



National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Dance Notation (SCQF level 6)

Unit code: H73R 46

Superclass: LB

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to introduce the learner to knowledge and application of the use of dance notation. Dance notation is a means of capturing and presenting dance motifs, movements and combinations. It can be used to both plan choreography and to document existing dances. This is a theory Unit, supported by practical elements which are designed to apply knowledge, understanding and practice within the practical dance environment.

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.

Achievement of this Unit may help learners to progress to higher awards such as HN in Dance or other further courses of study which lead to recognised achievement at a higher level of dance performance.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Describe dance notation.
- 2 Record dance movement in notation form.
- 3 Recreate movement phrases from dance notation.

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)

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Recommended entry to the Unit

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre and while there is no requirement to have previous learning in this subject, learners must be able to demonstrate the dance movements which they notate as part of this Unit. It would therefore be helpful if learners have previous experience in movement or dance at SCQF level 5 or equivalent. Knowledge and understanding of Intermediate 2 *Dance Notation: An Introduction* would also be useful.

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.

National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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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

Describe dance notation.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Describe the development of dance notation as a form of recording movement.
- (b) Identify and describe the graph used in dance notation.
- (c) Identify and describe the graphic symbols used in dance notation.
- (d) Outline the benefits of using dance notation.

Outcome 2

Record dance movement in notation form

Performance Criteria

- (a) Body parts are notated.
- (b) Direction of movement is notated.
- (c) Level of movement is notated.
- (d) Timing is notated.

Outcome 3

Recreate movement phrases from dance notation.

Performance Criteria

Recreate a short dance motif or combination from dance notation in terms of:

- (a) Body parts.
- (b) The direction selected.
- (c) The levels selected.
- (d) Timing selected.

National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

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

Evidence for this Unit includes a combination of written, oral and/or recorded responses and performance evidence.

Outcome 1

Evidence for each PC must be accurate and clearly described. Benefits of notation over the use of other techniques (such as video recordings) must be outlined.

One western dance notation system should be identified and used as evidence for this Outcome.

Outcome 2

Evidence for must be accurately recorded, noted or documented using the appropriate symbols to notate body parts; direction and level of movement; and timing.

Outcome 3

Evidence for this Outcome is practical. The learner is to perform a short dance motif or combination of movement from a piece of dance notation provided by the tutor:

- ◆ This should be a minimum of 16 bars of music.
- ◆ The dance motif or combination must be accurately and safely recreated in terms of body parts, direction, level and timing.

Learners' work can be presented for assessment in a variety of formats depending on the preferences of centres and learners, as long as this covers all Performance Criteria of the Unit.

All performance evidence must be videoed. To ensure authenticity of evidence, during performance assessments mirrors are to be covered or learners must not be facing mirrors.

Further guidance on assessment is provided in the Support Notes.



National Unit Support Notes

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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

This Unit is within the NC in Dance at SCQF level 6 and can also be taken as a free-standing Unit. The aim of this Unit is to introduce the learners to knowledge and application of the use of dance notation — a means of capturing and presenting dance movements, combinations and motifs.

Outcome 1 includes written or oral work to evidence an understanding of the chosen western dance notation system. Centres should choose one notation system according to staff expertise.

The Unit should cover the five different types of notation systems:

- ◆ Abstract
- ◆ Musical
- ◆ Visual
- ◆ Verbal
- ◆ Track

Learners should be made aware of some of the more popular notation systems available, such as Playford, Feuillet, Zorn Saint Leon, Stepanov Morris Danscript, Eschol — Wachmann, Laban, Benesh Movement, etc.

It is recommended that each learner collates their own vocabulary book, symbol dictionary or video which will act as a log they can refer to as they progress through the Unit.

In Outcome 2, dance notation could be made from moving images, live dancers or illustrated worksheets.

Outcome 3 involves a practical demonstration based on tutor-developed dance notation but there is scope for the tutor or learner to choose the dance genre or style. The movements should be of a standard that the learners are able to accurately and safely demonstrate.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

Delivery should be by a tutor familiar with at least one form of western dance notation ie Benesh, Laban notation, etc.

This may be supported by CD and/or DVD packages on dance notation as well as by visiting specialists such as dance company notators.

The Unit can be delivered to a group, working on the same material throughout with opportunities to work in pairs or solo, using peer or self-assessment. Learners should be encouraged to choreograph their own combinations for notation tasks and to use video recording to assist with identifying any additional support required.

Where this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award such as NC in Dance, learners should be encouraged to use their dance notation skills to record work in other dance Units; eg either complete choreography; starting positions only; or simple combinations in group or solo dances.

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.

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience and their understanding of their learners to determine the most appropriate methods to generate evidence.

Assessments must be valid, reliable and fit for purpose for the subject and level, and should fit in with learning and teaching approaches. Teachers and lecturers should also use inclusive approaches to assessment, taking account of the specific needs of their 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.

Outcome 1: A suggested instrument of assessment is a closed-book essay or report, where in written format of approximately 500 words or alternatively an oral presentation of around 5 minutes. This could also take the form of a question and answer assessment.

Outcome 2: This could be assessed using worksheets or videoed/live dance performances for which the learner must provide accurate and appropriate dance notation symbols. The symbols are to be used to notate body part such as head, arms and hands, ankles, knees, and feet. They are also to notate direction and level of movement, such as forwards, backwards, on diagonal small jump or large leap.

Outcome 3: A practical performance by the learner which shows application of knowledge developed in Outcomes 1 and 2. This should be a short dance motif or combination of movement (lasting 16 musical bars) based on tutor-designed dance notation.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Integration of Outcomes 2 and 3

These could be assessed during practical sessions, with the dance or movement being viewed from video recordings or performed live by fellow learners/peers.

The following examples are suggestions only:

- ◆ One learner could complete Outcome 3, demonstrating movement from notation provided by the tutor while other learners complete Outcome 2 by notating the movement demonstrated by the first learner.
- ◆ Alternatively, learners could be more involved in the assessments eg some learners provide a notated piece of their own choreography (approved by the tutor/assessor), which would satisfy Outcome 2. The other learners then demonstrate this choreography from the notation provided which could satisfy Outcome 3. The 'learner choreographer' would assist the tutor in identifying whether the movement had been recreated accurately. But final assessment decision **must** be taken by tutor/assessor.

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

To ensure authenticity of evidence, during performance assessments mirrors are to be covered or learners must not be facing mirrors.

Time should be allowed for any necessary re-assessment.

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.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential 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**
There are opportunities for learners to develop oral communication skills where assessment takes the form of short oral presentation(s) or oral question and answer session(s).

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Dance Notation (SCQF level 6)

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

Opportunities exist during the delivery of this Unit to develop reading and writing skills, eg where supporting documentation is provided for learners in written format such as handouts on relevant dance notation terms and systems; use of notation vocabulary; using or developing a symbol dictionary, etc. Also assessments may be in written format, eg short essays, written question and answers; worksheets; blogs, small portfolios; etc.

Problem Solving

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

Using analysis and reasoning, learners have opportunities to develop critical thinking in Outcome 1 which also includes highlighting benefits of using dance notation over other forms of recording dance movement (eg videos). In Outcome 3, using knowledge and understanding from other Outcomes, learners are to recreate movement phrases from dance notation symbols and terms provided by tutor. In addition, where this Unit is delivered as part of the NC in Dance, learners can be encouraged to develop dance notation skills to record work form other relevant dance Units.

◆ **Component: Planning and Organising at SCQF level 5**

In Outcome 3, learners are to plan and carry out a performance of movement based on dance notation provided by tutors.

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

Where Outcomes 2 and 3 are assessed together, there are opportunities for learners to reflect, review and evaluate on the performance of others in their group.

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 (in pairs or small groups); use interpersonal skills; take responsibility for own contribution; reflect on own personal learning and/or provide peer assessments on eg recreation of movement phrases from dance notation, etc. Also, where assessment for Outcomes 2 and 3 is combined, learners have opportunities to develop interpersonal skills, take responsibility for their own contribution and support co-operative working and undertake peer assessment.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

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

There are opportunities for learners to electronically collect relevant and appropriate information on dance notation vocabulary, symbols, specific notation systems and dance notators, using straightforward searches, using filtering techniques with appropriate criteria, keywords, etc.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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◆ **Component: Providing/Creating Information at SCQF level 4**

There are opportunities for learners to present information using ICT, eg electronically produced responses, short essays; presentations; posters; symbol dictionaries, etc. There are also opportunities to use blogs and wikis, etc to support learning.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Dance Notation (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 forms part of the NC in Dance at SCQF level 6 (ie Higher level) and is designed to introduce knowledge of the use of dance notation. This is about capturing and presenting dance movements and combinations as symbols and it can be used both to plan choreography and document existing dances.

This is a theory Unit, supported by practical elements designed to apply your knowledge, understanding and practice within the practical dance environment.

On achievement of this Unit you will be able to:

- ◆ describe what dance notation is.
- ◆ record/document dance movement in notation form.
- ◆ recreate movement phrases from dance notation.

Assessments arrangements will be outlined by your tutor and are likely to include the production of a short essay/report or an oral presentation; production of dance movement using notation symbols and form; and a practical performance of a short dance movement based on dance notation provided by your tutor.

There will be opportunities for both solo and group work. There are also opportunities to develop Core Skills in *Communication, Problem Solving, Working with Others* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

To undertake this Unit, you do not need to have previous experience of dance notation. However, it is expected that you will have previous dance experience as you need to demonstrate the dance movements that you notate. It would therefore be helpful if you have previously studied movement or dance at SCQF level 5 (ie Intermediate 2). Also achievement of the Unit *Dance Notation: An Introduction* at SCQF level 5 or equivalent would be useful.

Achievement of this Unit may help you to progress to higher Units in Dance (such as HNC level) and other further courses of study which lead to achievement of dance performance at a higher level.