tonal colour, dynamics, variety and control of vowel sound, resonance, flexibility, characterisation and clarity.

#### B5: SKILL AT USING MOVEMENT

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Tries to communicate some ideas and feelings with movement.	<i>Communicates some ideas and feelings, and uses some movement techniques.</i>	Communicates some ideas and feelings, <i>selecting from a range of movement techniques, and applying them to rôle or performance space.</i>	Communicates <i>ideas and feelings, selecting appropriately</i> from a wide range of movement techniques and applying them to rôle and performance space.	Communicates ideas and feelings <i>effectively</i> , selecting appropriately from a wide range of movement techniques and applying them <i>confidently</i> to rôle and performance space.

A specific skill area which is also readily assessed. We felt that this should be a separate aspect from voice so that it can be treated as equally important. The two do not necessarily go together in any case.

This aspect could be applied to these elements of movement:

stance, flexibility, stamina, characterisation, sense of line and dynamics, support for breathing etc.

#### B6: TECHNICAL SKILL

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Shows some understanding of basic technical elements used in production and attempts to apply them.	Shows some understanding of <i>technical</i> elements used in production and <i>applies</i> them.	Shows a <i>wide</i> understanding of technical elements used in production and applies them, <i>solving some problems.</i>	Shows a wide understanding of <i>a range of</i> technical elements used in production and <i>consistently</i> applies them, <i>solving problems.</i>	Shows a wide understanding of a <i>sophisticated</i> range of technical elements used in production and consistently applies them, <i>anticipating</i> and solving problems.

Those parts of the dramatic experience which deal with things other than simply the actor. Applicable to skill in lighting, stage management, design, music and all the "backstage" areas. This set of criteria emphasises the way in which technical expertise is normally manifested: the ability to solve problems.

Assessment of this skill should take account of the two main ways in which it can be manifested: by reflecting deep knowledge of a single area (eg lighting) or wide and integrated knowledge of several areas (eg lighting, sound, music).

#### B7: SKILL AT EVALUATION

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Begins to observe/consider.	Observes/considers <i>and attempts to analyse.</i>	Observes/considers, <i>analyses and attempts to draw conclusions.</i>	Observes/considers, <i>analyses critically, and draws conclusions.</i>	Observes/considers <i>perceptively</i> , analyses critically <i>and in detail</i> and draws <i>justified</i> conclusions.

This set of criteria relates to the following range of activities:

- 1 The student's own performance.
- 2 The student's own performance as part of a group.
- 3 The performance of the student's own group as a whole.
- 4 The performance of another group in which the student takes no part.

Because it would be difficult to say that a student could *observe* the work he or she has done as an individual performer, the option of observe/consider has been used here. The aspect is equally applicable to self-analysis - a component central to the actor's reflective process - and to the critical awareness which is part of being an audience member. It allows the student to trace his or her own growth.

#### B8: ATTITUDE: CO-OPERATION

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
<i>Attempts to</i> recognise the contribution of others.	<i>Recognises</i> the contribution of others <i>and sometimes supports group activity.</i>	<i>Accepts</i> the contribution of others and <i>supports</i> group activity.	Accepts the contribution of others and <i>shows initiative and commitment</i> in group activity.	<i>Facilitates</i> the contribution of others, shows initiative, <i>consistently demonstrating a commitment towards</i> group activity.

This aspect deals with the group work which is an essential part of most drama activities, and tries to define what it means for a student to be willing to hear and welcome other viewpoints. *Facilitating* refers to welcoming the views of others, helping them to take part, giving positive feedback, clarifying points of view etc.

#### B9: ATTITUDE: PERSEVERANCE

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Tries to complete some activities when supervised.	<i>Completes</i> some activities <i>without supervision.</i>	Completes <i>most</i> activities without supervision, demonstrates self-discipline, <i>sometimes responding positively to extra challenges.</i>	Completes most activities without supervision, demonstrates self-discipline, <i>shows initiative and responds positively to extra challenges.</i>	<i>Consistently</i> completes activities without supervision, demonstrates self-discipline, <i>shows initiative, responds positively to extra challenges, and works beyond expectations.</i>



Self-discipline was a late addition to this set of criteria, as it was considered an important by-product of drama, and a prerequisite to success. Is its placement in this aspect ideal? Should it go somewhere else? Is it always related to perseverance?

**B10: ATTITUDE: SELF-CONFIDENCE**

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
Tries to accept challenges.	<i>Sometimes accepts challenges and can take risks to communicate ideas and feelings.</i>	<i>Accepts challenges, takes risks to communicate ideas and feelings, and can demonstrate dramatic presence.</i>	Accepts challenges, <i>repeatedly</i> takes risks to communicate ideas and feelings, and <i>frequently</i> demonstrates dramatic presence.	Accepts challenges, repeatedly takes risks to communicate ideas and feelings, and <i>consistently</i> demonstrates dramatic presence.

This aspect has been included in place of the aspect *initiative* originally listed because initiative seems to be covered by the upper levels of perseverance and co-operation, and because self-confidence is often cited as one of the side-effects of drama. For some students, it is an important factor in their choosing the subject.

## APPENDIX 6: QUESTIONNAIRE

(PLEASE NOTE THAT IN THIS COPY THE LAYOUT HAS BEEN COMPRESSED AND SPACE FOR COMMENTS REMOVED.)

<b>SECTION ONE BACKGROUND INFORMATION</b>
---

- 1.1. How many years' secondary teaching experience have you had?  
Less than one [ ]  
From one to five [ ]  
From six to ten [ ]  
From eleven to fifteen [ ]  
More than fifteen [ ]
- 1.2. How many years' experience have you had of teaching sixth form drama?  
Less than one [ ]  
From one to five [ ]  
More than five [ ]
- 1.3. Do you feel that your level of training and experience in assessment is adequate for the use of grade related criteria? YES NO  
If no, what extra training would you like?
- 1.4. What support or resources are available to you in making decisions about assessment (designing assessment tasks, applying GRCs, weighting and aggregating marks, reporting?)  
No support available. [ ]  
Research Affiliate Resource Book [ ]  
Colleagues at school [ ]  
Colleagues in group [ ]  
Drama advisor/s [ ]  
Officers of the Ministry [ ]  
Other (Please specify) [ ]
- 1.5. Was this support adequate during this year's trial? YES NO  
If no, what extra help would you have liked?

<b>SECTION TWO GRADE RELATED CRITERIA: USING THE LITTLE CRITTERS!</b>
---

- 2.1. Which set of grade related criteria did you use: SET A [ ]  
SET B [ ]  
A COMBINATION [ ]
- 2.2. If you selected a combination, please circle which ones you used.
- |       |    |    |    |    |     |
|-------|----|----|----|----|-----|
| SET A | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5  |
|       | A6 | A7 | A8 | A9 | A10 |
| SET B | B1 | B2 | B3 | B4 | B5  |
|       | B6 | B7 | B8 | B9 | B10 |

For the following questions, use the scale to indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements:

	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>[ ]</b>
	<b>MOSTLY AGREE</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>[ ]</b>
	<b>UNDECIDED</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>[ ]</b>
	<b>MOSTLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>MD</b>	<b>[ ]</b>
	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>[ ]</b>
2.3	Grade related criteria are appropriate for teaching and assessing drama.	SA MA U MD SD	[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
2.4	The set of grade related criteria which I used would be readily understood by teachers.	SA MA U MD SD	[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
2.5	The set of grade related criteria which I used would be readily understood by students.	SA MA U MD SD	[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
2.6	The use of grade related criteria created no administrative problems.	SA MA U MD SD	[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
2.7	Grade related criteria would be readily applied by teachers in a consistent way.	SA MA U MD SD	[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
2.8	Grade related criteria would require liaison among teachers for them to be used consistently.	SA MA U MD SD	[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
2.9	Grade related criteria would require worked exemplars, resource material and explanatory notes to enable them to be used consistently.	SA MA U MD SD	[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

<p><b>SECTION THREE</b>  <b>THE EFFECTS OF GRADE RELATED CRITERIA</b>  <b>ON CURRICULUM AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE</b></p>
--

**CURRICULUM**

- 3.1 Do the grade related criteria which you used provide an adequate coverage of the draft national course statement? YES NO
- 3.2 Could the grade related criteria which you used be applied flexibly enough for you to run your course as you wish? YES NO
- 3.3 Did the trial use of grade related criteria mean significant changes to your course?  
YES NO
- 3.4 Did the use of grade related criteria lead to more effective assessment? YES NO
- 3.5 Did the use of grade related criteria lead to more effective reporting?  
 3.5.1 to students YES NO  
 3.5.2 to parents YES NO
- 3.6 What other effects on your teaching of the curriculum have grade related criteria had?
- 3.7 How would your experience of grade related criteria at SFC level affect your teaching of drama programmes at other levels in the school?

**CLASSROOM PRACTICE**

- 3.8 Did grade related criteria encourage better teaching and learning?  
 3.8.1 teaching YES NO  
 3.8.2 learning YES NO
- 3.9 Did grade related criteria seem to affect student motivation?
- 3.10 Has the use of grade related criteria changed the quantity and quality of work required of students?
- 3.10.1 QUANTITY: Students are required to do:  
 much more [ ]  
 slightly more [ ]  
 about the same [ ]  
 slightly less [ ]  
 much less [ ]
- 3.10.2 QUALITY: The quality of students' work is:  
 much higher [ ]  
 slightly higher [ ]  
 about the same [ ]  
 slightly lower [ ]  
 much lower [ ]
- 3.11 Has the use of grade related criteria changed the emphasis on skills/knowledge required of students? YES NO  
 If yes, please explain in what ways.

- 3.12 What have been the benefits of an assessment programme using grade related criteria:  
 3.12.1 To you as a teacher?  
 3.12.2 To your students?

- 3.13 What have been the disadvantages of an assessment programme using grade related criteria:

- 3.13.1 To you as a teacher?  
 3.13.2 To your students?

<p><b>SECTION FOUR</b>  <b>THE FUTURE</b></p>
---

**For the following questions, use the scale to indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements:**

STRONGLY AGREE	SA	[ ]
MOSTLY AGREE	MA	[ ]
UNDECIDED	U	[ ]
MOSTLY DISAGREE	MD	[ ]
STRONGLY DISAGREE	SD	[ ]

- |     |   |    |     |
|-----|---|----|-----|
| 4.1 | All drama teachers would respond positively to the use of grade related criteria.   | SA | [ ] |
|     |   | MA | [ ] |
|     |   | U  | [ ] |
|     |   | MD | [ ] |
|     |   | SD | [ ] |
| 4.2 | Inservice training would be required for drama teachers to enable them to use grade related criteria successfully         | SA | [ ] |
|     |   | MA | [ ] |
|     |   | U  | [ ] |
|     |   | MD | [ ] |
|     |   | SD | [ ] |
| 4.3 | The benefits of grade related criteria outweigh the initial increase in administration, assessment and teaching workload. | SA | [ ] |
|     |   | MA | [ ] |
|     |   | U  | [ ] |
|     |   | MD | [ ] |
|     |   | SD | [ ] |
| 4.4 | What support (materials, personnel, resource book) would be required for grade related criteria to be used successfully?  |    |     |
| 4.5 | If achievement-based assessment is introduced for drama, what form of moderation would you favour?                        |    |     |
|     | Consultation among teachers in neighbouring schools   |    | [ ] |
|     | Visiting moderators   |    | [ ] |
|     | Common assessment tasks   |    | [ ] |
|     | Exemplars   |    | [ ] |
|     | Common grade related criteria only  |    | [ ] |

**SECTION FIVE  
GROUP MEETINGS**

- 5.1. Did your group meet regularly? YES NO  
 5.1.1 If yes, how often did you meet?  
 5.1.2 If no, what factors affected the regularity of meetings?
- 5.2. What were the major benefits of the meetings?
- 5.3. Would a regular group meetings help to provide future training in the use of grade related criteria? YES NO

**SECTION SIX  
EVALUATION OF RESEARCH AFFILIATE PROJECT**

Please evaluate the following areas of the research affiliate project.

- |     |  |           |     |
|-----|--|-----------|-----|
| 6.1 | Quality of information offered:<br>initial letter of invitation,<br>mailouts,etc.              | VERY GOOD | [ ] |
|     |  | GOOD      | [ ] |
|     |  | AVERAGE   | [ ] |
|     |  | POOR      | [ ] |
|     |  | VERY POOR | [ ] |
| 6.2 | Quality and usefulness of:<br>the resource booklet   | VERY GOOD | [ ] |
|     |  | GOOD      | [ ] |
|     |  | AVERAGE   | [ ] |
|     |  | POOR      | [ ] |
|     |  | VERY POOR | [ ] |
| 6.3 | The use of audio and videotapes<br>to supplement written material.                             | VERY GOOD | [ ] |
|     |  | GOOD      | [ ] |
|     |  | AVERAGE   | [ ] |
|     |  | POOR      | [ ] |
|     |  | VERY POOR | [ ] |
| 6.4 | Amount of information shared<br>about overall progress of<br>project.                          | VERY GOOD | [ ] |
|     |  | GOOD      | [ ] |
|     |  | AVERAGE   | [ ] |
|     |  | POOR      | [ ] |
|     |  | VERY POOR | [ ] |
| 6.5 | Value of the project in your<br>continuing professional<br>development                         | VERY GOOD | [ ] |
|     |  | GOOD      | [ ] |
|     |  | AVERAGE   | [ ] |
|     |  | POOR      | [ ] |
|     |  | VERY POOR | [ ] |
| 6.6 | Value of the project in making<br>contact/becoming aware of<br>neighbouring teachers of drama. | VERY GOOD | [ ] |
|     |  | GOOD      | [ ] |
|     |  | AVERAGE   | [ ] |
|     |  | POOR      | [ ] |
|     |  | VERY POOR | [ ] |

**SECTION SEVEN  
RESOURCE BOOK MATERIAL**

**When you send your questionnaire, please include with it anything relevant you have worked on this year. I would be particularly grateful for any copies of expanded criteria, assessment exemplars, worksheets, markbook layouts, report forms and yearplans to add to the material already received.**

**With your permission, I hope to include a selection of these resources in a resource book which I will edit, print and send to you before the end of the term.**

**If you have assessment resources in a other forms - video comes to mind - which you'd like to share, please do so as well!**

## APPENDIX 7: SCRIPT OF AUDIOTAPE GUIDE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello its Paul Bushnell here from the Education Department at the University of Canterbury. Before I begin on this brief guide to the questionnaire, I'd like to advise that you're best to undertake it after school, with your feet up, pen in one hand and a large gin or similar in the other!

Well first of all I'd like to thank you for being prepared to take part in this section of the research affiliate project into grade related criteria.

Your perceptions, opinions and reactions to the questions which are in the questionnaire are going to be very valuable. That applies not only to those people who have been taking part in the various groups around the country, but also to those of you who have been working on your own.

It also applies across the spectrum from those who have been working very intensively on the project, devising their own sets of criteria applied to assessment tasks, to those who received information but decided for one reason or another that it was not possible to put it into practice.

Those who have been most involved will probably have provide the most specific answers to the questions, but I'd warmly encourage you to respond as fully as you can, whatever your level of involvement to date.

All questions can be tackled by everyone, but for the section on group meetings, obviously of relevance to group members only.

Now for the questions. First, please don't feel appalled at the length of the questionnaire. Half an hour of your time is the most which can be expected - given the fact that you are very busy, that this is one more tasks among many at a time when the school year is very crammed, that you may have been inundated by a deluge of surveys this year, from the Ministry, from the NZQA and so on.

Having said that, I'd still hope to get answers which are as detailed as possible: that doesn't mean filling in all the blank lines, but answering fully those questions which you can. It's important that the final report, if it's going to be of use to anyone in the future, contain as much specific information as possible. So thanks for your time.

To go on now to the questionnaire itself.

What I'll do is talk about each section as a whole, then go through question by question, filling in information about each in turn. So what I suggest you do is just pause the tape where it suits, and write down your responses.

### SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

Questions 1.1 and 1.2 look at the profile of the drama teachers who are responding: information which, I suspect, doesn't exist elsewhere. 1.3 relates this closely to your experience of the trial this year.

1.4 A very brief response is all that's needed here: the area is dealt with in greater detail elsewhere.

1.5 If the amount of support available had an effect on your involvement, please note this in your comments. Again, it's dealt with in greater detail further on.

### SECTION TWO: GRADE RELATED CRITERIA: USING THE LITTLE CRITTERS.

For this a straightforward tick response is going to be quite valuable. Do add comments if you'd like to.



2.1 Which set of grade related criteria did you use? Set A or Set B? If you used one or the other exclusively, the answer's straightforward. However, if you used some criteria from one set and some from the other, please indicate which ones you used in the next answer.

2.2 This question applies both to those who undertook a full trial and those who may have used the material for just one section of their course. A brief comment on the reasons for your choice would be much appreciated.

The questions which come are more general, and relate to your experience of using the criteria this year.

2.3 Generally speaking, do you think it's a good thing?

2.4 and 2.5 Is the wording of the criteria clear? Are they coherent? Do they make sense? Would they be understood by teachers students?

2.6 A brief answer only is needed here, as it's expanded in later questions. Problems? Practical ones of time, etc, but also those relating to meshing an achievement based system of assessment into the existing norm-based system.

2.7 Can I clarify what I mean by consistency - not the ability to apply the criteria consistently across the single SFC Drama class which operates in most schools, but from one school, and teacher, to another.

2.8 and 2.9 The same comparison is being made here of consistency between schools and teachers - in fact it's the thorny old issue of moderation, I suppose. Can I also add, in brackets, that comments from any school which does run more than one SFC Drama class will be particularly valuable here. Please comment freely.

### SECTION THREE: THE EFFECTS OF GRADE RELATED CRITERIA ON CURRICULUM AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Now the really specific questions start - the ones which detail how grade related criteria have affected what you have done as a teacher.

3.1 This is straightforward, I hope.

3.2 is pretty closely related to 3.1. Were there any problems in fitting your course into the framework offered by the set of criteria you were trialling?

3.3 Trials of grade related criteria for other subjects suggest that it's not possible simply to plaster criteria over the top of existing courses and hope that they will adhere. I'm keen to find if your response has been similar.

3.4 I've left **effective** undefined: if you have any special comment to make, please do so. Here, and for 3.5 I should make a plea for you to use your own experience, but not be limited by it. Like me, you may have found real difficulty in organising the time to write a large number of assessment exemplars this year, applying the general criteria and rewriting them for the tasks which you had decided were to be assessed. I could have done many things a lot better in terms of using the criteria, but I still feel confident in making generalisations, and hope that you will too.

3.5 Reporting to students and also to parents. To students refers to the feedback which occurs throughout the year, and to parents it usually applies in the report forms and/or student profile generated at the end of the year.

3.6 This is a catch-all question for you to add anything you think important to the previous responses.