



## National Unit specification

### General information

**Unit title:** Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

**Unit code:** H73F 46

**Superclass:** LB

**Publication date:** May 2014

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to introduce skills and techniques in contemporary dance, along with a basic understanding of the performance skills for this style. Contemporary dance is a style of expressive dance that combines elements of several dance genres including jazz, ballet and modern. It stresses versatility and improvisation and can be performed to many different styles of music.

On successful completion of this Unit, possible progression opportunities may include the Contemporary Dance Techniques Unit at SCQF level 7 (ie HNC) and other further courses of study which lead to recognised achievement at a higher level of dance performance.

This is a free-standing Unit and is also within NC in Dance at SCQF level 6 which is designed for learners interested in pursuing a career in dance.

### Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate a range of skills and techniques in contemporary dance through classwork.
- 2 Demonstrate contemporary dance knowledge and technical ability through the performances of sequences.
- 3 Demonstrate performance skills through a tutor taught choreographed solo dance.

### Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 6 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6)

## **National Unit specification: General information (cont)**

**Unit title:** Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

### **Recommended entry to the Unit**

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. There are no requirements for learners to have previous experience in this subject; however, experience in movement or dance at SCQF level 5 or equivalent would be beneficial.

### **Core Skills**

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

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

### **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.

### **Equality and inclusion**

This 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).

## **National Unit specification: Statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

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 a range of skills and techniques in contemporary dance through classwork.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Understanding of posture and alignment is demonstrated.
- (b) Use of articulation is demonstrated.
- (c) Use of form/clarity of shape in space is demonstrated.
- (d) Detail of movement is demonstrated.
- (e) Transference of weight and balance is demonstrated.

### **Outcome 2**

Demonstrate contemporary dance knowledge and technical ability through the performances of sequences.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Choreographed sequences are recreated.
- (b) Falling and suspension are demonstrated.
- (c) Use of floor work is demonstrated.
- (d) Travelling and elevation are demonstrated.
- (e) Musicality is demonstrated through use of timing and dynamics.
- (f) Projection and performance are maintained.

### **Outcome 3**

Demonstrate performance skills through a tutor taught choreographed solo dance.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Use of dynamics, musicality and rhythm are demonstrated.
- (b) Directions are demonstrated through the use of the body.
- (c) Projection and focus and performance are maintained.
- (d) Physical expression is demonstrated.

## **National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

### **Evidence Requirements for this Unit**

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

The Outcomes of this Unit are designed to be practical; therefore Evidence Requirements are primarily dance practice.

#### **Outcome 1**

Practical evidence of all the Performance Criteria is through the performance of contemporary dance classwork.

#### **Outcome 2**

Practical evidence of all Performance Criteria is through the accurate demonstration of two contemporary dance sequences containing a minimum of two technical elements covered in Outcome 1.

#### **Outcome 3**

Practical evidence of all Performance Criteria is required through demonstration of a tutor taught choreographed dance. The dance should last between 1 minute and 1 minute 15 seconds performed as a solo. A change of time signature is permitted.

Performance of the solo dance piece should include:

- ◆ Accurate reproduction of choreography
- ◆ Projection to the audience
- ◆ Performance style suitable to the mood of the piece

This Unit will be assessed by practical assessments undertaken in supervised conditions.

Assessment for all Outcomes could be integrated and be met within class. The Outcomes could also be assessed on a one by one basis or by means of combining any of the three Outcomes together. Alternatively, Outcome 3 can be assessed in a studio or theatre setting as a single assessment. This may be under supervised and controlled conditions.

Videoed evidence of all performances is required. And to ensure authenticity of learners' work during performances, mirrors must be covered or learners must not be facing mirrors.



## National Unit Support Notes

**Unit title:** Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and 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

All three Outcomes are designed to be achieved through tutor led set movement sequences and exercises in the form of technique classes.

Learners will be given opportunities to explore and refine all Outcomes simultaneously. The Outcomes are designed to support one another and can therefore work holistically.

Classes may take a focus of any one Performance Criterion or Outcome at any given time however the other Performance Criteria and Outcomes will still be embedded within the technique of contemporary dance.

Examples of the skills and techniques required in this Unit may include:

- ◆ Contractions
- ◆ Leg exercises
- ◆ Tendues/tendues with plies
- ◆ Plies
- ◆ Spirals
- ◆ Releases
- ◆ Contraction arches
- ◆ Centrework
- ◆ Parrallel plies with releve
- ◆ Parrallel plies with contraction
- ◆ Shifting body weight
- ◆ Body arcs
- ◆ Contraction in 2nd
- ◆ Jumps 1st/2nd/4th
- ◆ Triplets
- ◆ Leaps
- ◆ Runs
- ◆ Side Triplets

The movement sequences and exercises should be created to promote learning for numerous Performance Criteria at the same time, therefore they should be varied.

## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

### Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

Key influences include Skinner J. Releasing, J. Limón, M. Cunningham, and M. Graham. Youtube clips from the internet are bountiful with exercises for contemporary dance.

In Outcome 1 is looking at:

- ◆ how to work in class with correct posture and alignment, articulation of the joints and/or a specific movement.
- ◆ clarity of movement is to be covered.
- ◆ utilising transference of weight from one area of the body to another.

Outcome 2 is looking at:

- ◆ use of weight and timing, including falling and suspending simultaneously in movements.
- ◆ use of the floor — different ways of utilising movements such as rolling, lying down, placing weight into the floor using different body parts, travelling across the floor, etc.
- ◆ shifting in space — small jumps, turns, shifts and/or movements requiring the lengthening of limbs to cover ground.
- ◆ height of the elevations and/or the length of the elevations.

Outcome 3 is looking at:

- ◆ use of a variety of dynamic, musicality and rhythm, eg working on various tempos; with dynamic qualities and various rhythms.
- ◆ utilising various facings and directions.
- ◆ maximisation of physical presentation and expression of movement.

## Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit should provide learners with regular opportunities to develop both their technical and performance skills in contemporary dance. Tutors should assist learners in their learning by providing sufficient opportunity for formative feedback throughout the Unit, which could include:

- ◆ Lecturer feedback
- ◆ Peer feedback
- ◆ Self feedback through the use of video observation
- ◆ Time for self-analysis

The Performance Criteria for all Outcomes should be explored in a range of exercises, such as:

- ◆ Large dynamic full bodied movement
- ◆ Small and detailed movement
- ◆ Variation of speeds
- ◆ Variation of levels
- ◆ Variation of musical choices

## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

Learners should be encouraged to develop a sense of their own performance physical expression within a framework. This could be aided by tasks such as asking the learners to complete a phrase of movement. By adding their own section, you provide an opportunity for choice, personalisation and performance expression for the learner.

Throughout the delivery of the Unit, learners should be encouraged to develop any existing dance skills in conjunction with new contemporary dance skills. This will likely involve reaffirming feedback from the lecturer, and a continual mode of study. Demonstration of understanding can be evidenced through observation checklists and/or video documentation.

### Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

In order to achieve this Unit, learners are required to demonstrate practical evidence that they have met all PCs for each Outcome as specified in the Evidence Requirements.

The recommended approach is for assessment for all Outcomes to be integrated and be met within class. However, the Outcomes could also be assessed one-by-one or by a combination of any of the three Outcomes.

Video footage must be taken of all practical assessments for this Unit and may be supported by checklists and/or marking schemes. These records should be made available for External Verification.

In order to maintain authenticity, all mirrors should be covered or learners must not be facing mirrors during the practical assessments.

More guidance for tutors to assist with making an assessment decision:

#### Outcome 1

- ◆ Learner's understanding of how to work in class with correct posture and alignment, articulation of the joints and/or a specific movement. For example, specific would be the articulation of the foot, or more generic such as isolated arm movements.
- ◆ Clarity of movement. For example, if the exercise is delivered with instructions to bend the right leg and keep the left leg straight, the learner would have clarity of movement if these instructions were adhered to.
- ◆ Detail of movement within the exercises, such as specific hand movements, complex timing, flexed or pointed feet, direction of focus should be evident and the learner should utilise transference of weight from one area of the body to another (for example from hands to feet, one leg to another), and to balance on one leg or another body part.

## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

### Outcome 2

- ◆ Demonstration of the use of weight and timing, which can be full bodied, as in leaning forwards and falling.
- ◆ Use of Suspension, ie holding momentarily. Also falling and suspending simultaneously in movements such as a swing.
- ◆ Demonstration of a use of the floor. There are a vast amount of ways, utilising movements such as rolling, lying down, placing weight into the floor using different body parts, travelling across the floor, etc.
- ◆ Demonstration of shift in space. Evidence could be small jumps, turns, shifts and/ or movements that require the learners to lengthen their limbs to cover ground.
- ◆ Height of the elevations and/or the length of the elevations that are directed more at travelling across the space.

### In Outcome 3

- ◆ Demonstration of using a variety of dynamic, musicality and rhythm.
- ◆ Evidence could be working on various tempos; slow, medium and fast movement, with dynamic qualities such as sharp, soft, and various rhythms such as 4s, 3s and 7s.
- ◆ The learner should utilise various facings and directions, such as direction of travelling on the diagonal, facing stage right or left, etc and present projection and focus that is set for the movement.
- ◆ Throughout this Outcome, the assessor is looking for the learner to maximise their physical presentation and expression of movement.

## Opportunities for 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 social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at [www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment).



## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

### Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

#### (a) Core Skills

Although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills in this Unit, there are opportunities to develop the following Core Skills.

#### Communication

◆ **Component: Oral Communication at SCQF level 5**

In the dance education environment/dance instruction, learners have opportunities to develop good listening skills which may be evidenced by the performance of the learner in all three Outcomes of this Unit.

◆ **Component: Written Communication (Reading) at SCQF level 5**

Opportunities may exist during the delivery of this Unit to develop reading skills where supporting documentation is provided for learners in written format (eg handouts on terminology and vocabulary relevant to contemporary dance) to support observational learning.

#### Problem Solving

◆ **Component: Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5**

Using analysis and reasoning, learners have the opportunity to demonstrate both understanding and technical ability of a range of dance techniques, elements and terms which are appropriate for contemporary dance.

◆ **Component: Reviewing and Evaluating at SCQF level 5**

There are many opportunities for learners to review and evaluate their own performance and assess how well they are integrating techniques for contemporary dance into their individual movement and performance. Elements of dance such as expression, communication, interpretation and projection depend strongly on the individuality of each performer and will benefit from self-review and self-evaluation on the part of the learner.

#### Working with Others

◆ **Components: Working Co-operatively with Others and Reviewing Co-operative Contribution at SCQF level 5**

In the dance education environment/dance instruction, learners may have opportunities to develop skills in working with others such as, work in collaboration with others; use interpersonal skills; take responsibility for own contribution; reflect on own personal learning and/or provide peer assessments, etc. Also in the delivery of this Unit, where learners take part in group work, they have opportunities to develop interpersonal skills, take responsibility for their own contribution, support co-operative working; and demonstrate spatial awareness to other dancers.

## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

### Information Communication Technology (ICT)

◆ **Component: Accessing Information at SCQF level 4**

There are opportunities for learners to electronically access and collect relevant and appropriate information on contemporary dance styles, practitioners, etc and videos of relevant dance work using straightforward searches, using filtering techniques with appropriate criteria, keywords, etc.

**(b) Overview of other Essential Skills**

It is expected that learners will naturally develop broad, generic skills through this Unit. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Unit are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These may be built into the Unit where there are appropriate opportunities, some of which are identified below:

- ◆ **Literacy:** Opportunities exist for learners to develop their listening skills in class and in independent learning, in relation to their tutors, peers and audio-visual materials supporting class content. This may relate to information regarding course content regarding contemporary dance and/or feedback and guidance on their own learning (ie taking instruction about exercises, sequences, performance, techniques, etc).
- ◆ **Health and Wellbeing:** The practical nature of this Unit encourages learners to take responsibility for their own personal learning, and further develop their physical wellbeing through training in the techniques associated with contemporary dance. Class-based activities and performance opportunities encourage learners to develop further understanding of body/use of body in applying technique (eg transference of weight, suspension, balance, use of floor, etc). Group-based activities offer opportunities for learners to develop their interpersonal skills for the benefit of themselves and others.
- ◆ **Employability, Enterprise and Citizenship:** Through the delivery and assessment, this Unit provides opportunities to develop skills in working cooperatively, in both class and performance contexts.
- ◆ **Thinking Skills:** The requirement to accurately replicate contemporary dance sequences provides learners with the opportunity to develop their capacity to retain and apply non-verbal and sequential complex information. Further there are opportunities for learners to develop their capacity for creativity across this Unit, eg the performance in Outcome 3 should maximise physical presentation and expression of movement, etc.

## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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## General information for learners

### Unit title: Dance: Contemporary (SCQF level 6)

This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This Unit is designed to introduce skills and techniques in contemporary dance, along with a basic understanding of the performance skills for this style. Contemporary dance is a style of expressive dance that combines elements of several dance genres including jazz, ballet and modern. It stresses versatility and improvisation and can be performed to many different styles of music.

On completion of the Unit you will be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate a range of skills and techniques in contemporary dance through classwork.
- 2 Demonstrate contemporary dance knowledge and technical ability through the performances of sequences.
- 3 Demonstrate performance skills through a tutor taught choreographed solo dance.

You will learn a range of skills and techniques in contemporary dance. This will include understanding of posture and alignment; use of articulation; use of form/clarity of shape in space; detail of movement and transference of weight and balance. Then you apply these skills as well as learning new skills such as falling and suspension; use of floor work; travelling; and elevation. You then have the opportunity to demonstrate both your technical and performance skills for contemporary dance, including the use of dynamics, musicality and rhythm; directions and facings in space; projection and focus; and physical expression.

Assessments for this Unit are practical and your tutor will outline exact arrangements. This is likely to be demonstrations through class work and a solo performance of a short contemporary dance which will be choreographed by your tutor.

Within the Unit, there may also be opportunities to develop Core Skills in *Problem Solving, Communication, Working with Others* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

There is no need to have previous experience in contemporary dance to undertake this Unit, however experience in movement or dance at SCQF level 5 or equivalent would be helpful.

On achievement of this Unit, possible progression opportunities may include *Contemporary Dance Techniques* Unit at SCQF level 7 (ie HNC) or equivalent and/or other further courses of study which lead to recognised achievement at a higher level of dance performance.