



Higher National Graded Unit specification

General information for centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HNC Contemporary Dance Performance. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Instruments should therefore reflect the key aims of the Award; to prepare candidates for professional performance work. Emphasis should be placed on the candidate's performance skills, with the additional ability to demonstrate technical ability and creativity. Centres wishing to use another type of Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing justification for change for validation.

Graded Unit title: Contemporary Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

Graded Unit code: F1Y2 34

Type of Graded Unit: Project

Assessment Instrument: Practical Assignment

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Purpose: This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following specific aims of the HNC Contemporary Dance Performance Award:

◆ **Intermediate Technical Ability**

- provide candidates who have dance potential with the opportunity to gain a qualification
- provide a highly practical training, the core of which will focus on classical ballet and at least one contemporary dance technique
- improve and extend technical ability, performance skills and experience through performance opportunities
- produce candidates capable of progressing to higher level study in dance
- provide a comprehensive training in contemporary dance performance which is relevant to the needs of the industry

General Information for Centres (cont)

◆ Intermediate Creativity

- provide candidates who have dance potential with the opportunity to gain a qualification
- provide a highly practical training, the core of which will focus on classical ballet and at least one contemporary dance technique
- produce candidates skilled in creative processes of choreography
- produce candidates capable of progressing to higher level study in dance
- provide a comprehensive training in contemporary dance performance which is relevant to the needs of the industry

◆ Intermediate Performance Skills

- provide candidates who have dance potential with the opportunity to gain a qualification
- provide a highly practical training, the core of which will focus on classical ballet and at least one contemporary dance technique
- improve and extend technical ability, performance skills and experience through performance opportunities
- provide a comprehensive training in contemporary dance performance which is relevant to the needs of the industry

The project will be a practical assignment which will take the form of a solo performance.

Technical ability should be demonstrated through sustained application of technical principles, including but not exclusively shown through; posture, placement, turnout, use of back and centre, flexibility, strength, stamina, control, use of gravity and weight, coordination, and use of arms.

Creativity should show the candidate's ability to respond to given stimuli, and demonstrate their awareness of the production's intentions. These principles should be combined with the candidate's ability to capture the audience's attention by use of appropriate performance skills, which include but are not exclusively shown through; focus, energy, attention to nuance and emotion, and sense of self.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It is recommended that the candidate should have completed or be in the process of completing all Mandatory Units relating to the HNC Contemporary Dance Performance prior to undertaking this Graded Unit. These Units are:

F1NS 34	<i>Dance: Choreographic Skills</i>
F1LF 34	<i>Dance: Body Conditioning</i>
F1LL 34	<i>Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques: Intermediate</i>
F1LM 35	<i>Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques: Advanced</i>
F1LD 34	<i>Dance: An Introduction to Performance and Production</i>

In addition candidates should have undertaken Units in at least one of the following techniques: Cunningham-based, Graham-based.

Core Skills: There may be opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Problem Solving and Communication at SCQF level 5 in this Unit although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Assessment: This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of a practical assignment. The practical assignment should provide the candidate with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of the Group Award that this Graded Unit covers.

Administrative Information

Graded Unit code: F1Y2 34

Graded Unit title: Contemporary Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

Original date of publication: May 2007

Version: 01

History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

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Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates

Graded Unit title: Contemporary Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

Conditions of assessment

The candidate should be given a date for completion of the practical assignment. The instructions for the assessment task should be distributed prior to the first rehearsal to allow the candidate sufficient time to assimilate the details and prepare to carry out the assessment task. During the time between the distribution of the assessment task instructions and the completion date, assessors may answer questions, provide clarification, guidance and reasonable assistance. The assessment task should be marked as soon as possible after the completion date. The final grading given should reflect the quality of the candidate's evidence at the time of the completion date.

The evidence for the project is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, where each stage has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. Thus any reassessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage.

If a candidate fails the project overall or wishes to upgrade, then this must be done using a *substantially different* project, ie all stages are undertaken using a new project, assignment, case study, etc. In this case, a candidate's grade will be based on the achievement in the re-assessment, if this results in a higher grade.

At this level, candidates should work independently. It is up to centres to take reasonable steps to ensure that the project is the work of the candidate. For example, centres may wish to informally question candidates at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project on which they have embarked.

Instructions for designing the assessment task

The assessment task is a project. The project will be a practical assignment which will take the form of a solo performance. The project undertaken by the candidate must be a complex task which involves:

- ◆ variables which are complex or unfamiliar
- ◆ relationships which need to be clarified
- ◆ a context which may be familiar or unfamiliar to the candidate

This will involve:

- ◆ devising movement material from given stimuli.
- ◆ creating original choreography in response to a given brief
- ◆ using technical dance skills
- ◆ showing accurate timing and sensitive musicality
- ◆ developing nuances and performance elements key to the production

The assessment task must require the candidates to

- ◆ analyse each given task and decide on an approach
- ◆ show planning and organisation, and carry tasks through to completion
- ◆ reflect on what has been done and draw conclusions for the future
- ◆ produce evidence of meeting the aims which this Graded Unit has been designed to cover

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

This assessment instrument is not concerned exclusively with practical activity — candidates are provided with a brief that allows them to prepare, plan and demonstrate creative and choreographic skills. Candidates should be asked to research, prepare, rehearse and present a finished work.

The Brief

The candidate will be expected to demonstrate skills in the major areas covered by the Award, these being:

- ◆ technical ability
- ◆ creativity
- ◆ performance skills

These will be undertaken by demonstrating the following:

- ◆ research, plan and devise solo work in response to a given brief related to and in preparation for a devised performance
- ◆ rehearse solo work to performance standard and keep a detailed record of development
- ◆ deliver the solo performance
- ◆ evaluate the solo performance

The project will involve a practical assignment culminating in a solo performance at an assessment event. Candidates must demonstrate the application of skills learned in all of the Mandatory Units in the Award. These are:

F1NS 34	<i>Dance: Choreographic Skills</i>
F1LF 34	<i>Dance: Body Conditioning</i>
F1LL 34	<i>Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques: Intermediate</i>
F1LM 35	<i>Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques: Advanced</i>
F1LD 34	<i>Dance: An Introduction to Performance and Production</i>

In addition candidates should have undertaken Units in at least one of the following techniques: Cunningham-based, Graham-based.

The assessment task will take the form of a performance event. Candidates will be given a brief to produce original work choreographed and developed independently and derived from given stimuli/tasks. This may or may not be material utilised for public performance. The solo work is an open brief which may concentrate on one area of technique or a combination of techniques. It will be researched with tutor advice. Mentoring will be available in the early planning stage and will be available to ensure that the brief and choreographic task is completely understood. To allow for assessment that is identical for each candidate there will be an assessment event. All practical elements will be recorded on video/DVD.

- ◆ The solo performance will last between 3 and 6 minutes and will be performed to an assessment panel of a minimum of 2 people.
- ◆ No costume or props will be permitted.
- ◆ The music will be set within the given choreographic brief and be the same for all candidates.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

The practical assignment and the way that it is planned and conducted should reflect the opportunities for individual research. Each candidate must provide evidence at each stage of the practical assignment.

Stage 1 — The Planning Stage

The candidate will produce a research plan in relation to the brief including how response to the choreographic tasks relates to the underlying themes of the production. In addition, the candidate will devise, structure and rehearse a solo in response to the brief. Candidates at this level should demonstrate an ability to work on creative and set rehearsal tasks, unsupervised or as independent study.

Stage 2 — The Developing Stage

The candidate will rehearse and perform their work demonstrating technical ability and creativity, including choreographic skills and performance skills.

Stage 3 — Evaluation

Assessment for this stage will be shown by the candidate's evaluation of the whole process. This will be supported by evidence. Evaluations are expected to be reflective and critical, showing that candidates have an accurate and informed understanding of their own abilities, progress and needs for future improvement.

Guidance on grading candidates

Candidates who meet the minimum Evidence Requirements will have their achievement graded as C — competent, or A — highly competent, or B somewhere between A and C. The grade related criteria to be used to judge candidates performance for this Graded Unit is specified in the following table.

Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ has sufficient evidence for the three essential phases of the project, is produced to a high standard, and is quite clearly inter-related ◆ demonstrates an accurate and insightful interpretation during performance ◆ is highly focused and relevant to all creative tasks ◆ has a clear and well structured approach to rehearsals, and performance is of a high standard in terms of accuracy and technical content ◆ effectively consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills 	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ has sufficient evidence of the three essential phases of the project, is produced to an adequate standard ◆ demonstrates an acceptable interpretation during performance ◆ is focused and relevant to creative tasks ◆ has a satisfactory approach to rehearsals, and performance is adequate in terms of level, accuracy and technical content ◆ consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills but this may lack some continuity and consistency

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

The project will be marked out of 100. Assessors will mark each stage of the project, taking into account the criteria outlined. The marks will then be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the project. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

- A = 70% — 100%
- B = 60% — 69%
- C = 50% — 59%

Note: the candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified below for each stage of the project in order to achieve the Graded Unit.

Evidence Requirements

The project consists of three stages: planning; developing; and evaluating. The following table specifies the minimum evidence required to pass each stage.

Note: The candidate must achieve **all of the minimum evidence** specified below for each stage of the project in order to pass the Graded Unit.

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 1 — Planning 15% of total marks	<p>A log book/diary which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ details of each task set◆ a choreographic plan illustrating choreographic choices — structure, dynamic structure, floor plan◆ approach taken to interpret each task in relation to the context of the underlying intention of the solo performance◆ rehearsal schedule and identification of the timescale for completion <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i></p>

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 2 — Developing 70% of total marks	<p>Devising, Rehearsal and Performance of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ evidence through inclusion and performance that candidate has creatively and technically developed tasks from the planning stage ◆ demonstrate the ability to work independently ◆ demonstrate individual vocabulary and choreographic understanding at the required level ◆ demonstrate performance skills that reflect the level of knowledge and skills learned in Mandatory Units ◆ demonstrate dance technique that reflects the knowledge and skills learned in Mandatory Units <p>A record of the process should be contained in a structured logbook which should include a choreographic log detailing choices made and the reasoning underlying the creative choices and a record of progress.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage.</i></p>
Stage 3 — Evaluating 15% of total marks	<p>Evaluation report which should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ assess the strengths and weaknesses of their solo performance ◆ review approach to rehearsals and individual practice in the light of experience ◆ identify any knowledge and skills which have been gained and/or developed <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i></p>

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Support notes

This part of the Unit is offered as guidance. The Support Notes are not mandatory. While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the Content and Context for this Unit

This Graded Unit is designed to assess that candidates have met the specific aims of the HNC Contemporary Dance Performance Award, assess the candidates' ability to retain and integrate the knowledge/or skills gained in the Units and to grade candidate achievement.

Guidance on the Delivery and Assessment of this Unit

The Unit should be delivered and assessed in a dance studio with adequate space, sprung floor and sound facilities. Candidates will require to use facilities individually to allow for practise and development of work. A schedule allowing for equal access to facilities for each candidate may be necessary. To facilitate the process of individually created solos it may be useful for the planning and development stages to be undertaken during the creative process of a student production. This would allow candidates to relate to the underlying themes of the production and place their work in the context of the production. The student production would not form any part of the assessment and would only serve as a contextual framework for candidates to relate to.

Assessment will be observed by an assessment panel consisting of a minimum of two people. The conditions of the assessment must be identical for each candidate. A DVD or video recording should be made of each candidate to serve as evidence and allow for assessment review.

It is essential that the candidate meets the minimum requirements of the task to be eligible for assessment. The minimum time for the solo performance must be achieved.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative assessment arrangements. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

General information for candidates

This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence, through a project, that you have achieved the aims of the HNC Contemporary Dance Performance Award. The project will be a practical assignment which will take the form of a solo performance.

You will be expected to demonstrate skills in the major areas covered by the Award, these being:

- ◆ technical ability
- ◆ creativity
- ◆ performance skills

This will be undertaken by demonstrating the following:

- ◆ research, plan and devise solo work in response to a given brief related to and in preparation for a devised performance
- ◆ rehearse solo work to performance standard and keep a detailed record of development
- ◆ deliver the performance
- ◆ evaluate the performance

The project will involve a practical assignment culminating in a solo performance at an assessment event. You must demonstrate the application of skills learned in the following Mandatory Units in the Award:

F1NS 34	<i>Dance: Choreographic Skills</i>
F1LF 34	<i>Dance: Body Conditioning</i>
F1LL 34	<i>Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques: Intermediate</i>
F1LM 35	<i>Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques: Advanced</i>
F1LD 34	<i>Dance: An Introduction to Performance and Production</i>

In addition, you must demonstrate the application of skills gained in at least one of the following techniques: Cunningham-based, Graham-based.

The practical assignment and the way that it is planned and conducted should reflect opportunities for individual research. At this level you should demonstrate an ability to work on creative and set rehearsal tasks unsupervised or as independent study. You must provide evidence at each stage of the practical assignment.

Stage 1 — The Planning Stage

You will produce a research plan in relation to the brief including how response to the choreographic tasks relates to the underlying themes of the production. In addition you will devise, structure and rehearse a solo in response to the brief.

Stage 2 — The Developing Stage

You will rehearse and perform your work, demonstrating technical ability and creativity including choreographic skills and performance skills.

Stage 3 — Evaluation

Assessment for this stage will be shown by your evaluation of the whole process. Evaluations are expected to be reflective and critical, showing that you have an accurate and informed understanding of your own abilities, progress and needs for future improvement.

General Information for Candidates (cont)

The assessment task will take the form of a performance event. During this process you will be provided with a brief to produce original work choreographed and developed independently and devised from given stimuli/tasks. This may or may not be material utilised for public performance. The solo work is an open brief which may concentrate on one area of technique or a combination of techniques. It will be researched with tutor advice. Mentoring will be available in the early planning stage and will be available to ensure that the brief and choreographic task is completely understood. To allow for assessment that is identical for each candidate there will be an assessment event. All practical elements will be recorded on video/DVD.

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