



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 5)

Unit code: FH5X 11

Superclass: LB

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Summary

In this Unit candidates will be introduced to skills and techniques in the style of contemporary dance. They will develop the fundamentals of the technique which will incorporate warm up, floor work, travelling and sequences. Candidates will also have the opportunity to contextualise their learning by recreating movement in the style of a choreographer. They will also undertake some research into the choreographer and dance repertoire.

This Unit is an optional Unit in the National Progression Award in Dance at SCQF level 5 and can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit is suitable for candidates who are interested in developing contemporary dance technique and for those who wish to continue to study contemporary dance at Higher level. The Unit can be studied as part of an NPA, or as an introduction to contemporary dance for vocational or leisure reasons.

Outcomes

- 1 Demonstrate skills and techniques in contemporary dance.
- 2 Demonstrate contemporary dance sequences and phrases.
- 3 Demonstrate the ability to recreate contemporary dance repertoire.

National Unit specification: general information (cont)

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 5)

Recommended entry

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ E8XJ 10 Introduction to Dance
- ◆ E8XL 10 Dance: Contemporary 1
- ◆ E8XK 10 Dance: Classical 1
- ◆ E8XP 10 Dance: Alternative Option 1

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 5: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*)

**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 component in this Unit.

National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 5)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Demonstrate skills and techniques in contemporary dance.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Develop and demonstrate posture and alignment.
- (b) Develop and demonstrate the use of spine in curves and high release.
- (c) Develop and demonstrate the use of parallel and turn out.
- (d) Develop and demonstrate floor work and swings.

Outcome 2

Demonstrate contemporary dance sequences and phrases.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Develop and demonstrate travelling sequences.
- (b) Develop and demonstrate movement phrases.

Outcome 3

Demonstrate the ability to recreate contemporary dance repertoire.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Learn and recreate movement sequences.
- (b) Demonstrate performance qualities.
- (c) Identify appropriate background information relating to the dance repertoire.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 5)

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Outcome 1

Performance evidence supported by a video/DVD recording and an Assessor Observation Checklist is required for this Outcome. This evidence will be gathered under supervised conditions at appropriate points in the Unit.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate and apply correct posture and alignment when performing all Performance Criteria. It is important that candidates understand the use of the core muscles that provide stability.

Candidates must demonstrate the following:

Upper back curves:

- ◆ Lateral spine curves
- ◆ High release
- ◆ Contractions
- ◆ Roll downs
- ◆ Pliés in parallel and turn out (first and second position)
- ◆ Tendus and foot work in parallel and turnout

Floor exercises:

- ◆ Swings
- ◆ Curves
- ◆ High release
- ◆ Tilts
- ◆ Transitions from standing to floor and reverse

Swings:

- ◆ Standing swings
- ◆ Figures of eight
- ◆ Ski swings

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 5)

Outcome 2

Performance evidence supported by a video/DVD recording and an Assessor Observation Checklist is required for this Outcome.

Candidates must demonstrate the following:

- ◆ travelling which includes runs
- ◆ triplets
- ◆ leaps
- ◆ skips
- ◆ turns
- ◆ movement phrases using directions, floor patterns and floor work

Candidates will demonstrate short tutor-led movement phrases lasting a minimum of 1.5 minutes. This can be made up of short studies that add up to 1.5 mins. Evidence will be gathered under supervised conditions at appropriate points in the Unit.

Outcome 3

Performance evidence supported by a video/DVD recording and an Assessor Observation Checklist is required for this Outcome.

Candidates will individually demonstrate a tutor taught repertoire dance lasting a minimum of 1.5 mins. This short dance should be in the style of an established contemporary dance choreographer, chosen by the teacher/lecturer. This evidence will be gathered under supervised conditions on one assessment occasion.

Written and/or oral evidence is also required. The candidate will identify background information on the repertoire and the choreographer. This will include the following: brief biographical information on the choreographer, their contemporary style/influences, knowledge of other dance pieces by the same choreographer, theme and stimulus for the piece.

This evidence must be approximately 500 words and will be gathered in open-book conditions at appropriate points in the Unit.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides sample assessment material including an instrument of assessment, briefs and checklists. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 5)

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 an optional Unit in the National Progression Award in Dance at SCQF level 5 and can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to the fundamentals of contemporary dance technique through the practical application of the movement style.

Candidates will develop their dance technique skills whilst also developing a greater understanding of the context of the technique. Through short performances of the technique, candidates will be able to develop their performance skills and a sense of self within a performance context.

Outcome 1 introduces the fundamentals of a contemporary dance technique class.

Outcome 2 helps to develop the skills learned in Outcome 1 to include travelling and movement phrases and sequences. Candidates will develop the skill to rehearse and perform longer movement phrases. This will develop movement memory, timing and musicality. It is recommended at this level to include basic travelling movements: runs, triplets, basic leaps (eg brush jetés and skips). Further development takes place when the candidate is given longer phrases to learn. They will be given the opportunity to develop their spatial skills, change of direction, floor patterns and use of the floor.

Outcome 3 gives the candidate the opportunity to contextualise their learning and be able to perform a solo lasting 1.5 mins. The style of choreography chosen by the tutor should be an established contemporary style. Candidates are also required to contextualise their learning by gathering biographical knowledge of the choreographer, their style, influences and themes/stimulus.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 5)

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

This Unit can be taught to a group, working on the same movement material throughout the Unit.

The Unit should consist of a series of on-going classes which focus on the following areas: posture and alignment, use of the core muscles to provide stability, use of parallel and turn out, use of the spine in contemporary dance (curve and high release), pliés and tendus in parallel and turn out and simple floor exercises including fall and recovery to the floor.

It is advised that candidates are given feedback on their progress throughout the learning process. This can take the form of general and individual technique corrections in class time, one to one feedback at crucial points during the Unit, peer assessment, using media to self critique performance, etc.

Candidates should also be introduced to the concept of professionalism and how they can apply this to their own work and be able to recognise this in others, eg how they present themselves (clothing, hair), concentration and focus, appreciation of others' work, etc.

Tutors can use media/online resources to underpin the skills being developed throughout the Unit. Candidates should be encouraged to watch examples of good practice, the different contemporary dance styles that exist, and learn a little about the history of the style in general. For example, learning about the pioneers of contemporary dance (eg Duncan, Humphrey, Limon, Graham, and Cunningham) and the key influences that exist currently (eg McGregor, Khan, Shechter).

Candidates should be given the opportunity to watch contemporary dance either online or at attendance at live performances which would give them increased knowledge of the dance style. It would also allow them to experience performance styles and qualities and dance technique within performance. Candidates should have the opportunity to watch choreography by the chosen choreographer and be able to identify their style. Use of visual media, reviews of dance performances and theatre visits can all enhance the learning experience for the candidates.

Tutors should introduce candidates to the basics of correct alignment and use of the core muscles. This could be presented to the candidates through informal seminars with a focus on very basic anatomy of the spine and the muscles supporting good posture. Visual media (watching themselves on video), tutor and peer observation can be used to demonstrate correct alignment and identify postures that are incorrect and that have the potential to cause injury.

Partnerships with local choreographers/companies are to be encouraged. This would give candidates an opportunity to experience first hand the movement of the choreographer, or a dancer in an established piece.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Candidates will be producing written and/or oral evidence for Outcome 3, which gives the opportunity to develop aspects of the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Information and Communication Technology*.

Through peer analysis or perhaps working on tasks in pairs or small groups candidates will have opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Working with Others*.

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

Suitable instruments of assessment for all Outcomes are practical assignments.

Outcomes 1 and 2 can be developed concurrently and be delivered as part of the sequence of a whole dance class, eg warm up, centre work, travelling and phrases and sequences. Video/DVD recording can be filmed in groups or as a whole class.

For Outcome 3 candidates should present themselves one at a time and perform the tutor taught solo.

For Outcome 3 candidates should produce a written report/oral presentation in the region of 500 words or 3 minutes in length.

Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates 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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