



# Higher Dance

## Practical activity

### Assessment task

This document provides information for teachers and lecturers about the coursework component of this course in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed. It **must** be read in conjunction with the course specification.

**Valid from session 2023-24 and until further notice.**

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# Contents

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Introduction                | 1 |
| Recording documentation     | 2 |
| Marking instructions        | 8 |
| Instructions for candidates | 9 |

# Introduction

This document contains recording documentation and instructions for candidates for the Higher Dance practical activity. You must read it in conjunction with the course specification.

This practical activity is worth 70 marks. This is 30% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

This is one of three course assessment components. The other components are a question paper and a performance.

The practical activity has two sections.

**Section 1** 'choreography' has 45 marks.

**Section 2** 'choreography review' has 25 marks.

In this assessment, candidates create, present and review a group choreography for three or more dancers or a solo choreography, excluding themselves.

# Recording documentation

The SQA visiting assessor and the designated centre assessor should use the following recording documents to record the marks awarded to candidates.

The SQA visiting assessor and designated centre assessor collaboratively mark up to 12 candidates. When there are more than 12 candidates, the designated centre assessor applies the national standard to the remaining candidates.

## Higher Dance: practical activity (group)

Centre:

Candidate:

Candidate number:

### Section 1: group choreography

| Element  | Max mark  | Mark awarded | Assessor comments |
|--|-----------|--------------|-------------------|
| Use of theme and/or stimulus to create and develop motif/movements to convey theme | 12        |              |                   |
| Use of complex choreographic structure   | 6         |              |                   |
| Use of complex choreographic devices   | 12        |              |                   |
| Use of spatial elements  | 6         |              |                   |
| Use of music and/or sound  | 4         |              |                   |
| Use of theatre arts  | 5         |              |                   |
| <b>Sub-total</b>   | <b>45</b> |              |                   |

## Higher Dance: practical activity (solo)

Centre:

Candidate:

Candidate number:

### Section 1: solo choreography

| Element  | Max mark  | Mark awarded | Assessor comments |
|--|-----------|--------------|-------------------|
| Use of theme and/or stimulus to create and develop motif/movements to convey theme | 12        |              |                   |
| Use of complex choreographic structure   | 6         |              |                   |
| Use of motif development and complex choreographic devices                         | 12        |              |                   |
| Use of spatial elements  | 6         |              |                   |
| Use of music and/or sound  | 4         |              |                   |
| Use of theatre arts  | 5         |              |                   |
| <b>Sub-total</b>   | <b>45</b> |              |                   |

| <b>Section 2: choreography review</b>  |                 |                     |                          |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Task</b>  | <b>Max mark</b> | <b>Mark awarded</b> | <b>Assessor comments</b> |
| <b>1a</b><br>Explain the relationship between research, theme, developed movement and complex choreographic devices to convey meanings, ideas or effects | <b>10</b>       |                     |                          |
| <b>1b</b><br>Explain the relationship between research and spatial elements to convey meaning or effects   | <b>4</b>        |                     |                          |
| <b>1c</b><br>Explain choice of complex structure to convey intended theme, meanings, ideas or effects  | <b>3</b>        |                     |                          |

| <b>Section 2: choreography review (continued)</b>  |                 |                     |                          |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Task</b>  | <b>Max mark</b> | <b>Mark awarded</b> | <b>Assessor comments</b> |
| <b>2a</b><br>Explain use of specific music and/or sound to convey intended theme, meanings, ideas or effects | <b>2</b>        |                     |                          |
| <b>2b</b><br>Explain use of specific theatre arts to convey intended theme, meanings, ideas or effects       | <b>2</b>        |                     |                          |
| <b>3</b><br>Evaluate a choreographic skill and the impact this has on the finished dance                     | <b>4</b>        |                     |                          |
| <b>Sub-total</b>   | <b>25</b>       |                     |                          |



# Higher Dance

## Coursework component: practical activity

Centre:

Candidate name:

Candidate number:

| Section 1 + Section 2     | Maximum mark | Mark awarded |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Choreography              | 45           |              |
| Choreography review       | 25           |              |
| Total marks for component | 70           |              |

# Marking instructions

The marking instructions for the Higher Dance practical activity are in the course specification.

# Instructions for candidates

This assessment applies to the practical activity for Higher Dance.

This practical activity is worth 70 marks. This is 30% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

This practical activity has two sections.

**Section 1** 'choreography' has 45 marks.

**Section 2** 'choreography review' has 25 marks.

## **Choreography assesses:**

- ◆ understanding and application of a range of choreographic skills and principles to create a group dance or a solo dance
- ◆ working imaginatively and demonstrating individual creativity
- ◆ co-operating, supporting and working with others
- ◆ using:
  - movements/motif to convey theme
  - complex choreographic structure
  - three complex choreographic devices
  - spatial elements
  - music and/or sound
  - two theatre arts from lighting, set, props, theatrical make-up, costume

## **Choreography review assesses:**

- ◆ the relationship between research, theme, developed movement, choreographic principles and spatial elements to convey meanings, ideas or effects
- ◆ reasons for the choreographic principles, structure, spatial elements, music and/or sound and theatre arts used and the relationship to the choreographic intention
- ◆ the evaluation of a choreographic skill and the impact this has on the finished dance

Your teacher or lecturer will let you know the specific conditions for doing this assessment.

In this assessment you have to create, present and review a choreography for a group of three or more dancers or one dancer (solo), excluding yourself. The choreography must last a minimum of 2 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes.

Read everything before you begin, and ask your teacher or lecturer if you are unsure about what you are expected to do.

## Coursework component: practical activity

In this practical activity you will create, present and review a group choreography for a minimum of three dancers or a solo choreography for one dancer, excluding yourself.

You will follow three stages that help you work logically through the choreographic process and prepare you for assessment. These steps are:

- 1 Planning**  
Select a theme, carry out research, and devise initial movement ideas.
- 2 Development**  
Create and finalise your choreography.
- 3 Performance**  
Present your choreography for assessment.

## How you will be assessed

There are two sections to this assessment.

### Section 1: group choreography (45 marks)

In this section, your final choreographed dance will be marked as follows:

|  | Marks     |
|--|-----------|
| ◆ use of theme and/or stimulus to create and develop motif/movements to convey theme | 12        |
| ◆ use of complex choreographic structure   | 6         |
| ◆ use of complex choreographic devices   | 12        |
| ◆ use of spatial elements  | 6         |
| ◆ use of music and/or sound  | 4         |
| ◆ use of theatre arts  | 5         |
| <b>Total marks</b>   | <b>45</b> |

## Section 1: solo choreography (45 marks)

In this section, your final choreographed dance will be marked as follows:

|  | <b>Marks</b> |
|--|--------------|
| ◆ use of theme and/or stimulus to create and develop motif/movements to convey theme | 12           |
| ◆ use of complex choreographic structure   | 6            |
| ◆ use of motif development and complex choreographic devices                         | 12           |
| ◆ use of spatial elements  | 6            |
| ◆ use of music and/or sound  | 4            |
| ◆ use of theatre arts  | 5            |
| <b>Total marks</b>   | <b>45</b>    |

The 'choreographic process' section, on the following pages, provides guidelines on how to choreograph your dance.

## **Section 2: choreography review (25 marks)**

In this section, you are assessed on a review of your choreography. There are three assessment tasks you must complete.

You can begin these tasks at any suitable point in the choreographic process. You can ask your teacher or lecturer for advice on when to begin.

You must have completed all the assessment tasks for the choreography review by the time you present your final choreography.

The assessment tasks for the choreography review are after these instructions for the choreographic process.

# Section 1: choreography

## Instructions for the choreographic process

Follow the stages below to plan, develop and present your choreography for assessment.

Remember that your dance must last a minimum of 2 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes, and be for a minimum of three dancers for a group dance or one dancer for a solo dance, excluding yourself.

You should keep a record of everything you gather, plan or do during the choreographic process. You are not assessed on any records you keep, but doing this will help you to be well-organised during the process, and provide you with the notes or other materials you need to complete all of the assessment tasks.

You need to arrange for at least three dancers for a group dance or one dancer for a solo dance, who can work with you during the process and perform your choreography for assessment. You can use a larger group if you wish, but if you do, make sure you have good reasons for this. Don't use a large group simply for effect. You should consider your theme and intentions, and such things as availability of dancers and/or the practicalities of working with a large group.

You should finalise who your dancers are as early as possible, as you will need to arrange a rehearsal schedule, and work with them throughout the development stage of your choreography.

There are three stages in the instructions for the choreographic process for you to follow.

## Stage one

**Planning: select a theme, carry out research, and devise movement for at least one motif**

*The work you do here is also assessed through task one of the choreography review.*

This stage helps you to develop a general ‘vision’ of the way forward for your choreography. By the end of this stage, you should have a number of initial ideas about features such as structure, key devices, spatial elements, music/sound, use of theatre arts and the number of dancers you will need.

Select a theme to develop through your choreography. This can be inspired by any appropriate visual, verbal, audio or kinaesthetic stimulus or source of ideas for a dance. Your theme might be linked to a story; be symbolic; emotional; abstract; or theatrical. When selecting your theme, you should think carefully about the creative and practical aspects of the choreographic process.

You should carry out at least three pieces of research to help you begin to develop movement, choreographic devices and spatial elements. It is recommended that one of these should be the consideration of a professional piece of choreography relevant or similar to your theme or ideas; the other two can be anything else appropriate.

As a **minimum**, by the end of this stage you must have devised at least one motif related to your theme, with a minimum of eight counts. However, don’t be limited by this if you have more ideas – for example, your initial motif could be longer than eight counts; or you might devise more than one motif to show different ideas or effects relevant to your theme, before you progress on to making decisions about other aspects of your choreography.



## Stage two

### Development: create and finalise your choreography

*The work you do here is also assessed in tasks one and two of the choreography review.*

Plan and develop the movement for your choreography, using choreographic principles of structure, devices, spatial elements, music and/or sound and theatre arts.

You must use choreographic principles in a complex way – marks are awarded for this. Using principles in a complex way means that you go beyond simply showing your theme. You should give carefully considered reasons for **all** the choices you make. Your choices should communicate intentions, meanings or ideas about your theme in an original and creative way. You should consider what you want your audience to think, feel, experience or understand, and use the relevant choreographic principles to achieve this. Remember, you are creating a dance piece, not simply a dance routine.

You must use **all** of the following in your choreography, but you do not have to make decisions about them in the order given:

#### One structure

Structures which may be particularly suitable for complex use include:

- ◆ rondo
- ◆ in-depth narrative
- ◆ theme and variation
- ◆ collage
- ◆ ternary
- ◆ episodic

There might be other valid complex structures not listed above that you are familiar with and want to use, and this is acceptable.

#### Three choreographic devices

Devices which may be particularly suitable for complex use include:

- ◆ motif development
- ◆ retrograde
- ◆ inversion
- ◆ embellishment
- ◆ fragmentation
- ◆ instrumentation
- ◆ augmentation through time or space
- ◆ quality and force
- ◆ accumulation
- ◆ call and response (for a group dance)
- ◆ canon-reverting/simultaneous/cumulative (for a group dance)
- ◆ contact work (for a group dance)
- ◆ juxtaposition (for a group dance)

There might also be other valid complex devices not listed above that you are familiar with and want to use, and this is acceptable.

### **Spatial elements**

Use, as appropriate:

- ◆ direction
- ◆ floor patterns
- ◆ pathways
- ◆ levels
- ◆ formations (for a group dance)
- ◆ proximities

There may be other valid spatial elements not listed above that you are familiar with and want to use, and this is acceptable.

### **Music and/or sound**

Select music and/or sound that is appropriate to your choreographic intention.

- ◆ silence
- ◆ voice
- ◆ sound effects
- ◆ body percussion
- ◆ live musical accompaniment

There may be other valid uses of music and/or sound not listed above that you are familiar with and want to use, and this is acceptable.

### **Theatre arts**

Select two theatre arts from lighting, set, props, theatrical make-up and costume to enhance your choreography.

Make sure you have your dancers available by this stage, and consider providing them with a clear rehearsal schedule. You should work with them to experiment with, finalise and rehearse your choreography, but you must make all the final decisions about what your choreography will contain yourself. Organise and lead rehearsals, keeping notes and making changes as you go until you are satisfied with the final choreography. You must use safe dance practice throughout.

By the end of this stage, your choreography should be complete and ready for performance.

## **Stage three**

### **Performance: present your finished choreography**

In this stage, your dancer(s) perform your finished choreography.

Your teacher or lecturer will tell you of any arrangements that need to be made for the performance event.

Remember to make sure you have completed your choreography review before presenting your finished choreography for assessment.

## Section 2: choreography review

You need to review the choreographic process by completing the tasks below. You can present your review in any suitable format. Your teacher or lecturer can give you advice on this.

You can include, or make reference to: diagrams, floor plans, mood boards, photographs if these are relevant to the points you want to make in your review. You do not have to use these, and you will not be marked on the quality of this material. You will be awarded marks for the points you make in your review.

### Task one: review planning

During the planning of your choreography, you carried out research, developed movement for at least one motif, and selected three complex choreographic devices.

You must explain the relationship between your research, theme and/or stimulus, developed movement and complex choreographic devices to convey meanings, ideas or effects.

You should explain two of your research findings that influenced your selection of movement and choreographic devices to show your theme.

**10 marks**

You must explain your use of spatial elements to convey your intended theme, meaning, ideas or effects. You must link this with a third source of research.

**4 marks**

### Task two: review development

With reference to your theme and/or stimulus, or the meanings, ideas or effects you intended, explain the reasons for the specific choices you have made in your choreography which must cover **all** of the following:

- ◆ use of complex structure 3 marks
- ◆ use of music and/or sound 2 marks
- ◆ use of theatre art(s) 2 marks

Make sure you use the appropriate technical term for each choice.

### **Task three: evaluation**

Choreographers need to have many skills including creativity, leadership and effective organisation.

You need to evaluate a choreographic skill and the impact this has on the finished choreography.

At least one point should make reference to the choreographed dance and one skill, and the impact this has on the finished choreography.

**4 marks**

**Total: 25 marks**

## Administrative information

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### History of changes

| Version | Description of change   | Date     |
|---------|---|----------|
| 2.0     | Option for solo choreography added throughout. Marking guidance for solo choreography included. | May 2023 |
|         |   |          |
|         |   |          |
|         |   |          |

Note: you are advised to check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.

## Security and confidentiality

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