

# Higher Dance



## Subject-specific guidance on gathering key evidence in session 2020–21

Document updated 5 March 2021 — component 2: practical activity.

Please read this guidance alongside [National Courses: guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates](#) and the SQA Academy resource, [Quality assurance of estimates for National Courses](#).

### Gathering key evidence for Higher Dance

This document and *National Courses: guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates* will give you additional support and guidance to support your decision making for session 2020–21. Evidence should be gathered later in the course, as a realistic reflection of a candidate's attainment. It is important to note that it is not the **quantity** of evidence, but the **quality** of evidence, in relation to its predictive value, that will support you during this process.

The following types of key evidence are likely to provide a good predictive value and may be helpful to you, although there may be other types of key evidence you would like to use.

#### Types of key evidence

You should focus on four key pieces of evidence when deciding a candidate's provisional result for Higher Dance:

- ◆ question paper
- ◆ practical activity — choreography
- ◆ practical activity — choreography review
- ◆ performance

You should consider the relative weighting of each course assessment component when reviewing candidate evidence.

#### Component 1: question paper

The question paper has 40 marks (scaled to 30), which is a relative weighting of 30% of the overall course assessment.

Candidates do not need to produce evidence for the question paper on a single occasion, but assessment tasks must be **unseen**. The closer the internal assessment is to the standard, duration, format and assessment conditions of the SQA question paper, the more reliable it should be.

The assessments you use must include content from:

- ◆ Section 1: dance appreciation in context (24 marks)
- ◆ Section 2: study of a professional choreography (16 marks)

Centres can produce their own question paper. Centre-devised question papers must be of a similar standard to an SQA question paper. When creating a question paper, please refer to the [specimen question paper and marking instructions, and the 2019 past paper and marking instructions](#). These illustrate the standard, structure, and requirements of the question paper. When creating a question paper you can use a combination of centre-devised, specimen question paper and past paper questions. However, you should not use the specimen question paper or a past paper in its entirety, as they are in the public domain.

Evidence generated later in the year, once learning and teaching has taken place and candidates have had the opportunity to consolidate knowledge and understanding, has a higher predictive value than evidence generated early in the course.

### **Component 2: practical activity — updated**

The practical activity consists of two sections and has a relative weighting of 30% of the overall course assessment.

The two sections are:

- ◆ Section 1: choreography (45 marks)
- ◆ Section 2: choreography review (25 marks)

Evidence with the highest predictive value would be the candidate creating a group or solo choreography and presenting it for assessment under a high degree of supervision and control. The choreography review should be conducted over time under some supervision and control.

We have published guidance on the [Dance subject page](#). It includes information about the solo choreography option and appropriate devices and spatial elements for group choreography to aid the creative process if physical distancing is required. You should use your professional judgement to decide if this guidance applies to your situation.

To provide further flexibility in session 2020-21, candidates can perform in their own solo or group choreography for this session only to help reduce the number of candidates working together on the practical activity component. It is vital that candidates develop creative skills and understand how to apply key principles to enhance the choreographic intentions, as this is integral for the validity of the Higher Dance course.

You must apply the marking instructions on pages 15 to 29 of the [Higher Dance Course Specification](#) when assessing the group choreography and choreography review. We recommend that you complete a mark sheet for each candidate, which you can find in the [practical activity assessment task](#).

For session 2020–21, we introduced a solo choreography option. You must apply the marking instructions in the *Guidance on modifications to Higher course assessments for*

session 2020–21 document when assessing candidates' choreography. You can find this document in the 'National 5 to Advanced Higher course information for 2021–21' section of the [Higher Dance subject page](#).

Candidates may decide to change from a group to a solo choreography late in the course due to current restrictions. In this case, candidates should keep the same theme, or have similar intentions for the piece. To provide support to centres and reduce the burden on learning and teaching, candidates that have completed their choreography review for a group piece are not required to rewrite the full review for a solo. In this situation, candidates should address any changes in the choreography review evaluation (task 3) by:

- ◆ stating the reason for the change from a group to solo
- ◆ explaining any new devices applied through motif development for a solo
- ◆ explaining any new spatial elements used in the solo

### **Component 3: performance**

The performance has 70 marks (35 marks each solo) and a relative weighting of 40% of the overall course assessment.

Evidence with the highest predictive value would be two tutor-choreographed technical solo performances in contrasting dance styles, performed under a high degree of supervision and control.

Candidates benefit from developing a strong technical foundation. Once they have this and have established the key principles of a style, they can work to enhance their performance skills.

You must apply the marking instructions on pages 32 to 35 of the [Higher Dance Course Specification](#) when assessing each technical solo performance. We recommend that you complete a mark sheet for each candidate which you can find in the [performance assessment task](#).

### **Assessment of practical components**

We recommend that you set aside two practical assessment dates so that you have back-up for any candidate absences. Practical assessment conditions should be as close to the SQA visiting assessment environment as restrictions allow. We advise you to film all assessments for quality assurance purposes within your centre and at local authority and national level. You can also refer to the recordings when making assessment judgements for your candidates' provisional results.

During the assessment of practical components, we recommended that:

- ◆ candidates wear appropriate attire and dance shoes suitable for the style or bare feet
- ◆ all candidates perform two live technical solos — presenting style one first followed by style two
- ◆ only one performance is allowed for live assessments — once the performer starts dancing you do not allow them to restart

- ◆ candidates give a short introduction to the choreography, stating the theme, three devices and structure before the choreography is performed
- ◆ only the candidate and the assessor(s) are present during the assessment
- ◆ if an additional person is present to operate the recording equipment, they must not engage in or comment on the assessment process

### **Using additional assessment resources for session 2020–21: key information**

It is important that you use valid and reliable assessment when gathering evidence in session 2020–21.

In Higher Dance, SQA will provide a question paper for session 2020–21. Please note that the marking instructions have not been standardised based on candidate responses. You may therefore need to agree within your centre how to consistently mark an item if a candidate response is not covered by the marking instructions.

The Higher Dance question paper will only be available on SQA's secure website — you must treat this confidentially, in the same way as other live assessment materials.

You have the option to use the question paper as an internal assessment for gathering candidate evidence. The question paper can be split to support assessments you carry out during class time.

If you use a question paper in part or in its entirety, you should remind candidates that they must not discuss the content of the paper with anyone, including friends, family or on social media.

### **Understanding the national standard**

You must base your provisional results on demonstrated attainment from the candidate evidence gathered for each component. You should ensure that candidate evidence is judged in line with the national standard and that you have taken the weighting for each component into consideration.

Please refer to examples of candidate evidence from previous years, which illustrate how marking instructions are applied. Question paper evidence and candidate responses with commentaries from 2019 are available on the [Understanding Standards website](#).

Examples of practical activity and performance along with commentaries are available on SQA's Understanding Standards Higher Dance **secure** web page. Newly published materials are available for:

- ◆ solo performances in jazz, contemporary and commercial (2020)
- ◆ practical activity — three choreographies and four choreography reviews (2020)

An example of the practical activity — solo choreography option will also be available soon.