



Course Report 2015

Subject	Dance
Level	National 5

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers, lecturers and assessors in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published assessment and marking instructions for the examination.

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Component 1: Performance

The second year of the collaborative marking model of a sample of 12 candidates for National 5 Dance was well received by centres. Many centres noted the positivity generated from meetings with SQA Visiting Assessors (VAs) and felt it afforded an excellent development opportunity.

The majority of centres were very well prepared for the Visiting Assessment, with all documentation and assessment sheets complete and ready for use. This reduced assessment time and helped make the process run smoothly. A large number of centres noted how supported they felt with the relaxed and informative role adopted by the VA. Within this sample of 12, a number of centres were able to present their whole cohort for external assessment. This was noted as valuable and supportive.

The majority of centres were able to meet the correct performance standard at National 5. Advice and guidance was given to support a small number of centres who were not so secure in the national standard prior to the VA day. A greater understanding of standards in performance was clearly evident across the majority of centres, and this was reflected in the choreographed dances for assessment. Assessment of Practical Performance in 2015 was very positive.

Component 2: Practical Activity

Choreography and the choreography review afforded candidates a great opportunity to access marks for their skills and abilities. Candidates who struggled with their technical ability were able to access a range of marks within this component of the Course assessment.

Candidates were generally well prepared for choreography and choreography review. The majority of candidates chose to write a report to supplement their choreography. Most pupils presented work of a high standard and supplemented their written report with a Mood/Stimulus Board. This allowed the VA to fully understand the choreographer's intentions. The majority of centres had ensured that candidates were prepared to answer questions from the VA. This allowed a further opportunity for all marks to be accessed.

A number of centres had encouraged candidates to really build from the work done for the Dance: Choreography Unit, with a few candidates producing creative choreography of an exceptionally high standard.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Component 1: Performance

The majority of centres demonstrated clear evidence of the required performance standards at National 5. The majority of candidates were very well prepared for their one chosen solo performance. The majority of centres selected Jazz as their chosen style. To ensure that each candidate was able to use their strongest genre for performance, some centres used more than one genre for assessment.

A number of centres presented candidates with strong technique but no performance quality. This is highlighted as an area of focus for further development for many centres. It was evident that a few centres had worked with candidates to improve their performance quality. This allowed candidates to access the full range of marks for performance.

A few centres require further support to ensure they choreograph assessment dances that allow candidates to access all available marks. However, the majority of centres were more confident and this resulted in a very positive experience.

Component 2: Practical Activity

Choreography

There was evidence in some centres that candidates had really built on their learning from the Dance: Choreography Unit and produced work that was very creative and high in quality. Some candidates used their use of movement and choreographic devices to great effect, creating work that was insightful.

A number of centres had encouraged candidates to think beyond the more typical stimulus ideas for choreography, and this allowed for a more interdisciplinary experience throughout the choreographic journey. Many centres had encouraged candidates to explore more original music/sound which enhanced creativity.

Some candidates demonstrated an understanding of the use of structure as appropriate to National 5 standards. Some centres have been guided to seek further support to ensure candidates are able to access all marks. When used well the use of space complimented and supported creativity throughout the choreography.

Choreography Review

The majority of candidates produced a written report and a mood/stimulus board. It was obvious that for many this written report had evolved throughout the choreographic process. When questioned, most candidates could explain their choreography in a very articulate manner, demonstrating a clear understanding of the process they had undertaken. This allowed many candidates to access the full range of marks. A few candidates were able to access full marks in the review, having provided depth and justification in their written report.

Some candidates demonstrated confusion in their understanding of the use of structure. Where this was evident, VAs were able to advise centres as how best to seek support.

Most candidates were able to discuss motif development in relation to their theme. Some candidates were able to do this in some depth and as a result could access all available marks.

Many candidates could review their own strengths and weaknesses in performance in the review. However, at times there was a lack of depth to back up the impact of these strengths and weaknesses within their chosen genres, resulting in lower marks being awarded.

The Choreography Review was well received, and centres were positive in their feedback to VAs noting that it had been a worthwhile process.

Section 3: Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Performance

The majority of candidates were well prepared for their chosen solo performance and were able to demonstrate the requisite technical skills for National 5 Dance.

Many centres demonstrated an excellent understanding of the requirements of technical skills and this had a positive impact on the marking of performance. A large number of candidates chose Jazz as their performance genre, which proved to be a good and appropriate choice — reflected in the marks awarded.

Component 2: Practical Activity

There was evidence in some centres that candidates were able to build from their choreographic experiences in the internally-assessed Unit. It was obvious in some centres that strong foundations were in place, affording pupils the confidence to be creative and really explore and develop movement.

Candidates were generally confident in their own work and were generally able to answer questions in a clear and confident manner.

There was evidence of a good level of knowledge of choreographic processes and use of structures in some reports. The majority of essays were written in a cohesive and structured way.

Section 4: Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Performance

- ◆ Some candidates struggled to control their nerves to ensure they were able to perform at their best.
- ◆ Some candidates struggled to meet and/or sustain the technical demands of their chosen genres.
- ◆ The lack of a correct centre/alignment meant that for some candidates all technical areas were compromised.
- ◆ The majority of candidates could benefit from an improved sense of performance quality to ensure they are able to access the full range of marks.

Component 2: Practical Activity

Choreography

- ◆ Some candidates could benefit from exploring motif development through the use of a theme in more depth before they embark on their own choreography.
- ◆ Centres should explore in more depth the use of choreographic structures as appropriate to a dance for two people to ensure candidates are equipped for the challenges ahead.
- ◆ Candidates should be encouraged to ensure that their chosen theme/stimulus is not too challenging for the choreographic task. Candidates would benefit from selecting one aspect of a theme. Consideration should be given to the length of the final choreographed piece.

Choreography Review

- ◆ A few candidates struggled to discuss their own choreography when asked. Centres should encourage candidates to share their creative thoughts, feelings and processes throughout their journey. Such conversations should enrich the learning journey.
- ◆ Some candidates provided answers that could not access the full range of marks due to a lack of depth and justification. Candidates should be encouraged to think about the reason behind their answers to help provide more depth.

Section 5: Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Performance

- ◆ A few centres should seek support in their understanding of the technical demands of National 5 Dance.
- ◆ Centres should discuss appropriate assessment genres with candidates to ensure they feel confident and assured for assessment.

- ◆ All centres should ensure paperwork is complete, ordered and ready before the VA arrives, as this can be very time-consuming on the assessment day.

Component 2: Practical Activity

- ◆ Centres should ensure that the foundations for developing movement are in place before allowing candidates to embark on choreography.
- ◆ Centres should focus on the use of structure and devices as appropriate to a theme for two people over a 1 minute 30 second piece of creative choreography.
- ◆ Candidates should feel confident if questioned on their choreography as this can allow them to access additional marks. Centres should ensure that they incorporate this as part of the learning journey.
- ◆ Centres should ensure all candidates are available and prepared to present their choreography at any point during the allotted time for choreographic assessment. This will ensure the exam day is able to run as smoothly as possible.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2014	361
Number of resulted entries in 2015	437

Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark - 100				
A	54.2%	54.2%	237	70
B	25.2%	79.4%	110	60
C	14.9%	94.3%	65	50
D	3.4%	97.7%	15	45
No award	2.3%	-	10	-

The intention was to set a similar grade boundary to last year. The Course Assessment functioned as intended therefore no adjustment to grade boundaries was required.