

NextGen: HN unit specification

Jazz Dance (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: JDDN 47

SCQF level: 7 (16 SCQF credit points)

Valid from: August 2026

This unit specification provides detailed information about the unit to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It is for lecturers and assessors, and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver and assess the unit.

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Unit purpose

This unit enables learners to develop skills in jazz dance, specifically:

- fundamental skills and techniques
- artistry and performance

Entry is at your centre's discretion. We recommend the unit to learners who have completed one or more of the following:

- Dance at SCQF level 6
- Higher Dance

Learners study this unit as part of Higher National Certificate (HNC) Dance. They can also study it on a stand-alone basis.

Learners who complete the unit may progress to further studies and/or work in the dance or performing arts industries.

Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

1. demonstrate fundamental skills and techniques in jazz dance
2. demonstrate varied jazz dance styles
3. demonstrate jazz dance skills and techniques in performance
4. apply critical reflection and knowledge, highlighting awareness of key skills and practices

Evidence requirements

The standard of evidence for the outcomes should be consistent with the SCQF level of the unit.

Outcome 1

Learners must demonstrate fundamental skills and techniques in jazz dance. They must:

- participate in jazz dance classes that include:
 - a technical warm up
 - an isolation technique exercise
 - a stretch exercise
 - an adage and floor work phrase
 - a kick phrase
 - a pirouette and turn phrase
 - a jump and leap phrase
- perform a prepared class without tutor demonstration
- demonstrate co-ordination, control and accuracy of line
- perform with an awareness of rhythmical frameworks and accents
- demonstrate appropriate interpretation of musical phrasing and dynamics

To assess learners' competence, you observe their participation in classes, in which they demonstrate the knowledge and skills required for this outcome.

You must complete an assessor checklist and record the assessment for evidence. You must clearly label each learner, for example, with a badge or a sheet of paper attached to their clothing, using either a number or a letter system. Each learner's label must be clearly visible on the recording. No more than eight learners should be in each recording.

Outcome 2

Learners must demonstrate varied jazz dance styles. They must:

- perform a minimum of three short, contrasting choreographed phrases (lasting a minimum of 40 seconds each)
- demonstrate an understanding of classic and current jazz dance performance styles

To assess learners' competence, you observe their performance of a minimum of three contrasting choreographed phrases.

You must complete an assessor checklist. You may record the assessment for evidence.

Outcome 3

Learners demonstrate jazz dance skills and techniques in performance. They must:

- participate in a live performance of jazz dance
- perform tutor-set choreography
- demonstrate effective use of the performance space
- demonstrate artistic expression and communication

To assess learners' competence, you assess their performance of a tutor-set choreography lasting a minimum of 2 minutes. Learners can perform a solo or in a group.

You must complete an assessor checklist and record the assessment for evidence.

You must clearly label each learner, for example, with a badge or a sheet of paper attached to their clothing, using either a number or a letter system. Each learner's label must be clearly visible on the recording. No more than eight learners should be in each recording.

Outcome 4

Learners must apply critical reflection and knowledge, highlighting awareness of skills and techniques. They must:

- participate in a professional discussion, demonstrating their self-reflection and understanding of skills and techniques.

To assess learners' competence, you assess their reflections and responses through a professional discussion lasting a minimum of 5 minutes.

You must complete an assessor checklist. You may record the assessment for evidence.

Knowledge and skills

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 1</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • posture, alignment, placement and control • weight placement and transference in static and travelling phrases • complete co-ordination and line • varied dance rhythms and time signatures • musical phrasing and dynamics, and how they enhance performance 	<p>Outcome 1</p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate correct posture, alignment, placement and control • demonstrate effective weight placement and transference in static and travelling phrases • demonstrate co-ordination and line • perform with an awareness of rhythmical frameworks and accents • demonstrate appropriate interpretation of phrasing and dynamics
<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the varied stylistic qualities required for jazz dance (classic and current) 	<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpret and express a range of movement qualities while performing jazz dance choreography • adapt performance qualities to suit the nature of the choreography
<p>Outcome 3</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to retain and reproduce set choreography • synthesis of technique and performance skills • spatial awareness • projection and communication with the audience 	<p>Outcome 3</p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurately reproduce set choreography • synthesise technique and expressive artistic qualities in the performance of jazz dance • perform with appropriate spatial awareness • project and communicate with the audience to convey mood, emotion or character

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 4</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of reflective practice • the importance of listening skills • how to analyse and evaluate their personal technical and artistic performance • ways to evaluate their focus and approach • how to identify and implement strategies leading to personal progression 	<p>Outcome 4</p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse and reflect on their technique and performance skills in jazz dance • evaluate the effectiveness of their approach in the studio • set targets for progression • identify and implement strategies to achieve personal goals

Meta-skills

You must give learners opportunities to develop their meta-skills throughout this unit. We have suggested how to incorporate the most relevant ones into the unit content, but you may find other opportunities.

Self-management

This includes focusing, integrity, adapting and initiative. The most relevant are:

- focusing:
 - remaining focused throughout classes and performance assessments
 - retaining and applying feedback in a consistent way to build on technical and artistic development
- integrity:
 - contributing in a positive way to class (or rehearsals)
 - being punctual and prepared for class (or rehearsals)
- adapting:
 - working with others
 - responding to new and challenging choreography
 - responding and adjusting to varying musical rhythms and tempos
 - adapting movement phrases or choreography to work in different performance spaces
- initiative:
 - creating and developing movement phrases
 - instigating individual and group development tasks

Social intelligence

This includes communicating, feeling, collaborating and leading. The most relevant are:

- communicating:
 - engaging with tutors and fellow dancers
 - engaging in reciprocal feedback tasks
 - communicating through expressive movement qualities
- feeling:
 - developing empathy with fellow dancers
 - demonstrating empathetic responses to music and tone
 - demonstrating empathetic responses to character and mood
 - showing synchronicity with emotional states of other dancers
 - demonstrating inclusivity in practice
- collaborating:
 - working with fellow dancers to develop movement phrases
 - working with fellow dancers to resolve challenges within movement phrases
 - absorbing and applying direction from a choreographer or tutor

Innovation

This includes curiosity, creativity, sense-making and critical thinking. The most relevant are:

- curiosity:
 - exploring self-expression
 - exploring musical response

- creativity:
 - developing artistry through creative and musical expression
 - exploring emotions through movement
- sense-making:
 - understanding terminology
 - analysing vocabulary
- critical thinking:
 - reviewing and reflecting on personal performance
 - strategising for achievement of long-term goals

Literacies

This unit provides opportunities to develop the following literacies.

Communication

- presenting and performing
- expressing emotion and feelings through movement
- working with others

Digital

- researching
- communicating and documenting

Learning for Sustainability

Throughout this unit, you should encourage learners to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of sustainability.

This includes:

- a general understanding of social, economic and environmental sustainability
- a general understanding of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- a deeper understanding of subject-specific sustainability
- the confidence to apply the skills, knowledge, understanding and values they develop in the next stage of their life.

The following SDGs are particularly relevant to this unit:

- 3 good health and wellbeing
- 4 quality education

Delivery of unit

This is a mandatory unit in HNC Dance.

The notional time for delivery and assessment is 80 hours. The amount of time you allocate to each outcome is at your discretion.

We recommend that you run this unit throughout the duration of the HNC Dance course.

You can integrate and cross-assess this unit with the following mandatory and optional units at SCQF level 7:

- Choreographic Practice
- Dance Injury Prevention, Wellbeing and Health
- Classical Ballet
- Contemporary Dance
- Commercial Dance
- Dance Teaching Skills

Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

Content and context for this unit

This unit is designed to develop learners' jazz dance technique, musicality and artistry. It provides opportunities for learners to increase their knowledge of a range of classic and current styles required for jazz dance performance.

Learners develop strength, stamina, flexibility and control through participating in regular, studio-based classes. These classes are designed to help learners develop technical and artistic skills in a safe and supported environment.

Learners develop enhanced musicality and artistry through exploring musical phrasing, interpretation and expression.

Through reflective tasks, learners can analyse their strengths and areas for development, increasing autonomy in their practice.

Learners increase their knowledge and understanding of the importance of safe practice in dance through warm up, cool down and increased technical understanding.

You should use subject-appropriate language when delivering the unit. The following list of vocabulary is not exhaustive, but an indication of the level learners should be working at.

Plié	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demi-plié and full plié in parallel and turned-out positions
Foot work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • battement tendu, front, side and back • battement glissé, front, side and back • battement at 90 degrees, front, side and back
Isolations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • head • shoulders • chest • arms • hips • legs
Kicks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • front, side and back • développé, front and side • fan kick • layout • preparation layout to floor • hitch kick
Adage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • développé, front, side and back • arabesque • attitude
Floor work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smooth transitions to and from the floor • rolls • slides • knee spin
Turns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • double pirouette en dehors • pirouette en dedans • pencil turn • chassé turn • posé turn in retiré and cou-de-pied • chainés

Elevated steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coupé turn • picked up turn • barrel turn • jeté en avant and in second • stag leap • box jump • axel turn • coupé jeté en tournant
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Resources

Classes, workshops and assessments should take place in an appropriate location, such as a dance studio, gym hall, assembly hall or stage. We recommend the location has:

- a wooden or sprung floor
- adequate heating
- a sound system
- audio and visual equipment

Staff teaching the unit should have subject expertise in Dance and be qualified to at least SCQF level 8 or equivalent. They should have knowledge of safe dance practice, including appropriate:

- posture
- alignment
- warm up and cool down
- hydration
- clothing, footwear and hair styling

Approaches to delivery

The overall unit delivery time is a notional 80 hours of contact time for delivery and assessment. We expect learners to carry out a further 80 hours of self-directed study.

Demonstrate fundamental skills and techniques in jazz dance (outcome 1)

Learners must demonstrate a full jazz dance class that includes:

- a technical warm up
- an isolation technique exercise
- a stretch exercise
- an adage and floor work phrase
- a kick phrase
- a pirouette and turn phrase
- a jump and leap phrase

Learners should take part in unset jazz dance classes to develop comprehensive vocabulary before learning set exercises and phrases to present at assessment.

Throughout the assessed class, learners should demonstrate that they can maintain correct posture, alignment and control. Learners should also demonstrate secure weight placement and transference. They should move with co-ordination in centre exercises and travelling phrases.

You should introduce learners to a range of strengthening and stretching training exercises to ensure safe practice and increase range.

Learners should accurately maintain correct rhythm and timing. They should also demonstrate appropriate musical phrasing and dynamics.

Learners should take part in exercises designed to enhance their understanding of musical structure. You should introduce them to varied time signatures, with particular attention to syncopation. Learners should develop their understanding of key jazz dance rhythms such as swing, Latin and funk rhythms.

Learners should regularly take part in technical classes throughout the course to optimise progression and ensure safe practice.

You should encourage learners to record their work to help with reflection and evaluation, and engage in reciprocal peer feedback tasks to enhance their learning.

Demonstrate varied jazz dance styles (outcome 2)

Learners perform a minimum of three short, contrasting choreographed phrases.

The following list is not exhaustive, but they could study styles such as:

- the Jazz Age (1920s)
- the Swing Era (1930s and 1940s)
- the Golden Age (1930s to 1950s Hollywood)
- rock and roll (1950s to 1960s)
- disco (1970s)
- hip hop
- lyrical jazz
- current commercial dance trends
- Broadway and West End musical theatre production (1900 to the present day)

You should encourage learners to research the influence of significant choreographers on the development of jazz dance styles. They could include:

- Jack Cole
- Jerome Robbins
- Katherine Dunham
- Bob Fosse
- Matt Mattox
- Susan Stroman
- Michael Bennett
- Debbie Allen
- Arlene Phillips
- Mandy Moore
- Kate Prince
- Wade Robson
- Sonya Tayeh

Learners should demonstrate an understanding of classic and current jazz dance performance styles. They should show appropriate contrast in quality, style, intention and expression.

Learners could take part in workshops focusing on different styles relevant to jazz dance performance.

You should encourage learners to watch live and recorded performances of jazz dance to deepen their understanding of the breadth of styles required in jazz dance performance.

You should encourage learners to record their work to help with reflection and evaluation, and engage in reciprocal peer feedback tasks to enhance their learning.

Demonstrate jazz dance skills and techniques in performance (outcome 3)

Learners must perform a tutor-set choreography lasting a minimum of 2 minutes. This may be performed as a solo or in a group.

Learners must demonstrate performance skills, artistry and communication with an audience. They should explore:

- synthesis of artistry and technique
- dynamics
- use of space in performance
- projection
- communication with the audience
- performance qualities

The performance does not need to have a large public audience. Learners could perform to each other.

You should introduce learners to a range of recorded and, where possible, live jazz dance performances.

You should encourage learners to record their work to help with reflection and evaluation, and engage in reciprocal peer feedback tasks to enhance their learning.

Apply critical reflection and knowledge, highlighting awareness of skills and techniques (outcome 4)

Learners must participate in a professional discussion, lasting a minimum of 5 minutes, demonstrating their self-reflection and understanding of key skills and practices.

You should centre the conversation around learners' progress, strengths, areas for development and strategies to achieve personal goals.

Approaches to assessment

Use your professional judgement when observing learners in class and assessments to ensure all knowledge and skills are evidenced and consistent with the SCQF level of the unit.

Evidence can be generated through a range of assessment types. For this unit, we recommend performance, and oral or written.

You must record assessments for outcomes 1 and 3, and retain them as evidence with your assessor observation checklist. You may record the assessments for outcomes 2 and 4, but this is not mandatory. You can combine assessment of outcomes 1 and 2.

Demonstrate fundamental skills and techniques in jazz dance (outcome 1)

For their assessment, learners must demonstrate sound and secure jazz dance technique through a complete jazz dance class without tutor demonstration or verbal instruction. Learners must also demonstrate a sound and secure understanding of rhythm, dynamics, accents and expressive musical phrasing.

Practical demonstration must include:

- a technical warm up
- an isolation technique exercise

- a stretch exercise
- an adage and floor work phrase
- a kick phrase
- a pirouette and turn phrase
- a jump and leap phrase

You assess learners on an ongoing basis and in a prepared demonstration class.

Demonstrate varied jazz dance styles (outcome 2)

For their assessment, learners must perform a minimum of three short, contrasting choreographed phrases lasting a minimum of 40 seconds each. You assess their ability to demonstrate stylistic quality, intention, artistry and expression in a range of jazz dance performance styles.

Demonstrate jazz dance skills and techniques in performance (outcome 3)

For their assessment, learners must perform a tutor-set choreography lasting a minimum of 2 minutes. They can perform this as a solo or in a group. You assess their:

- synthesis of artistry and technique
- dynamics
- use of space in performance
- projection
- communication with the audience
- performance qualities

Apply critical reflection and knowledge, highlighting awareness of skills and techniques (outcome 4)

For their assessment, learners must participate in a professional discussion, lasting a minimum of 5 minutes, demonstrating their self-reflection and understanding of key skills and practices. You assess their ability to:

- analyse and reflect on their technique and performance skills in jazz dance
- evaluate their focus and approach in the studio
- set targets for progression
- identify and implement strategies to achieve personal goals

Equality and inclusion

This unit is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You must consider the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and those with additional support needs is available on the [assessment arrangements web page](#).

Information for learners

Jazz Dance (SCQF level 7)

This information explains:

- what the unit is about
- what you should know or be able to do before you start
- what you need to do during the unit
- opportunities for further learning and employment

Unit information

This unit enables you to develop fundamental skills in jazz dance. It provides opportunities for you to increase your knowledge of technique and artistry, and develop performance skills.

We recommend the unit if you have completed one or more of the following:

- Dance at SCQF level 6
- Higher Dance

During the unit, you:

- learn fundamental knowledge of jazz dance techniques
- learn about rhythm, dynamics, musical response and phrasing
- learn a range of stylistic qualities appropriate for jazz dance performance
- apply performance skills and artistry in performance
- engage in reflective practice to enhance performance

You are assessed through some or all of the following:

- performance and in-class observation
- oral assessment
- written assessment
- question-and-answer sessions

When you finish the unit, you may wish to progress to further studies and/or work in the dance or performing arts industries.

Meta-skills

Throughout this unit, you develop meta-skills that are useful for the dance and performing arts sector.

Meta-skills are transferable behaviours and abilities that help you adapt and succeed in life, study and work. There are three categories of meta-skills: self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

Self-management

You develop the meta-skill of focusing throughout classes and performance assessments, and when implementing feedback.

You develop integrity by being punctual and prepared, and making a positive contribution to classes and rehearsals.

You develop adapting when working with others, and when you respond to new choreography, rhythms, tempos and performance spaces.

You develop initiative by creating and developing movement phrases, and instigating group and individual tasks.

Social intelligence

You develop the meta-skill of communicating when you engage with tutors and fellow dancers, and express yourself through movement.

You develop feeling through having empathy for your fellow dancers when you dance together. You also develop empathetic responses to music, tone, character and mood. You also develop feeling by demonstrating inclusivity in your practice.

You develop collaborating when you work with fellow dancers, and receive direction from your choreographer or tutor.

Innovation

You develop the meta-skill of curiosity by exploring self-expression and your response to music.

You develop creativity through creative and musical expression, and by exploring emotions through movement.

You develop sense-making by learning, understanding and analysing terminology.

You develop critical thinking when you review and reflect on your personal performance, and plan how to achieve long-term goals.

Learning for Sustainability

Throughout this unit, you develop skills, knowledge and understanding of sustainability.

You learn about social, economic and environmental sustainability principles and how they relate to the dance and performing arts sector. You also develop an understanding of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#).

Administrative information

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Superclass: LB

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

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