



## Higher National Unit specification: general information

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HNC Professional Dance Performance. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Centres wishing to use another type of Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing the justification for change for validation.

**Graded Unit title:** Professional Dance Performance:  
Graded Unit 1

**Graded Unit code:** H4T3 34

**Type of Graded Unit:** Project

**Assessment Instrument:** Practical Assignment

**Publication date:** August 2013

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 02

## Unit purpose

This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the learner has achieved the following principal aims of the HNC/HND Professional Dance Performance:

- ◆ To develop skills in dance performance
- ◆ To develop skills in the creation of stage dance choreography
- ◆ To develop skills in working independently
- ◆ To prepare learner to present themselves for audition
- ◆ To develop as a dancer and a performer

## Recommended prior knowledge and skills

It is recommended that the learner should have completed or be in the process of completing the following Units relating to the above specific aims prior to undertaking this Graded Unit:

F1M1 34 *Jazz Dance Techniques 1*  
H4RE 34 *Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques 1*  
H4RC 34 *Dance Technique for Commercial Performance 1*  
F1LD 34 *Dance: An Introduction to Performance and Production*  
F1NS 34 *Dance: Choreographic Skills*

## **General information (cont)**

### **Credit points and level**

1 Higher National Unit 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 National 1 to Doctorates.*

### **Core Skills**

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

### **Assessment**

This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of a practical assignment. The developed practical assignment should provide the learner with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of the Graded Unit that it covers. The assessment is based on technique, movement, choreography for the Dance industry and performance elements.

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

**Graded Unit title:** Professional Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

## Conditions of assessment

Learners should be given a date for completion and performance of the practical assignment. However, the instructions for the assessment task should be distributed, to allow sufficient time to assimilate the details and 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.

At this level, learners should work independently. It is up to centres to take reasonable steps to ensure that the projects are learners' own work. For example, centres may wish to informally question learners at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project on which they have embarked. Centres should ensure that where research etc, is carried out in other establishments or under the supervision of others that the learner does not receive undue assistance.

Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing learners with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes.

In relation to the assessment of Higher National Project-based Graded Units, assessors may provide advice, clarification, and guidance during the time between the distribution of the project instructions and the completion date, ie at each stage of the project.

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify learner responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. In either case, such instances must be formally noted by the assessor, either in writing or recording, and be made available to the internal and external verifier. In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, learners must be given the opportunity for remediation at each stage of the project.

The evidence for a Higher National Project-based Graded Unit is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, each of which has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. This means that any re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage. The overall grade is derived from the total number of marks *across all* sections, and should reflect the ability of the learner to work autonomously and the amount of support required. In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, learners who have failed any stage of the project and have been unable to provide the necessary evidence through remediation must be given the opportunity for re-assessment of that stage.

## Instructions for designing the assessment task

The assessment task is a project. The project undertaken by the learner 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 learner

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

### Graded Unit title: Professional Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

The assessment task must require the learner to:

- ◆ analyse the task and decide on a course of action for undertaking the project
- ◆ plan and organise work and carry it 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

This assessment instrument is not concerned exclusively with practical activity — learners are provided with a brief that allows them to prepare, plan, and demonstrate creative skills.

The assessment should be based on a combination of the end result of the activity (the performance) and the carrying out of the activity (the process).

The project must involve a practical assignment culminating in a solo performance by the learner and a piece of choreography performed by a group (excluding the learner) in a stage dance style. Learners must demonstrate the application of skills, eg developing and devising newly created dance material in a dance style of their choosing, organisational skills, planning and staging choreography. Learners must also clearly demonstrate knowledge and skills from the dance technique Units.

Learners will be asked to:

- ◆ interpret and implement the brief
- ◆ choreograph a solo to be performed as an audition piece (approximately two to three minutes in length) appropriate to the brief
- ◆ select appropriate music
- ◆ choose appropriate audition attire and make up for the solo
- ◆ schedule and organise rehearsals
- ◆ choreograph a dance piece of at least three to five minutes in length for a minimum of three dancers (excluding the choreographer)
- ◆ use dancers to perform in a group choreography
- ◆ choose suitable costume and make up for the group performance
- ◆ performance of the solo and present the group dance piece
- ◆ respond appropriately to viva voce questions
- ◆ evaluate the performance (through feedback)

The performance should not be directed by staff, and learners should not be closely supervised while preparing for the project. A mentoring system would help learners select appropriate material and ensure they carry out appropriate preparation for the task.

Learners will individually choreograph a two to three minute solo appropriate to the brief. The context for assessment will be an audition.

Learners should identify, create and develop their own dance choreography and it is vital that the choreography and direction is the learner's own work. The group performance piece should be three to five minutes in length and contain a minimum of three dancers (excluding the choreographer).

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

### Graded Unit title: Professional Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

Both the solo and the group choreography will be presented in front of a panel consisting of a minimum of two people and a live audience. The audience can be made up of the general public or the class peers and the live performance may take place in a studio space or in a theatre venue. This will allow the learner to evaluate the response of the audience and may also allow for internal verification. Learners should then take part in a viva voce discussing their planning, process, performance and choreography. Five minutes should be allocated to this for the solo performance and a further five minutes on the group performance. This will provide the learner with appropriate feedback for their evaluation. The planning and development stages of the practical assignment should reflect the opportunities for individual research.

### Guidance on grading learners

Learners 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 learner 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"> <li>◆ has detailed evidence for the three essential phases of the project</li> <li>◆ is produced and performed to a high standard and is clearly interrelated</li> <li>◆ demonstrates an enhanced interpretation of the project brief which shows insight</li> <li>◆ is highly focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the project</li> <li>◆ has clear and well-structured performance concepts developed from plan to performance</li> <li>◆ uses language which is of a high standard and appropriate in terms of accuracy, and technical content in written work</li> <li>◆ effectively consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills</li> </ul>	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ has sufficient evidence for the three essential phases of the project</li> <li>◆ is produced and performed to an acceptable standard</li> <li>◆ demonstrates an acceptable interpretation of the brief</li> <li>◆ is focused and relevant to the project brief</li> <li>◆ displays satisfactorily structured performance concepts</li> <li>◆ uses language which is adequate in terms of accuracy and technical content in work</li> <li>◆ consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills but this may lack some continuity and consistency</li> </ul>

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

### Graded Unit title: Professional Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

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 learner for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

A = 70%–100%

B = 60%–69%

C = 50%–59%

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

Any learner who has failed their graded unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity, or in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. In the case of project-based graded units, this must be done using a substantially different project.

The final grading given must reflect the quality of the learner's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Learners must be awarded the highest grade achieved — whether through first submission or through any re-assessment, remediation, and/or reasonable assistance provided.

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

**Graded Unit title:** Professional Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

### 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 learner 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	<p>The planning stage is worth 20% of the marks.</p> <p>An action plan which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ the learner’s interpretation of the brief</li> <li>◆ any research gathered in response to the brief</li> <li>◆ identification of the style of audition that the solo is being prepared for</li> <li>◆ identification of the style of group piece being choreographed</li> <li>◆ detailed description of learner’s individual aims for both choreographies</li> <li>◆ an overview of the solo including information surrounding choice of material, skills demonstrated and specific dance elements for audition</li> <li>◆ an overview of the group piece including theme, structure, and style of the dance piece</li> <li>◆ movement plans for both choreographies illustrating use of stagecraft and design including choreographic structure, choreographic devices, floor plans, choice of costume, props, make up, etc</li> <li>◆ rehearsal schedule and identification of the timescales for completion</li> </ul> <p>The plan should consist of approximately 750 words or equivalent.</p> <p><i>The learner 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 learners (cont)

**Graded Unit title:** Professional Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 2 — Developing	<p>The developing stage is worth 60% of the marks.</p> <p>Learners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ perform the two to three minute choreographed solo in either a studio space or theatre space in front of a panel of at least two members and an audience which can either be members of the public or class peers</li> <li>◆ prepare and present a three to five minute group piece in the style identified in the planning stage (group piece will not contain the choreographer as a performer)</li> <li>◆ demonstrate good direction and rehearsal process by presenting a coherent group piece in the style identified in the planning stage.</li> <li>◆ respond appropriately to the viva voce questions relating to the stage dance theatre performance. The viva voce should last five to ten minutes.</li> </ul> <p>Performances should be video recorded as supporting evidence.</p> <p>A <b>record of the processes</b> underpinning the activity should be contained in a structured logbook, with appendices used where appropriate. This should consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ a plan of action</li> <li>◆ research evidence</li> <li>◆ demonstrate the ability to integrate research in to the rehearsal process and performance of both choreographies</li> <li>◆ detailed performance material illustrating choreographic devices, style of overall group piece, use of stage craft and design</li> <li>◆ analysis of rehearsal process in preparation for both solo and group performance to include: unforeseen events, scheduled rehearsals, goal setting, piece and movement development, and response to ideas/issues from mentoring</li> </ul> <p>The logbook for the development stage should be 1,000 words or equivalent.</p> <p><i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage.</i></p>



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

**Graded Unit title:** Professional Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 3 — Evaluating	<p>The Evaluating Stage is worth 20% of the marks.</p> <p>An <b>evaluation report</b> which should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ analysis and reflection of the performance of the solo</li> <li>◆ a brief analysis of the solo choreography</li> <li>◆ a brief analysis of the group piece choreography</li> <li>◆ an analysis of the use of choreography, devices, stage craft, and design of both performance pieces</li> <li>◆ a review and update of the plan of action in light of the performance experience</li> <li>◆ a summary of any unforeseen events during rehearsal and performance and their impact</li> <li>◆ identification of any Knowledge and/or Skills which have been gained and/or developed</li> <li>◆ assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the rehearsal process</li> <li>◆ identification of strategies for future development as a solo performer</li> <li>◆ identification of strategies for future development as a choreographer</li> <li>◆ analysis of the viva voce experience</li> </ul> <p>The evaluation should consist of approximately 750 words or equivalent.</p> <p><i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i></p>

### Support notes

Learners will plan, choreograph and present their work in a theatre/studio. Learners will work individually to produce their pieces of choreography and will be responsible for their rehearsal schedule, working relationships with their dancers, devising and setting the choreography, finding costumes and music.

This project should enable the synthesis of knowledge and skills acquired throughout the HNC Professional Dance Performance Group Award.

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

### Graded Unit title: Professional Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

The project brief should sample elements from the mandatory Units. Some examples of these are listed below.

Unit title	Element
Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques 1	Technique
Jazz Dance Techniques 1	Technique
Dance Technique for Commercial Performance 1	Technique
Dance: An Introduction to Performance and Production	Planning for performance, choreographic techniques
Dance: Choreographic Skills	Choreographic techniques and devices

It is suggested that the Graded Unit is delivered towards the end of the HNC year to allow for utilisation of necessary required skills. This will allow learners to take part in seminars, technique classes, research and plan their project, and receive mentoring and present their project. While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Weeks	Activity	Resources
1–18	Seminars: Introduction, presentation of brief, planning, identification of existing practitioners, samples of performed work	Dance studio, learner handouts highlighting performance/presentation requirements for varying style of performance in Stage Dance
19–30	Tutorials/Mentoring: one to one sessions to check progress and provide support	Dance studio/classroom/tutorial room
30–36	Assessment	Dance Studio

It is up to centres to take reasonable steps to ensure that projects are learners' own work. For example, centres may wish to informally question learners at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project on which they have embarked.

### Equality and inclusion

This graded unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Update of Conditions of Assessment	Jul 2018

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SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of Higher National qualifications.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Call SQA's Customer Contact Centre on 0345 279 1000.

## General information for learners

### Graded Unit title: Professional Dance Performance: Graded Unit 1

This Graded Unit will enable you to:

- ◆ develop skills in dance performance
- ◆ develop skills in the creation of professional dance performance choreography
- ◆ develop skills on working independently
- ◆ prepare learner to present themselves for audition
- ◆ develop as a dancer and a performer

In order to achieve the above skills, you will be required to create a group piece of dance choreography and a solo for an audition. Once you have been set your brief for the assessment, you will be asked to:

- ◆ interpret and implement the brief
- ◆ choreograph a solo to be performed as an audition piece (two to three minutes in length)
- ◆ schedule and organise rehearsals
- ◆ select appropriate music
- ◆ choreograph a group dance piece of three to five minutes in length for a minimum of three dancers (not including yourself)
- ◆ use dancers to perform in the group choreography
- ◆ choose suitable costume and make up for both the performances
- ◆ perform the solo and present the group dance piece
- ◆ take part in a five to ten minute viva voce
- ◆ evaluate the performance (through feedback)

Your assessment is broken down into three different stages: Planning Stage, Development Stage, and the Evaluative Stage. You must successfully complete each stage before progressing on to the next.

You will be mentored by your tutor throughout your practical project, and your material for performance must be approved by your tutor/mentor.