

## **NextGen: HN unit specification**

### **Dance Industry Skills (SCQF Level 7)**

**Unit code:** JLP0 47

**SCQF level:** 7 (8 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 relevant to the dance industry, specifically in:

- employability and professional skills that support their progression into the dance and performing arts industries
- understanding dance industry structures
- professional expectations and etiquette
- building a personal portfolio, including a résumé, photographs and a showreel

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 this unit may progress to further studies and/or seek work in the dance and performing arts industries.

# Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

1. demonstrate key knowledge of the dance industry
2. understand professional practices relevant to the dance industry
3. create a basic dance portfolio

## Evidence requirements

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

### Outcome 1

Learners must demonstrate key knowledge of the dance industry. They must demonstrate understanding of:

- three industry sectors and the types of opportunities in these sectors
- three key industry roles and how they work with each other
- three current, relevant industry bodies or organisations

You assess learners' knowledge through a presentation or portfolio. Portfolios should be a maximum of 750 words. Oral presentations should last a maximum of 5 minutes, and you must record them for evidence.

You must complete an assessor checklist.

### Outcome 2

Learners must understand professional practices relevant to the dance industry. They must understand:

- professional and employability skills and etiquette
- the different pathways to employment in the dance industry
- the different methods casting teams use to find dancers

You assess learners' knowledge through a presentation or portfolio.

Portfolios should be a maximum of 750 words. Oral presentations should last a maximum of 5 minutes, and you must record them for evidence.

You must complete an assessor checklist.

Evidence for this outcome could be combined with the evidence for outcome 1. In this case, written evidence for outcomes 1 and 2 must be a maximum of 1,500 words in total, and oral presentations should last a maximum of 10 minutes in total. You must record oral presentations.

### **Outcome 3**

Learners must create a basic dance portfolio. They must:

- understand the different components needed for a dance portfolio
- understand the different photographs that can be used in a portfolio
- create a dance résumé
- create a short showreel showcasing their employable strengths as a performer

You assess the effectiveness of the showreel and the résumé.

Learners should present their résumé in digital format, and it must be a maximum of one page.

The showreel should last 60 to 80 seconds.

# Knowledge and skills

Knowledge	Skills
<p><b>Outcome 1</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the different sectors of employment:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ performance-based work</li> <li>○ education and teaching</li> <li>○ choreography and direction</li> <li>○ dance for screen and digital media</li> </ul> </li> <li>• key industry roles and how they work with each other and contribute to a project</li> <li>• relevant industry bodies, such as trade unions (for example, Equity)</li> <li>• sector support</li> <li>• casting opportunities</li> <li>• funding and policy development</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 1</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe three different sectors of employment and the opportunities in each sector</li> <li>• describe three industry roles involved in a dance project and how they contribute to the project</li> <li>• describe three different current industry bodies, why they are needed in the industry and when they can be helpful</li> </ul>

Knowledge	Skills
<p><b>Outcome 2</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• professional and employability skills, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ adaptability</li> <li>○ communication skills</li> <li>○ collaboration</li> <li>○ professionalism</li> <li>○ critical thinking and problem-solving</li> <li>○ networking and self-promotion</li> <li>○ continuous learning</li> <li>○ resilience</li> </ul> </li> <li>• correct etiquette for each sector of the industry</li> <li>• the different pathways to employment in the performing sector of the industry</li> <li>• the different methods casting teams use to find dancers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 2</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain what skills to use and when to apply them to improve their employability</li> <li>• explain the correct etiquette for each sector of the industry</li> <li>• identify key elements in a contract and describe where they can receive guidance on contracts</li> <li>• describe two pathways to employment in the performing sector of the industry</li> <li>• describe two different methods casting teams use to find dancers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 3</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the different components that are important to include in a portfolio</li> <li>• the different types of photographs that can be included in a portfolio</li> <li>• how to structure a dance résumé</li> <li>• how showreels can be used in place of live auditions and what they should include</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 3</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create a basic professional portfolio</li> <li>• identify what type of photographs they should include in a portfolio that will be relevant to the type of artist they want to be</li> <li>• create a dance résumé that is structured in a way in which casting teams can see the information clearly</li> <li>• identify their strengths as a dance artist and how to highlight these in a showreel</li> <li>• use basic media software and cut clips together to create a showreel</li> </ul>

# 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:
  - engaging with planning and portfolio tasks with attention to detail and accuracy
  - responding to tutor and peer feedback constructively
- integrity:
  - demonstrating honest and reflective self-evaluation
  - maintaining professionalism across practical and written tasks
- adapting:
  - taking on feedback to improve work quality
  - responding to varied portfolio requirements across sectors
- initiative:
  - researching relevant portfolio examples and resources
  - taking the lead in curating personal presentation materials

## **Social intelligence**

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

- communicating:
  - presenting clearly in discussions or presentation tasks
  - tailoring a résumé and a digital presence for a target audience
- feeling:
  - showing empathy and self-awareness in collaborative learning
  - responding appropriately to peer or tutor critique
- collaborating:
  - supporting others in review or feedback exercises
  - sharing resources or suggestions for industry research

## **Innovation**

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

- curiosity:
  - researching current trends in self-promotion and casting
- creativity:
  - applying creative decision-making to portfolio materials
- sense-making:
  - interpreting different employer or agent requirements

- critical thinking:
  - evaluating and refining own portfolio materials through reflection and feedback

## **Literacies**

This unit provides opportunities to develop the following literacies.

### **Communication**

- professional communication and etiquette
- self-presentation

### **Digital**

- video editing
- file management
- online professionalism
- digital applications

# 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 an optional unit in HNC Dance.

The notional time for delivery and assessment is 40 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:

- Classical Ballet
- Contemporary Dance
- Jazz Dance
- Commercial Dance
- Choreographic Practice

# Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

## Content and context for this unit

This unit is designed to help learners develop the professional and personal skills they need to gain employment in the dance industry.

Delivery should balance theoretical understanding and practical application. Delivery approaches could include:

- workshop-based tasks focused on employability
- seminars exploring the structure of the dance industry and associated bodies
- tutorials or guided sessions on developing résumés, photographic materials and showreels
- group discussions on industry trends, casting platforms and self-promotion strategies
- peer and tutor feedback throughout portfolio development

You should encourage learners to reflect on their current practice and aspirations throughout the unit.

Learners must use a digital platform to compile and present their final portfolio submissions.

## **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 this 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**

This unit complements practical and performance-based modules by focusing on the broader skills and understanding required to secure and maintain professional work.

The overall unit delivery time is a notional 40 hours of contact time for delivery and assessment. We expect learners to carry out a further 40 hours of self-directed study.

## **Demonstrate key knowledge of the dance industry (outcome 1)**

The following examples are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive.

Learners could consider the following industry sectors and employment opportunities:

- performance-based work:
  - theatre, musical theatre, commercial (television, tours, live shows), dance companies, cruise ships, immersive/physical theatre
  - touring dancer, ensemble performer, featured roles, backing dancer
- teaching and education:
  - schools, colleges, universities, studios, outreach programmes
  - dance tutor, teaching assistant, education officer, workshop facilitator
- choreography and direction:
  - creating works for stage/screen, commissions, assistant roles
  - freelance choreographer, resident choreographer, movement director, creative director
- dance for screen/digital media
  - film, television, music videos, virtual performance, motion capture, content creation
  - on-screen talent, movement model, digital dance artist
- community and participatory dance
  - socially engaged dance projects, healthcare settings, community arts organisations
  - community dance artist, inclusive dance facilitator

You could cover the following key industry roles and interrelationships:

- dancer: executes choreography to a professional standard
- choreographer: designs movement material; may work solo or collaboratively
- rehearsal director: maintains choreographic integrity; leads company rehearsals
- creative director: oversees the artistic vision of a production or project
- producer: manages budgets, logistics and team co-ordination
- stage/technical manager: oversees performance operations (lighting, sound, set)
- casting director/agent: sources talent; connects dancers with opportunities
- dance teacher/facilitator: delivers technique classes or creative workshops

Learners should consider how different roles work together, for example, how:

- a dance production or project typically involves multiple specialists working in co-ordination
- dancers must communicate and collaborate with choreographers, directors and producers
- understanding hierarchy, creative intent and technical requirements is essential to workflow

Learners should be aware of the key bodies and organisations that support, regulate and promote the dance sector.

Learners could consider the following key bodies and organisations:

- Equity: the UK trade union for performing artists; offers:
  - legal support
  - contract guidance
  - fair pay campaigns
  - insurance
- One Dance UK: sector support organisation; offers resources and support relating to:
  - health and wellbeing
  - training

- advocacy
- careers
- CDMT (Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre): accredits training programmes and promotes quality education
- Spotlight: professional casting platform for performers and agents
- Arts Council England and Creative Scotland: public funding bodies that support dance projects, education and professional development
- ITC (Independent Theatre Council): offers support for freelancers and small companies

Learners should understand the functions of the key bodies and organisations:

- supporting dancers' legal rights
- promoting health and diversity
- ensuring training quality
- providing access to work

Learners should know how to access resources, join unions and engage with sector support.

## **Understand professional practices relevant to the dance industry (outcome 2)**

You should discuss employability skills throughout the outcomes. Some key examples could be:

- **Adaptability:** The dance industry is dynamic and ever-changing. Employable dancers should be adaptable and willing to learn new techniques, styles and approaches to stay relevant and competitive in the field.
- **Communication skills:** Effective communication is crucial in dance, whether conveying emotions through movement, explaining choreography to fellow dancers, or interacting with students in a teaching role.
- **Collaboration:** Dance often involves working with others, whether in group performances, collaborative choreography or teaching settings. Employable

dancers should be able to work well with others and contribute positively to a team.

- **Professionalism:** Demonstrating professionalism includes punctuality, reliability, respect for colleagues and mentors, and maintaining a positive attitude. It also involves adhering to ethical standards and respecting the culture and diversity of the dance community.
- **Critical thinking and problem-solving:** Dancers encounter various challenges, from adapting to new choreography to finding creative solutions to technical issues. Employable dancers are skilled at analysing situations and coming up with effective solutions.
- **Networking and self-promotion:** Building connections within the dance community and effectively promoting oneself can lead to more opportunities. Employable dancers should understand networking strategies and basic self-promotion techniques.
- **Continuous learning:** The dance industry is always evolving. Employable dancers are committed to ongoing learning and professional development, whether through workshops, classes or other forms of training.
- **Resilience:** The dance industry can be competitive and demanding. Being able to handle setbacks and rejection, through physical and mental resilience, is an important aspect of employability.

It may be useful to discuss meta-skills in general and ask learners to reflect on their meta-skills journey, allowing them to focus on areas they could develop.

### **Pathways to employment**

- freelance work: most dancers work freelance, which requires self-promotion, invoicing and portfolio building
- agency representation: agents help dancers find work, book auditions and negotiate fees
- auditions/open calls: traditional route for theatre, commercial and cruise work
- graduate showcases: often the first step for dancers from vocational training to secure work

- networking and referrals: building professional relationships is critical to repeat bookings
- creating own work: many dancers self-produce, choreograph or collaborate to create opportunities
- digital platforms: building an online presence through social media or YouTube for visibility and reach

### **Types of performing work**

- theatre (musicals, plays)
- commercial (television, music videos, live events)
- cruise ships, theme parks, immersive/physical theatre
- touring companies and project-based productions
- dance for screen and digital media

### **Create a basic dance portfolio (outcome 3)**

Learners should be able to identify the difference between four different portfolio pictures:

- musical theatre headshot
- commercial headshot
- body shot
- action shot

Learners should create one of each for their portfolio to match possible career paths.

Learners should be able to create a basic dance résumé (one page), including the following key information:

- name
- playing age
- height
- eye colour
- hair colour
- email

- phone number
- social media
- special skills
- professional experience
- in training experience

Optional information to include:

- date of birth
- qualifications
- personal statement
- cover letter
- photograph

You should show learners how to identify their strengths as a performer and how to highlight them in a short, 60- to 80-second showreel. These recordings should be suitable for upload to social media and websites so that potential casting teams can access them.

## **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 written, oral and recorded evidence.

You must supplement assessments with an assessor checklist.

## **Demonstrate key knowledge of the dance industry (outcome 1)**

For their assessment, learners must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the different sectors of the dance industry
- the roles of the various people involved in a dance project and how they contribute to the project
- different industry bodies and when they can be helpful to a dance artist

You assess learners' presentations or portfolios.

## **Understand professional practices relevant to the dance industry (outcome 2)**

For their assessment, learners must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- what skills to use and when to apply them to improve employability, including correct etiquette for each sector of the industry
- two pathways into the performing sector

You assess learners' presentations or portfolios.

Evidence for this outcome could be combined with the evidence for outcome 1.

## **Create a basic dance portfolio (outcome 3)**

For their assessment, learners must create a basic professional portfolio that includes:

- photographs
- a dance résumé (one page)
- a showreel (60 to 80 seconds)

# 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

## Dance Industry Skills (SCQF level 7)

### Unit information

This unit enables you to develop key industry skills to help you find employment. It provides opportunity for you to increase your knowledge of how the dance industry works and the different roles and sectors within it.

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 key knowledge of the dance industry in relation to finding employment
- learn about key bodies and organisations in the dance and performing arts industries
- learn what skills and professional practices are required in the dance industry
- build a dance portfolio to use in employment applications

You are assessed through some or all of the following:

- oral assessment
- written assessment
- digital recording

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 when you pay attention to detail and accuracy in tasks, and when you implement feedback.

You develop integrity by maintaining professional, ethical and legal standards when you present yourself and your work.

You develop adapting as you tailor your résumé, portfolio and showreel to meet different sector requirements. You can also show this by responding constructively to changes in casting briefs or employer expectations.

You develop initiative as you independently research industry trends, opportunities and contacts, and proactively update and improve your portfolio.

### **Social intelligence**

You develop the meta-skill of communicating by presenting clearly and confidently in interviews, discussions or presentations, adjusting your communication style to suit different professional contexts.

You develop feeling by demonstrating self-awareness and empathy in collaborative projects, and showing sensitivity to cultural, ethical and accessibility considerations.

You develop collaborating as you share feedback, resources and industry insights with your peers. You also contribute positively to group projects.

You develop leading as you take responsibility for your professional development planning, and encourage and support your peers during group tasks.

## **Innovation**

You develop the meta-skill of curiosity as you explore different career pathways, portfolio presentation formats and approaches to self-promotion.

You develop creativity as you think about personal branding and portfolio design, and produce engaging and distinctive digital content.

You develop sense-making by interpreting industry trends, casting requirements and professional standards, and identifying connections between transferable skills and employment opportunities.

You develop critical thinking as you reflect on and evaluate your portfolio and make informed decisions about future development.

## **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

Please check [our website](#) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this unit.

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