



NQ Verification 2017–18

Key Messages Round 1

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Dance
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	March 2018

National Courses/Units verified:

H22R 75	SCQF level 5	Dance :Technical Skills
H22R 76	Higher	Dance: Technical Skills
H22S 76	Higher	Dance: Choreography

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Most centres continue to use assessment approaches from SQA unit assessment support packs on SQA's secure website, or approaches derived from these.

There are three Dance unit assessment support packs to complement a range of learning and teaching approaches (unit-by-unit, combined and portfolio approaches). Centres are reminded that, if revised or centre-created assessment tasks are used, it is strongly recommended that you make use of SQA's prior verification service to ensure approaches to assessment are valid.

Assessments that are submitted for prior verification must be internally quality-assured by centre staff. There is more information on [SQA's prior verification](#) web pages.

SCQF level 5 Dance: Technical Skills

Assessment standard 1.1 — Describing the technical skills and characteristics of the selected dance style

Assessment standard 1.2 — Explaining the development of the selected dance style

Some centres chose to combine these assessment standards into one task for candidates. This is an effective approach, allowing candidates to develop a deep understanding of the dance style, its history, development, and key characteristics. Verifiers saw good examples of personalisation and choice in the assessment approach through a range of presentation models, including essays and posters.

Assessment standard 2.1 — Demonstrating the technical skills and fundamental principles of two contrasting dance styles

An effective approach to this assessment standard should be demonstrated through structured classwork on a series of skill-specific exercises, rather than a range of skills amalgamated into a few short sequences. For jazz, examples of a clear approach would be style-specific skills presented through a warm-up exercise, stretching and conditioning, *tendus* and *pliés*, arm exercises, isolations, kicks, jumps, travelling combinations, and a cool down. However, short exercises focusing on single skills may be linked together to make longer exercises covering more skills, where appropriate. Exemplifying this assessment standard through two or three exercises does not show a wide enough range of technical skills to meet the assessment requirements.

Assessment standard 2.2 — Performing two tutor-choreographed dance sequences in contrasting dance styles

For candidates to achieve this assessment standard the dance sequences should be between one minute and one minute and 30 seconds. Care should be taken to ensure that the dance is not too stylised. Please refer to the [Course Support Notes](#) and unit assessment support packs for appropriate dance steps. If the dance sequence is too stylised and the content is limited, the candidate may be judged not to have met the national standard. The styles selected must be contrasting; further guidance of what constitutes contrasting styles can be found in the [Course Support Notes](#).

Higher Dance: Technical Skills

Assessment standard 2.1 — Demonstrating refined technical skills and principles of two contrasting dance styles

An effective approach for this assessment standard would be to create an assessment checklist to assess elements such as posture and alignment; timing and musicality; and the use of turnout/parallel in relation to skill-specific exercises, supported by video evidence and/or detailed tutor comments. A number of centres have used terminology such as 'secure pass', 'pass', 'fail', 'good', 'satisfactory', and 'poor' to show how they have arrived at their assessment decisions. This is a good approach; centres should not assign marks

when making assessment judgements, as this is not appropriate for unit assessment.

Assessment standard 2.2 — Performing two tutor-choreographed dance sequences in contrasting dance styles

To achieve this assessment standard, the dance sequences should be between one minute and one minute and 30 seconds. Care should be taken to ensure that the dance is not too stylised. Please refer to the [Course and Unit Support Notes](#) and unit assessment support packs for appropriate dance steps. If the dance sequence is too stylised and the content is limited, the candidate will be judged not to have met the national standard. The styles selected must be contrasting; further guidance of what constitutes contrasting styles can be found in the [Course and Unit Support Notes](#).

An effective approach for this assessment standard would be to create an assessment checklist to assess technical and performance skills in relation to specific skills, supported by video evidence and/or detailed tutor comments. A number of centres have used terminology such as 'secure pass', 'pass', 'fail', 'good', 'satisfactory', and 'poor' to show how they have arrived at their assessment decisions. This is a good approach; centres should not assign marks when making assessment judgements, as this is not appropriate for unit assessment. The course assessment marking sheets should not be used when completing unit assessments.

Assessment standard 2.3 — Applying knowledge of safe dance practice when demonstrating technical dance skills

This assessment standard should be demonstrated through practical work, which shows candidates applying their knowledge. Written tasks can be used to support candidates' learning, but should not be used in isolation to make assessment judgements.

Assessment standard 2.4 — Analysing and evaluating technical dance skills in own and another's work

Some centres have presented candidate work which makes use of observation schedules to analyse and evaluate performance. This is a good approach; although the centre should ensure candidates are given the opportunity to analyse this data to make informed and detailed evaluations about their own and another's work. A good approach would be to complete observation schedules and follow this up with a task sheet, which prompts candidates to make detailed evaluative responses in relation to the results, clearly identifying strengths and/or areas for improvement.

Assessment judgements

SCQF level 5: Technical Skills

Assessment standard 1.2 — Explaining the development of the selected dance style

When discussing the influence of a style-specific key choreographer, centres should ensure that the candidate's response relates clearly to the choreographer's influence on the dance style, and not simply a list of facts about the choreographer.

Higher Dance: Technical Skills

Assessment standard 1.1 — Comparing the technical skills and characteristics of two contrasting dance styles

If using Unit Assessment Support Pack 3: Combined approach, candidates will be comparing two dance styles from observing and evaluating two contrasting pieces of professional choreography. The candidate's comparison should be clearly linked to the styles of dance, and not the specific pieces of movement chosen by the choreographer.

Higher Dance: Choreography

Assessment standard 1.1 — Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of theme/stimulus, and choreographic structures, devices and spatial patterns appropriate to a dance for a group

If using Unit Assessment Support Pack 3: Combined approach, candidates will be comparing two dance styles from observing and evaluating two contrasting pieces of professional choreography. When discussing choreographic devices the candidate must refer to three devices for each piece of professional choreography, and these must be different for each. Assessment judgements of a 'pass' should only be awarded where candidates have clearly demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of six different devices.

Assessment standard 1.2 — Analysing the use of theatre arts in choreography

When discussing the use of theatre arts, candidates must clearly analyse the impact created in relation to the choreographer's theme and intentions.

Assessment Standard 1.3 — Evaluating the impact of choreographic principles used in dance

Choreographic principles refers to the use of devices, structures and spatial patterns. Candidates should not be rewarded for discussing the use of theatre arts as this is already assessed in assessment standard 1.2.

Section 3: General comments

Candidate assessment records should be included and indicate clearly the assessment judgement (pass or fail) made by the centre for each assessment standard submitted. Assessor comments should also reference how the candidate has or has not met the assessment standard(s) relating to the candidate evidence provided. For verification purposes, it is possible to submit interim evidence for a unit which candidates have not fully completed. However, the centre must still indicate pass or fail judgements and include supplementary comments which detail what the candidate needs to do to meet the assessment standard(s). For more information please refer to our [Guide to Interim Evidence](#).

When submitting video evidence, please ensure all candidates are clearly identified. This could be done through introductions, candidate numbers, or floorplans. Please also ensure all videos are clearly labelled with the name of the exercise or task.

For all assessment standards submitted for verification, the centre should ensure that evidence is clearly labelled with the assessment standard(s) it relates to. Centres are encouraged to make use of SQA unit assessment support packs and refer to the judging evidence tables — this contextualises the assessment task and gives advice on what a successful response would look like to meet the competency for each assessment standard.