



National 5  
coursework  
assessment task



# National 5 Dance, SCQF level 5

## Practical activity

### Assessment task

This document provides information for teachers and lecturers about the coursework component of this course in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed. It must be read in conjunction with the course specification.

**Valid from session 2026-27 and until further notice.**

The information in this publication may be reproduced in support of Qualifications Scotland qualifications only on a non-commercial basis. If it is reproduced, Qualifications Scotland must be clearly acknowledged as the source. If it is to be reproduced for any other purpose, written permission must be obtained from [permissions@qualifications.gov.scot](mailto:permissions@qualifications.gov.scot).

This edition: June 2026 (version 3.0)

Copyright © Qualifications Scotland 2026

# Contents

Introduction	1
Recording documentation	2
Marking instructions	5
Instructions for candidates	6

# Introduction

This document contains instructions for candidates for the National 5 Dance practical activity. It must be read in conjunction with the course specification.

This practical activity is worth 55 marks. This is 45% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

This is one of three course assessment components. The other components are a question paper and a performance.

This practical activity has two sections.

**Section 1** titled 'choreography' has 35 marks.

**Section 2** titled 'choreography review' has 20 marks.

In this assessment, candidates create, present and review a choreography for two dancers, **excluding themselves**.

# Recording documentation

The following recording document should be used by assessors to record the marks awarded to candidates.

Assessors must ensure that they can reliably assess each candidate in any given conditions. They should consider the number of candidates being assessed at any one time.

## National 5 Dance: practical activity

Centre:	
Candidate name:	
Candidate number:	

### Section 1: choreography

Element	Max mark	Mark awarded	Assessor comments
Use of theme or stimulus to create and develop movement	10		
Use of choreographic structure	4		
Use of choreographic devices	12		
Use of spatial elements	6		
Use of music and/or sound	3		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>35</b>		

## Section 2: choreography review

Task	Max mark	Mark awarded	Assessor comments
1a	4		
1b	2		
2	2		
3	4		
4	2		
5	2		
6a	2		
6b	2		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>20</b>		

<b>Practical activity</b> <b>Total marks for section 1</b> <b>and section 2</b>	<b>/55</b>
---	------------

<b>Assessor:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

# Marking instructions

The marking instructions for the National 5 Dance practical activity are in the course specification.

A sample of 12 candidates is marked collaboratively by a Qualifications Scotland visiting assessor and a centre assessor under conditions set by Qualifications Scotland . When there are more than 12 candidates, the centre assessor applies the national standard to the remainder of the cohort.

# Instructions for candidates

This assessment applies to the practical activity for National 5 Dance.

This practical activity is worth 55 marks. This is 45% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

It assesses the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ creative movement from a chosen theme or stimulus
- ◆ application of a chosen structure
- ◆ application of three choreographic devices
- ◆ use of spatial elements
- ◆ use of music and/or sound
- ◆ response to stimuli
- ◆ response to research findings to communicate choreographic intentions
- ◆ structure in relation to choreographic intentions
- ◆ choreographic devices, choices and relevance to choreographic intentions
- ◆ spatial elements in relation to choreographic intentions
- ◆ music/sound in relation to choreographic intentions
- ◆ evaluation of skills in the choreographic process

The practical activity has two sections.

**Section 1** titled 'choreography' has 35 marks.

**Section 2** titled 'choreography review' has 20 marks.

Your teacher or lecturer will let you know if there are any specific conditions for doing this assessment.

In this assessment, you have to create, present and review a choreography for two dancers, excluding yourself.

Information and instructions for the practical activity begin on the next page.

Read through everything before you begin, and ask your teacher or lecturer if you are unsure about what you are expected to do.

## What this practical activity involves

In this practical activity you have to create, present and review a choreography for two dancers, excluding yourself.

The four stages below will help you work logically through the choreographic process and prepare you for the assessment.

- 1 Select a theme or stimulus
- 2 Carry out research
- 3 Develop your choreography
- 4 Present your choreography

## How you will be assessed

### Section 1: choreography (35 marks)

In this section, your final choreographed dance will be assessed.

You must create and present a choreographed dance for two people, excluding yourself. Your choreographed dance should last a minimum of 1 minute and 30 seconds and a maximum of 2 minutes, and contain all of the following, which will be marked as shown.

	Marks
Use of theme or stimulus to create and develop movement	10
Use of one choreographic structure	4
Use of at least three choreographic devices	12
Use of spatial elements	6
Use of music and/or sound	3
<b>Total marks</b>	<b>35</b>

The 'choreographic process' section on the following pages provides guidelines on how to choreograph your dance.

## **Section 2: choreography review (20 marks)**

In this section, you will be assessed on a review of your choreography. You must complete the assessment task by answering six questions in an extended response. Written responses to the choreography review should be maximum 1,500 words.

You must submit the word count with your completed choreography review.

You may use a maximum of 100 words to present your theme and choreographic intentions at the start of the choreography review. This is not included in your word count or marked, it is for context only.

If the word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty is applied.

You can begin these tasks at any appropriate point in the choreographic process. You can ask your teacher or lecturer for advice on when to begin.

You must have completed all the assessment tasks for the choreography review by the time you present your final choreography for the assessment event.

# Section 1: choreography – assessment task

## Choreographic process

You should keep a careful record of everything you gather, plan, review or do during the choreographic process. You are not assessed on any records you keep, but doing this will help you to be well-organised during the process and provide you with the notes or other materials you need to complete all your assessment tasks.

You also need to arrange for two dancers who can work with you during the process and perform your choreography for assessment. You should arrange this as early as possible, and certainly before you begin stage 3, as you will need to arrange a rehearsal schedule and work with them throughout the development stage of your choreography.

### Stage 1

Select a theme or stimulus as a starting point.

The theme or stimulus can be anything that inspires, interests or motivates you to create your dance, for example:

- ◆ photographs
- ◆ paintings
- ◆ sculptures
- ◆ objects
- ◆ patterns
- ◆ textures
- ◆ ideas
- ◆ books
- ◆ issues
- ◆ experiences
- ◆ memories
- ◆ events
- ◆ history
- ◆ family
- ◆ music
- ◆ dance
- ◆ film
- ◆ emotion
- ◆ news
- ◆ nature

### Stage 2

Carry out **at least two** pieces of research into your theme or stimulus, and use these to generate movement ideas.

The research you gather could be in the form of photographs, audio or visual materials, written information, internet research, or anything else appropriate. You must select two different sources of research and can only use one image-based source.

Use your research to generate movement ideas for your choreography. You may choreograph an initial motif or key movement as the starting point from which all your movement develops. This motif or key movement should help show your choreographic intentions. Keep a careful record of your movement ideas.

### Stage 3

Develop your choreography.

This stage in the choreographic process requires careful organisation and decision-making. In this stage, you need to plan and develop your movement using **each** of the following:

Choreographic structures – use **one** as appropriate:

- ◆ binary
- ◆ narrative
- ◆ ternary
- ◆ or any other suitable structure

Choreographic devices – use **at least three**, as appropriate:

- ◆ motif and development
- ◆ unison
- ◆ canon
- ◆ repetition
- ◆ or any other suitable device
- ◆ mirroring
- ◆ partner work
- ◆ retrograde
- ◆ contact improvisation

Spatial elements – use, as appropriate:

- ◆ direction
- ◆ floor patterns
- ◆ level
- ◆ pathways

Use of music and/or sound:

- ◆ choose music and/or sound that you think enhances what you are trying to communicate about your choreographic intentions

You should have reasons for **all** the choices you make – you should try to communicate meanings and ideas about your theme or stimulus, this is your choreographic intentions. What do you want your audience to think, feel, experience or understand?

Make sure you have your dancers available by this stage. You should work with them to experiment with, finalise and rehearse your choreography. Organise and lead rehearsals, keeping notes and making changes as you go, until you are happy with the final choreography. You should make sure that you use safe dance practice throughout.

Plan and organise anything else you want to include to enhance the final performance, for example costumes and props. Note: these are not essential – their use is not assessed, and they do not gain marks– but you can include them if you wish.

By the end of this stage, your choreography should be complete and ready for performance.

#### **Stage 4**

Present the finished choreography.

Your teacher or lecturer will tell you of any arrangements that need to be made for the assessment event.

Remember to make sure you have finished your choreography review before presenting your finished choreography.

## Section 2: choreography review – assessment task

Review the choreographic process by completing the tasks below in an **extended response**.

You can make reference to photographs, diagrams or other materials in your responses. You do not have to use these, and these materials will not be marked.

- 1a. Explain in what way(s) two research findings inspired your choreographic intentions. You must use **two** different sources of research. 4 marks
- 1b. Explain in what way(s) a motif or key movement(s) communicates your choreographic intention(s). 2 marks
2. Explain in what way(s) your use of structure communicates your choreographic intentions. 2 marks
3. Explain in what way(s) **two** choreographic devices communicates your choreographic intentions. 4 marks
4. Explain in what way(s) **one** spatial element communicates your choreographic intentions. 2 marks
5. Explain in what way(s) your use of music and/or sound communicate the choreographic intentions. 2 marks
- 6a. Evaluate **one** skill you consider to be an area of strength in the choreographic process. 2 marks
- 6b. Evaluate **one** skill you consider to be an area for development in the choreographic process. 2 marks

**TOTAL: 20 marks**

# Administrative information

---

Published: June 2026 (version 3.0)

---

## History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	'Use of space' changed to 'spatial elements' throughout the document.	September 2018
3.0	<p>We've reduced the marks for the practical activity course assessment task from 65 to 55 marks, we'll still scale this to 45 marks. We've reduced the marks for section 2: choreography review from 30 to 20 marks.</p> <p>We have revised the task and recording documentation for the choreography review.</p> <p>We've reduced the use of choreographic devices from three to two, and to use only one special element. Candidates must select two different sources or research and only use one image-based source.</p> <p>We've introduced a maximum word count of 1,500 words and a penalty for exceeding this by more than 10%.</p> <p>We've changed references to 'SQA' to 'Qualifications Scotland' throughout. We've updated the title to include the SCQF level.</p> <p>We've made changes to the format and layout of the document to improve accessibility.</p> <p><b>What you need to do differently</b> Ensure you give candidates the updated assessment task for the choreography review. You must ensure candidates submit the word count with their choreography review. Update your teaching notes and assessments in relation to the tasks and marking instructions for the choreography review.</p>	June 2026

Note: you are advised to check [Qualifications Scotland's website](#) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.

# Security and confidentiality

This document can be used by Qualifications Scotland approved centres for the assessment of National Courses and not for any other purpose.