



Higher National Unit specification: general information

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HND 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 2

Graded Unit code: H4T4 35

Type of Graded Unit: Project

Assessment Instrument: Practical Assignment

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Unit purpose

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

- ◆ To develop advanced skills in dance performance
- ◆ To develop skills in the creation of professional dance performance choreography
- ◆ To develop a thorough working knowledge of the processes involved in preparing for production
- ◆ To further develop innovative and creative approaches to work in rehearsal and performance
- ◆ To further develop exploration and development of a deeper awareness of the self
- ◆ To prepare learners to audition for employment and places at Higher Education establishments

General information (cont)

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:

H4RM 35	<i>Jazz Dance Techniques 2</i>
H4RF 35	<i>Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques 2</i>
H4RD 35	<i>Dance Technique for Commercial Performance 2</i>
F1NW 35	<i>Dance: Advanced Performance and Production</i>

Credit points and level

2 Higher National Unit credits at SCQF level 8: (16 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.*

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 and performance elements.

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Conditions of assessment

Learners should be given a date for completion 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. The assessment task should be marked as soon as possible after the completion date. The final grading given should reflect the quality of learners' evidence at the time of the completion date.

At this level, learners should work independently. 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.

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.

The performance should not be directed by staff, and learners should not be closely supervised while preparing for the project, however staff can help to guide the selection of appropriate material and ensure adequate preparation for the task is carried out.

The performance will be performed to a panel consisting of a minimum of two people who will judge the performance and conduct a viva voce after the performance.

If a learner 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 learner's grade will be based on the achievement in the re-assessment, if this results in a higher grade.

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

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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 and performance skills. Learners should be asked to research, prepare, rehearse and present two contrasting solo dances for an audition.

The project must involve a practical assignment culminating in two pieces of choreography and two performances of this choreography. Learners must demonstrate the application of the following skills, eg developing and devising newly created dance material in a 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.
- ◆ select and research two contrasting styles for their choreography.
- ◆ select appropriate music.
- ◆ choreograph two contrasting dance solos of two to three minutes in length in preparation for an audition brief.
- ◆ choose suitable costume and make up for the performance.
- ◆ perform the dance solos.
- ◆ 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, as described in the *Conditions of Assessment*, above, would help learners select appropriate material and ensure they carry out appropriate preparation for the task.

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

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Learners will compile a formal plan of their process which will include information on their interpretation of the brief, initial ideas, research and planned timescale for the project. Learners will individually choreograph and perform two stage dance solos. Each solo piece should be two to three minutes in length and 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 performance venue. This will allow the learner to evaluate the response of the audience. This will also allow the performance to be assessed by the Graded Unit lecturer and may also allow for internal verification. This, coupled with formal feedback by the tutor from a viva voce of five to ten minutes, will provide the learner with appropriate feedback for their evaluation. The practical assignment and the way that it is planned and conducted should reflect the opportunities for individual research.

Learners will choose which two contrasting styles of dance to choreograph, however they must be influenced by a dance practitioner. Some examples include: jazz piece in the style of Fosse, commercial piece in the style of Brian Freedman or Hip Hop piece in the style of Shane Sparks. It is important to identify that these are examples and learners should be allowed to choose from the entire Dance industry which can include; Ballet, Jazz, Commercial, Hip Hop, Cabaret, etc. Although the piece should be influenced by a practitioner, it is vital that the choreography is the learner's own work.

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.

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

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.

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

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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"> ◆ learners' interpretation of the brief ◆ any information gathered in response to the brief ◆ aims of the practical assignment ◆ research into chosen styles and influencing practitioners ◆ an overview of the choreography, preparation and rehearsal of the solos ◆ identification of materials and resources and how they will be accessed ◆ identification of the stages involved and the timescales for completion of each stage including a rehearsal schedule for dancers <p>The plan should be approximately 1,000 words in total 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)

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Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 2 — Developing	<p>The developing stage is worth 60% of the marks.</p> <p>Rehearsal and Performance</p> <p>Learners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ demonstrate appropriate ways of working to achieve performance aims during the rehearsal process ◆ demonstrate the ability to integrate research in to the rehearsal process and performance ◆ perform the two contrasting solos of two to three minutes each ◆ demonstrating concentration, focus and use of techniques, dynamics and confidence in performance ◆ respond appropriately to the viva voce questions relating to the audition material ◆ viva voce should last five to ten minutes in length <p>Performances should be video recorded as supporting evidence. A record of the processes underpinning the activity should be contained in a structured logbook of 1,000 words or equivalent, with appendices used where appropriate. This should consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An analysis of rehearsal process in preparation for performance to include: scheduled rehearsals, goal setting, developing choreography, interpretation of research and response to ideas/issues from mentoring. <p><i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage.</i></p>

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Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 3 — Evaluating	<p>The Evaluating Stage is worth 20% of the marks.</p> <p>An evaluation report which should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ analysis and reflection of the performance of the solos ◆ an analysis of the choreography of both solos ◆ an analysis of the use of choreography, devices, and overall execution of both performance pieces ◆ a review and update of the plan of action in light of the performance experience ◆ a summary of any unforeseen events during rehearsal and performance and their impact ◆ identification of any Knowledge and/or Skills which have been gained and/or developed ◆ assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the rehearsal process ◆ identification of strategies for future development as a solo performer ◆ identification of strategies for future development as a choreographer ◆ analysis of the viva voce experience <p>The evaluation should consist of approximately 1,000 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 or studio. Learners will work individually to produce two pieces of choreography and will be responsible for their own rehearsal schedule, devising and setting the choreography, finding costumes and music. The learner will select two styles and influencing practitioners to base their solos around for their choreography and devise two contrasting solos of two to three minutes each.

It should also enable the synthesis of knowledge and skills acquired throughout the HND Professional Dance Performance course.

Learners should approve all material for performance with the mentor/assessor.

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Unit title	Element
Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques 2	Technique
Jazz Dance Techniques 2	Technique
Dance Technique for Commercial Performance 2	Technique
Dance: Advanced Performance and Production	Planning for performance

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.

It is suggested that the Graded Unit is delivered towards the end of the HND year to allow for relevant learning to take place with the assessment at the end of the course. 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 80 hours.

Weeks	Activity	Resources
1–18	Seminars: Introduction, presentation of brief, planning, research theme, costumes, music, creation/exploration of choreographic ideas, staging	Classroom/Dance studio, piano, CD, video
19–30	Tutorials/Mentoring: one to one sessions to check progress and provide support Rehearsals in studio	Dance studio/classroom/tutorial room
30–36	Assessment	Dance Studio/Theatre

Disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

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This Graded Unit will enable you to:

- ◆ to develop advanced skills in dance performance.
- ◆ to develop skills in the creation of professional dance performance choreography.
- ◆ to develop a thorough working knowledge of the processes involved in preparing for production.
- ◆ to further develop innovative and creative approaches to work in rehearsal and performance.
- ◆ to further develop exploration and development of a deeper awareness of the self.
- ◆ to prepare learners to audition for employment and places at Higher Education establishments.

You will individually choreograph and present two contrasting stage dance solos. Each solo should be two to three minutes in length and will be presented in front of a panel consisting of a minimum of two people and a live audience.

You may choose which styles of dance to choreograph, however it must be influenced by a dance practitioner. Some examples include: jazz piece in the style of Fosse, commercial piece in the style of Brian Freedman or Hip Hop piece in the style of Shane Sparks. Although the solos should be influenced by dance practitioners it is vital that the choreography and direction is your own work.

You will be given a brief and be asked to:

- ◆ interpret and implement the brief.
- ◆ schedule and organise rehearsals.
- ◆ select and research the styles of dance for the choreography.
- ◆ select appropriate music.
- ◆ choreograph two contrasting dance solos of two to three minutes in length.
- ◆ choose suitable costume and make up for the performance.
- ◆ perform the dance pieces.
- ◆ evaluate the performances.