



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 4)

Unit code: H2W0 10

Superclass: LB

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Summary

In this Unit candidates will be introduced to basic skills and techniques in the style of contemporary dance. They will be introduced to the basic 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 identifying a contemporary dance style and choreographer and briefly summarising a contemporary dance performance.

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 SCQF level 5.

Outcomes

- 1 Demonstrate basic skills and techniques in contemporary dance.
- 2 Demonstrate basic contemporary dance sequences.
- 3 Apply basic skills and techniques to the performance of a contemporary dance.
- 4 Demonstrate a basic understanding of contemporary dance.

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:

Expressive Arts experiences and outcomes in Dance

National Unit specification: general information (cont)

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 4)

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 4: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4*)

**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 4)

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 basic skills and techniques in contemporary dance.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Demonstrate posture and alignment.
- (b) Demonstrate the use of parallel and turn out.
- (c) Demonstrate floor work.

Outcome 2

Demonstrate basic contemporary dance sequences.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Demonstrate swing sequences.
- (b) Demonstrate travelling sequences.

Outcome 3

Apply basic skills and techniques to the performance of a contemporary dance.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Learn and recreate a contemporary dance.
- (b) Demonstrate use of space.
- (c) Demonstrate performance qualities and musicality.

Outcome 4

Demonstrate a basic understanding of contemporary dance.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify and describe a contemporary dance style and choreographer.
- (b) Describe a contemporary dance performance.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 4)

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 demonstrate the following:

Posture and alignment

- ◆ Placement of the spine
- ◆ Use of core muscles

Parallel and turn out:

- ◆ Pliés
- ◆ Tendus
- ◆ Battements

Floor work:

- ◆ Rolls
- ◆ Swings
- ◆ Transitions to floor from standing

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:

Swing sequences

- ◆ Ski swings
- ◆ Figure of eight

Travelling steps

- ◆ Runs
- ◆ Triplets
- ◆ Skips
- ◆ Leaps
- ◆ Change of direction/floor patterns

Candidates will demonstrate short tutor-led movement phrases lasting a minimum of 1 minute 30 seconds. This can be made up of short studies that add up to 1 min 30 seconds. Evidence will be gathered under supervised conditions at appropriate points in the Unit.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 4)

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 dance lasting a minimum of 1 minute. This short dance should be in a contemporary dance style. This evidence will be gathered under supervised conditions on one assessment occasion.

Candidates must demonstrate timing, musicality and performance qualities as well as the following:

Accurate dance steps and movements

- ◆ Dynamics
- ◆ Body placement

Use of space

- ◆ Spatial awareness
- ◆ Direction
- ◆ Floor patterns
- ◆ Entrances and exits

Outcome 4

Written and/or oral evidence is required for this Outcome. The candidate will identify and briefly describe one contemporary dance style and one contemporary dance choreographer. They will also produce a short summary of a contemporary dance piece they have watched.

The summary will include a brief description of the following:

- ◆ music
- ◆ contemporary dance style
- ◆ theme (if appropriate)
- ◆ lighting

This evidence must be approximately 300 words or 2 minutes if presented orally and will be gathered in open-book conditions at appropriate points in the Unit.

National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 4)

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

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

Candidates will develop their technical dance skills whilst also developing an understanding of the context of the technique. Through short tutor-led presentations of the technique, candidates will be able to develop their technical and performance skills.

Outcome 1 introduces the basic elements of a contemporary dance technique class. Candidates will learn the basic demands of a technique class and will experience the use of parallel and turn out, floor work and posture. The technique class should be progressive and introduce more complex movements gradually whilst repeating and building on previously covered exercises.

Outcome 2 helps to develop the skills learned in Outcome 1 to include swings and travelling steps. Candidates will develop skills in co-ordination, stamina, spatial awareness and control. They will also start to develop timing, phrasing and musicality.

Outcome 3 gives the candidate the opportunity to contextualise their learning and be able to perform a solo lasting 1 minute. The tutor should devise a short solo that combines elements covered in Outcomes 1 and 2. This will give candidates the opportunity to combine movements and phrases into a longer dance. They will be able to express themselves and demonstrate performance qualities.

Outcome 4 requires candidates to further contextualise their learning by demonstrating basic knowledge of one contemporary dance style and one chosen choreographer. They will identify one contemporary style and one choreographer who worked in this style. The candidates will also produce a short summary of a contemporary dance performance they have seen (either live or recorded). The summary will be a basic description of the contemporary dance piece.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 4)

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

This Unit gives a basic introduction to contemporary dance technique. The structure of the Unit enables candidates to take part in weekly progressive classes that build on skills already covered and introduce new skills as they progress.

Candidates should be encouraged to appreciate the importance of repetition of skills and techniques throughout the Unit. They will be able to take part in classes that will build their awareness of posture and alignment, stamina, strength and control. They should be encouraged to track areas of improvement and increased skill over the course of the Unit.

Candidates should be given the opportunity to gain feedback throughout the Unit. This can take a number of forms, for example:

- ◆ general class corrections
- ◆ individual corrections
- ◆ peer feedback
- ◆ one-to-one feedback with a tutor outwith class time
- ◆ self-reflection/observation (could be watching themselves back on video/digital media)

Candidates could track their feedback through a simple log that would help them remember corrections/feedback given and be able to apply these without being prompted. A simple checklist could be devised to help with this and candidates could enter their feedback under different categories, for example:

- ◆ alignment
- ◆ timing
- ◆ memory
- ◆ directions
- ◆ spatial awareness

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.

Dress code and personal presentation should be introduced to candidates at this level. It is at the discretion of the centre how this is implemented, but health and safety considerations should be taken in to account in terms of dress code, hair and footwear (bare feet for contemporary).

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 4)

Candidates can be introduced to the concept of professionalism in the dance class, which in turn will help candidates understand the importance of the following:

- ◆ punctuality
- ◆ attendance
- ◆ concentration and focus
- ◆ appreciation of others
- ◆ behaviours
- ◆ attire
- ◆ self-presentation

The Unit provides the opportunity for candidates to place their practical learning in context in Outcome 4. Candidates will identify a contemporary dance style and a choreographer. Centres have the opportunity to present some background/historical context to the style they have been learning. There are a wide range of resources available and it is advised that time is taken for candidates to watch and comment on different styles and choreographers (eg Graham, Duncan, Limon, Cunningham, Horton, Humphrey, Release).

It is at the discretion of the centre which piece of choreography is chosen for the candidates to complete their summary. It could be a piece watched on video/DVD or a visit to a live performance. It is suggested, however, that the work is based on a piece by a professional company performing in a contemporary dance style. It would be best at this level to avoid companies that present work that mixes styles and genres.

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

Suitable instruments of assessment for Outcomes 1–3 are practical assignments. A written report or oral presentation would be suitable for Outcome 4.

For Outcome 1 candidates will demonstrate a condensed tutor-led dance class which covers all of the skills and technique listed for Outcome 1. Evidence will be gathered under supervised conditions at appropriate points in the Unit.

For Outcome 2 candidates will demonstrate short tutor-led movement phrases lasting a minimum of 1 minute 30 seconds. This can be made up of short studies that add up to 1 minute 30 seconds. Evidence will be gathered under supervised conditions at appropriate points in the Unit.

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 lasting 1 minute.

For Outcome 4 candidates should produce a written report/oral presentation in the region of 300 words or 2 minutes in length to include the identification of one contemporary dance style and one choreographer and a short summary of a contemporary dance piece.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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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)*.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Candidates will be producing written and/or oral evidence for Outcome 4, 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*.

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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