

## Higher National Unit specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Dance: Contextual Studies

**Unit code:** F1R4 35

**Unit purpose:** This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to dance within a variety of contexts — aesthetic, cultural and critical. Candidates will analyse dance within these contexts and so develop skills which will enable them to be critics of dance performances.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Analyse dance in relation to other art forms.
- 2 Analyse dance performance pieces in relation to their cultural context.
- 3 Critique dance performance pieces.

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

*\*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.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** Candidates should possess knowledge and understanding of dance history at SCQF level 7 eg the HN Unit:

F1M3 34 *Dance History: An Introduction.*

**Core Skills:** There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill(s) of Communication (Oral) at SCQF level 5, Communication (Written) at SCQF level 6 and Working with Others at SCQF level 4 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

**Context for delivery:** If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

**Assessment:** Outcomes should be assessed separately and in the order. Outcome 3 should reflect the accumulated knowledge of Outcomes 1 and 2.

Assessments for Outcomes 1 and 2 should take the form of analysis/evaluation of dance context. Outcome 3 will be assessed by dance critiques. Evidence can be presented in written/oral format.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Dance: Contextual Studies

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### **Outcome 1**

Analyse dance in relation to other art forms

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Art forms
- ◆ Dance types
- ◆ Artistic dance context

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ analyse the nature of the art forms
- ◆ investigate dance as, entertainment, therapy and ritual
- ◆ analyse at least three situations in which dance may be classed as art as opposed to entertainment, therapy or ritual

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

Assessment may be in the form of an assessment of 1,500 words or equivalent.

Candidates should be assessed on Outcome 1 before progressing on to Outcomes 2 and 3.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Dance: Contextual Studies

### Outcome 2

Analyse dance performance pieces in relation to their cultural context.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Dance performance relating to culture:
  - gender
  - sexuality
  - politics
  - race

#### Evidence Requirements

Candidates will analyse ways in which the choreographer relates their choreography to the above cultural terms.

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ analyse at least two ways in which issues relating to gender may be relevant to the choreographic content of a dance piece.
- ◆ analyse at least two ways in which issues relating to sexuality may be relevant to the choreographic content of a dance piece.
- ◆ analyse at least two ways in which issues relating to politics may be relevant to the choreographic content of a dance piece.
- ◆ analyse at least two ways in which issues relating to race may be relevant to the choreographic content of a dance piece.

Evidence for this Outcome will be generated through sampling two of the four areas (gender, sexuality, politics, race) under closed-book supervised conditions)

#### Assessment Guidelines

An oral presentation should last approximately 6-8 minutes. The presentation can make use of appropriate audio/visual materials. It can be presented in a seminar/class context, sharing individual research with the rest of the group. The presentation can be supported by relevant evidence (outline of talk, references, bibliography and visual illustrations). These should form part of the assessment. The assessment could be recorded using appropriate means.

Written evidence should be approximately 1,000 words or equivalent.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Dance: Contextual Studies

### Outcome 3

Critique dance performance pieces

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Movement analysis
- ◆ Choreographic devices and structures
- ◆ Audience perceptions
- ◆ Musical, physical and or aural setting
- ◆ Evaluation skills

#### Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by providing a critique for **two** dance performances. The critique should:

- ◆ describe a minimum of two elements of movement analysis
- ◆ interpret the two pieces taking into account the intentions of the choreographer.
- ◆ evaluate the pieces in terms of:
  - Was each dance performance successful?
  - Did each dance performance fulfil the choreographer's intentions?

#### Assessment Guidelines

Candidates could demonstrate the ability to critique (describe, interpret and evaluate) two dance performance pieces by different choreographers. These may be experienced in live or recorded performance.

The dance performance pieces may be described with reference to the following:

- ◆ elements of movement analysis.
- ◆ choreographic devices/structures
- ◆ physical setting
- ◆ musical or aural setting

The assessment should take the form of a critical review of two professional dance performance pieces of 700 words or equivalent for each.

## Administrative Information

**Unit code:** F1R4 35  
**Unit title:** Dance: Contextual Studies  
**Superclass category:** LB  
**Original date of publication:** May 2007  
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### History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

**Source:** SQA

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## Higher National Unit specification: support notes

### Unit title: Dance: Contextual Studies

This part of the Unit specification 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 Unit is primarily designed to introduce candidates to the wide range of contexts in which dance may be studied as an academic subject.

This Unit is concerned with dance as a performing art. It sets out to define dance in this context. It then moves on to placing dance in its social and cultural context, emphasising the ways in which gender, sexuality, politics and race are relevant to a dance performance piece. Finally, candidates are asked to put all they have learned from this Unit into practice by critiquing dance performance pieces for themselves. The overall aim is to give candidates the tools to view dance objectively and to learn to justify their opinions of what they see.

#### Outcome 1

The material for this Outcome may focus upon areas over which there is disagreement. What is art? What is not art? What is claimed to be art by some but would not be considered art by others? What is dance? When is dance art? When is dance entertainment? When is dance therapy? When is dance ritual?

#### Outcome 2

The material for this Outcome may be based to a large degree upon recordings of professional dance performance pieces. These can be analysed in terms of gender, sexuality, politics and race looking for ways in which the choreography has been shaped by these issues. Through this process candidates should develop skills in describing choreography and be able to discuss what they see. These skills will be used to analyse a dance performance piece.

#### Outcome 3

The material for this Outcome may be based upon dance criticisms found in current reviews in newspapers, magazines and journals. These may be analysed to understand the process used by the writers to convey information about a dance piece.

Elements of movement analysis could be: use of space, dynamics, body, actions and relationships.

Choreographic devices/structures could include use of repetition, form, motif development, etc.

The way in which opinions are formed is also important. Collections of writings by dance critics such as Arnold Haskell, Arlene Croce and Bruce Fleming are useful in giving a historical perspective.

A book which may be useful for this Unit is Rickett-Young, *L Essential Guide to Dance* (Publisher: Hodder and Stoughton, London 1996).

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Dance: Contextual Studies

### Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit has been developed as part of the HNC/HND Dance Artists. It is recommended that this Unit be delivered in the second year of the HND. Candidates should have prior knowledge of dance history.

Each of the Outcomes could be assessed separately and in order as Outcomes 1 and 2 contribute to the content of Outcome 3.

#### *Opportunities to develop Core Skills*

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill(s) of Communication (Oral) at SCQF level 5 in Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 and Communication (Written) at SCQF level 6 in Outcomes 1, 2 and 3. Candidates will be given the opportunity to develop the Core Skill of Working with Others at SCQF level 4 in Outcome 2. There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

CoreSkill	Component	Outcomes
Communication	Oral Communication (SCQF level 5)	Outcomes 1, 2 and 3
	Written Communication (SCQF level 6)	Outcomes 1, 2 and 3
Working with Others	Working with Others (SCQF level 4)	Outcome 2

The delivery and assessment of this Unit may contribute towards the component 'Written Communication' of the Core Skill Communication at SCQF level 6. In Outcome 2 the candidate could produce and respond to detailed written and oral communication in familiar contexts. These skills can be developed through formative assessments. Candidates should also be encouraged to use appropriate referencing methods.

Working with Others at SCQF level 4 could be developed in the work undertaken in Outcome 2. Candidates will work with others to plan, agree and take responsibility for tasks; to support co-operative working in appropriate ways; and to review the effectiveness of their own contribution. The candidates also have to contribute to the setting of goals, timelines, etc; contribute to the review of completed work and offer suggestions for improving practices and processes. They have to identify their own strengths and weaknesses relative to the work.

These Core Skills could be developed without formal certification.

### Open learning

Although this Unit could be delivered by distance learning, it would require a considerable degree of planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence. The value of working in a group would be reflected in the quality of the Outcomes, especially Outcome 2.

For further information and advice please refer to the SQA document *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* which is available on SQA's website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Dance: Contextual Studies

### **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 Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Dance: Contextual Studies

This Unit has been designed to help you understand the choreography you view in a variety of settings. You will learn how to critique and judge dance for yourself.

This Unit will assist you when you are creating your own choreography. It may help you to think about your own priorities and clarify what you want your choreography to communicate to an audience.

Outcome 1 looks at dance in relation to the Arts, examining the following questions:

- ◆ What is art?
- ◆ What is dance?
- ◆ When is dance art?

Outcome 2 looks at dance in relation to culture. You will examine how pieces of choreography relate to culture in terms of:

- ◆ gender
- ◆ sexuality
- ◆ politics
- ◆ race

Outcome 3 allows you to critique dance pieces for yourself. You may read or hear about what other people have to say about a performance. Now it is your turn to have your say. You should have a good understanding of dance in relation to art and culture by the time you reach this stage in the course. Examining the work of dance critics may then help you to find your own way of critiquing dance.