



National  
Qualifications

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# Dance

# Performance

# General assessment information

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This pack contains general assessment information for centres preparing candidates for the performance Component of Higher Dance Course assessment.

It must be read in conjunction with the specific assessment task(s) for this component of Course assessment which may only be downloaded from SQA's designated secure website by authorised personnel.

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# Contents

Introduction	1
What this assessment covers	2
Assessment	3
General Marking Instructions	7

# Introduction

This is the general assessment information for the Higher Dance performance.

This performance is worth 70 marks. The marks contribute 50% of the overall marks for the Course assessment. The Course will be graded A-D.

Marks for all Course Components are added up to give a total Course assessment mark which is then used as the basis for grading decisions.

This is one of two Components of Course assessment. The other Component is a practical activity.

The performance has one Section, comprising two technical solos.

This document describes the general requirements for the assessment of the performance Component for this Course. It gives general information and instructions for assessors.

It must be read in conjunction with the assessment task for this Component of Course assessment.

## Equality and inclusion

This Course assessment has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html)

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment in this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

# What this assessment covers

This assessment contributes 50% of the total marks for the Course.

The assessment will assess the skills, knowledge and understanding specified for the performance in the *Course Assessment Specification*. These are:

- ◆ applying and combining technical skills and performance skills to perform two technical solos, each in a different dance genre

# Assessment

## Purpose

The purpose of this assessment is to generate evidence for this Component of the added value of the Higher Dance Course by means of a performance.

The purpose of the performance is to assess the candidate's ability to apply technical skills and performance skills to perform two technical solos, each in a different dance genre.

## Assessment overview

A sample of candidates will be assessed by a Visiting Assessor. Arrangements for this will be issued separately.

Candidates will take part in a single performance event which should be challenging and demanding. Although the technical solos may be in a style assessed in the *Technical Skills* Unit, the challenge and demand of assessing performance of the same style in Coursework assessment arises from the following:

- ◆ sustaining technical and performance skills for a performance of one and a half to two minutes for each solo
- ◆ performing finished dances rather than sequences
- ◆ demonstrating a range of technical and performance skills in each dance rather than across more than one practical demonstration
- ◆ the challenge of a performance event

The assessment will consist of two technical solos in different dance styles, each lasting one and a half to two minutes. Each solo is worth 35 marks.

During the performance of each solo, candidates will be assessed on application of technique and performance skills using the following categories:

- 1 **Application of technique:**
  - a technical accuracy and use of turnout/parallel as appropriate to dance style
  - b centring, balance, alignment and posture
  - c stamina, strength and flexibility
  - d spatial awareness and accurate recreation of choreography
- 2 **Application of performance skills:**
  - a timing and musicality
  - b quality and dynamics
  - c self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus

Evidence will be in the form of a live performance. Assessors will use recording documentation provided to record candidate achievement. This will show clearly the basis on which assessment judgements have been made.

The role of the tutor is to choreograph and teach the dances, and provide rehearsals, feedback and ongoing support for candidates during preparation until the assessment event.

The choreographed dances should not be exact copies of those performed for assessment in the *Technical Skills* Unit, but they can select from and build on the technical and performance skills developed in that Unit.

The dances should be of a nature and standard achievable by grade C candidates, while also allowing grade A candidates to achieve full marks where they are capable of doing so. They should incorporate a range of style-specific steps and principles which enable candidates to demonstrate sustained technical skills. There should also be appropriate opportunities for the candidates to demonstrate their performance skills.

When choreographing the dances, tutors should consult the *Course and Unit Support Notes*, which contain information about style-specific steps that might be included. Care must be taken to ensure that each dance is of a technical complexity appropriate to Higher level, and includes movements and technical steps listed in the *Course and Unit Support Notes*, or equivalent to these.

Each solo should consist of integrated technical skills which clearly demonstrate co-ordination, control, dynamics, spatial awareness and line. The choreography should challenge the candidates at SCQF level 6 to demonstrate a cohesive use of strong technique, musicality and performance specific to the style being performed. Dances must be choreographed to enable the candidate to demonstrate that they can meet all the aforementioned criteria whilst maintaining a strong technique which incorporates correct posture, weight placement and alignment.

The dance styles selected for assessment must be recognisably different from each other in terms of technique and style.

For example, hip hop and classical jazz would be an acceptably contrasting combination because hip hop could be described as grounded and urban, with a looser centre and lower centre of gravity than classical jazz, and does not require the specific articulation of the foot that classical jazz does. Other differences between these styles are that classical jazz involves more control, posture and extension than hip hop, as well as a more traditional alignment, weight placement and so on that hip hop does not require. However, hip hop and street jazz would not be appropriately contrasting as street jazz takes the elements from hip hop and fuses them with jazz, and as a result there are too many similarities between these styles.

Other combinations which exemplify styles with sufficiently different steps, characteristics and techniques include: tap and soft shoe Irish; highland and ballet; and highland and classical jazz.

Other examples of combinations which are **not** sufficiently contrasting include: tap and hard shoe Irish; highland and Scottish; and highland and soft shoe Irish.

The examples above are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive; there are many other possible combinations.

The following advice should also be considered when choreographing the solos:

- ◆ ensure dances are age-appropriate
- ◆ use style-specific steps and characteristics
- ◆ include movement sequences that use personal and general space
- ◆ create movement that uses a range of pathways on the floor and around the body
- ◆ vary the direction of the movements
- ◆ use floor work and movements which use different levels, or move between levels
- ◆ use whole body movements like jumps, turns and rolls, as well as smaller, more intricate body-part-specific movements
- ◆ vary dynamics, use different rhythms and speed, and a range of movement qualities
- ◆ consider using music which has clear time signature(s)

## Assessment conditions

Assessors must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work.

This assessment is a single assessment event with one stage: a performance of two technical solos, each lasting between one and a half and two minutes.

There are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access while preparing for the assessment.

Candidates must undertake the final assessed performance independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates, for example, advice or feedback on technique or performance skills. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis.

Clarification may be sought by candidates regarding the specification or instructions for the assessment if they find them unclear. In this case, the clarification should normally be given to the whole class.

Group work approaches as part of the preparation for assessment can be helpful to simulate real-life situations, share tasks and promote team-working skills. In this respect, candidates can learn and rehearse the choreographed dance in a group setting. However, the candidate will perform the dance individually.

Assessment should take place in an appropriate location such as a dance studio, gym or assembly hall, or stage, preferably with a wooden or sprung floor.

Appropriate clothing and footwear, which allow the assessor to see the shape and line of the body, should be worn during the performance. This is to ensure that technical skills can be reliably observed and that safe dance practice is observed.

## Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

- ◆ evidence of a single performance of two technical solos in different dance genres

Assessors will use assessment recording documentation provided to record candidate achievement. This will show clearly the basis on which assessment judgements have been made.

# General Marking Instructions

In line with SQA's normal practice, the following Marking Instructions are addressed to the Marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for Course assessment.

The assessment tasks will be marked collaboratively by an SQA Visiting Assessor and the centre, under conditions set by SQA.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

## General Marking Principles for the performance

*This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to this performance. These principles must be read in conjunction with the Detailed Marking Instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.*

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must always be assigned in line with these General Marking Principles and the Detailed Marking Instructions for this assessment.
- (b) Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.

## Detailed Marking Instructions for the performance

For this component, candidates will perform two technical solos, each in a different dance style.

The Detailed Marking Instructions which follow should be applied to each technical solo.

Each technical solo is worth 35 marks.

Elements of technique and performance have been grouped together under broad categories which incorporate a number of related or interdependent skills or performance qualities. The importance or prominence of particular skills/qualities within broad categories may vary between dance styles and it is therefore not always appropriate to consider each one individually. In making an assessment judgement about broad categories, the constituent parts should be considered together within the context of the dance style being performed.

Assessors will allocate a mark up to the maximum available as follows. The assessor should select the band descriptor which most closely describes the standard of the candidate's performance. Once the best fit has been selected:

- ◆ Where the candidate's performance just meets the standard described, the lower mark from the range should be awarded.
- ◆ Where the candidate's performance fully meets the standard described, the higher mark from the range should be awarded.

Element 1: Application of technique		
Category	Max mark	Mark band descriptors
a Technical accuracy and use of turnout/parallel as appropriate to dance style	5	<p>4-5 As appropriate to the dance style, there is sustained control, fluency and smooth transitions throughout.</p> <p>2-3 As appropriate to the dance style, there is some evidence of control and fluency.</p> <p>0-1 There is little or no evidence of control or fluency appropriate to the dance style.</p>
b Centring, balance, alignment and posture	5	<p>4-5 Centring, balance, alignment and posture are sustained throughout.</p> <p>2-3 Centring, balance, alignment and posture are mainly sustained.</p> <p>0-1 Centring, balance, alignment and posture are not, or are barely, sustained.</p>
c Stamina, strength and flexibility	5	<p>4-5 Stamina, strength and flexibility are sustained throughout.</p> <p>2-3 Stamina, strength and flexibility are mainly sustained.</p> <p>0-1 Weaknesses in stamina, strength and flexibility significantly affect performance.</p>
d Spatial awareness and accurate recreation of choreography	5	<p>4-5 There is effective use of personal and general space, and accurate recreation of choreography.</p> <p>2-3 There is some effective use of space and mainly accurate recreation of choreography.</p> <p>0-1 There are significant weaknesses in both use of space and recreation of choreography.</p>

Element 2: Application of performance skills		
Category	Max mark	Mark band descriptors
a Timing and musicality	5	<p>4-5 Timing is accurate and musicality enhances performance.</p> <p>2-3 Timing is mainly accurate and musicality contributes to performance.</p> <p>0-1 Performance is significantly affected by a lack of timing and musicality.</p>
b Quality and dynamics	5	<p>4-5 Quality of movement and varied dynamics enhance performance.</p> <p>2-3 Quality and dynamics contribute to adequate performance.</p> <p>0-1 Performance is significantly affected by a lack of quality and varied dynamics.</p>
c Self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus	5	<p>4-5 Self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus are clearly evident.</p> <p>2-3 There is some evidence of self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus.</p> <p>0-1 There is little or no evidence of self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus.</p>

## Administrative information

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### History of changes

Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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