



Higher National and Graded Unit

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2022

Dance

Verification group number: 132

Introduction

The following units were verified:

H4RE 34	Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques 1
H4RC 34	Dance Technique for Commercial Performance 1
F1NS 34	Dance: Choreographic Skills
F1LE 34	Dance: Anatomy and Injury Prevention for Dancers
H4RL 34	Jazz Dance Techniques 1
F1LF 34	Dance: Body Conditioning
H4RM 35	Jazz Dance Techniques 2
H4T1 35	Audition and Portfolio Skills
F1NW 35	Dance: Advanced Performance and Production
H4RF 35	Dance: Classical Ballet Techniques 2
H4RD 35	Dance Technique for Commercial Performance 2
F1R4 35	Dance: Contextual Studies

Overall verification was successful for the verification group Dance (132) for session 2021–22. Centres have maintained standards and only areas for development were provided.

Category 2: Resources

Criterion 2.1: Assessors and internal verifiers must be competent to assess and internally verify, in line with the requirements of the qualification.

In all circumstances, centres were able to provide CPD records for all of their assessors and internal verifiers. A range of professional, personal and SQA CPD was sampled; for the most part, it was evident that staff were working to ensure they remained on top of their own development. At times, there was a lack of training and development that focused on the ability to undertake effective assessment and internal verification (IV). Centres should utilise online courses available through SQA to ensure all relevant staff are equipped with experience, skills and CPD, so that staff can carry out these processes to the best of their ability.

Criterion 2.4: There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.

Some centres provided risk assessments for the practical spaces used. Centres utilised Assessment Support Packs (ASPs) well for the unit Anatomy and Injury Prevention for Dancers. In some cases, learning and assessment materials for Choreographic Skills and Contextual Studies could have supported learners further by drawing out the required level of work. In most cases, pre-delivery reviews and staff meetings took place, and were well minuted to ensure environment, equipment, reference, learning and assessment materials were all up-to-date and of the required standard.

Some centres should link practical exercises together. Repeating exercises and running the full assessment together will help to develop the candidates in terms of movement memory retention, stamina, muscular endurance and strength.

Category 3: Candidate support

Criterion 3.2: Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.

In all circumstances, centres were able to provide detailed information regarding course entry. There was a variety of evidence gathered, ranging from prior achievements, audition processes and rigorous application submissions. Centres understand the requirements of the courses and are not taking on candidates who will not be able to achieve unit or full award passes.

Criterion 3.3: Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.

Due to the small numbers in some centres, a vast number of one-to-one meetings with candidates was evidenced. A range of feedback forms, scheduled sessions and reporting opportunities were also evidenced. Overall, candidates were aware of their strengths and development needs, and where they were on their learning journey.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

Criterion 4.2: Internal assessment and verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.

It was recommended that some centres utilise the detailed forms available from SQA. While the centres' forms met the requirements in a satisfactory way, there was scope to develop these to better support internal processes and, in turn, benefit the candidates. Centres can utilise the 'Internal Verification Toolkit for Centres Delivering HN Qualifications', in particular the appendices on pages 22–38:

- ◆ Pre-delivery Meeting Form
- ◆ Internal Prior Verification of Assessment Record
- ◆ Record of Internal Verification Activities during Delivery

It was also recommended that some centres ensure that IV is completed on a separate sheet to initial assessment. This ensures that the IV will not be influenced by the assessors' initial judgements, which will allow for more purposeful professional discussion in turn, whilst also supporting the external verifiers in their judgements.

Overall, centres had well-rounded policies in place and well-documented IV meetings, and they were fair and consistent in their approach to standardising both practical and theory-based assessments.

Criterion 4.3: Assessment instruments and methods and their selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.

It was recommended that some centres develop the complexity of practical work to meet the required level of the qualification being delivered. Units identified as requiring development in terms of complexity were Jazz and Ballet, and also the choreographic principles used within Choreographic Skills. Some written work sampled — particularly in Body Conditioning and Audition and Portfolio — required development in terms of candidates' work. It was recommended in some cases that the depth of analysis, reflection and evaluation required improvement to match the feedback that had been given by assessors and internal verifiers.

Overall, the standard of both practical and theoretical assessments was valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair. Some centres surpassed the standard expected in practical units, showcasing high levels of ability and talent. ASPs were used, particularly for the Anatomy unit, which supported success for centres and candidates.

Criterion 4.4: Assessment evidence must be the candidate's own work, generated under SQA's required conditions.

All centres sampled provided a detailed plagiarism and malpractice policy. The majority of centres ensure a candidate declaration is signed in advance of assessment work. Also, most policies reflect special consideration for the 'copying of choreography', which is good practice when considering possible subject specific challenges.

Criterion 4.6: Evidence of candidates' work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against SQA's requirements.

In some centres, leniency was identified in certain styles of dance in comparison to others, based on the strengths of the dancer. Whilst level requirements were met on a 'satisfactory' level, this is not good practice, and expectations of assessors must be consistent and match the requirements of the course specifications.

Overall, most centres utilised the SQA requirement set out in the course specifications and ASPs. The candidates' work was then judged accurately and consistently by all assessors and internal verifiers.

Criterion 4.7: Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.

All centres provided evidence of storing candidate work in secure environments. This was predominately in online, password protected portals. There was some confusion about how long evidence must be retained following the completion of an award; however, this has now been clarified with concerned centres.

Criterion 4.9: Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.

Due to small centres and the platform of online meetings, large amounts of staff from each centre were able to attend many external verification (EV) feedback sessions. This allowed the information to be disseminated directly from the EV, which staff found helpful. In cases where this was not possible, centres had planned feedback sessions for all staff after receiving the verification report. It was evident this was a part of common practice within centres, as some centre staff could reference previous meetings, verification and feedback sessions.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following good practice was reported during session 2021–22:

- ◆ excellent approaches in supporting candidates to develop areas of practical weaknesses
- ◆ excellent levels of practical work in some centres to push and challenge candidates
- ◆ industry leading choreography within centres to push and inspire candidates
- ◆ rigorous IV to maintain the national standard in most centres

Specific areas for development

The following areas for development were reported during session 2021–22:

- ◆ CPD to ensure staff are fully aware of the importance of IV and the rationale behind the process
- ◆ ensuring all dance styles are held to the same standard
- ◆ combining practical exercises where possible to provide challenge