National 5 course specification

Qualifications Scotland
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National 5 Dance, SCQF Level 5 Course Specification

Course code:	C818 75
Course assessment code:	X818 75
SCQF:	level 5 (24 SCQF credit points)
Valid from:	session 2026–27

This document provides detailed information about the course and course assessment to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the course and the course assessment in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed.

This document is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver the course.

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Course overview

The course consists of 24 SCQF credit points which includes time for preparation for course assessment. The notional length of time for a candidate to complete the course is 160 hours.

The course assessment has three components.

Component	Marks	Scaled mark	Duration
Component 1: question paper	30	20	1 hour
Component 2: practical activity	55	45	See 'Course assessment' section
Component 3: performance	35	35	See 'Course assessment' section

Recommended entry	Progression
Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre. Candidates should have achieved the fourth curriculum level or equivalent qualifications and/or experience prior to starting this course. Candidates may have completed the National Progression Award in Dance (SCQF level 4) prior to starting this course, but this is not mandatory.	♦ Higher Dance ♦ National Certificate in Dance (SCQF level 6) ♦ National Progression Award in Musical Theatre (SCQF level 6) ♦ National Progression Award in Dance (SCQF level 5) ♦ National Progression Award in Musical Theatre (SCQF level 6) ♦ other qualifications in dance or related areas ♦ further study, employment and/or training

Conditions of award

The grade awarded is based on the total marks achieved across all course assessment components.

Course rationale

National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

Every course provides opportunities for candidates to develop breadth, challenge and application. The focus and balance of assessment is tailored to each subject area.

The National 5 Dance course encourages candidates to become successful, independent and creative in their use of dance. They develop attributes and capabilities including creativity, flexibility and adaptability; enthusiasm and a willingness to learn; perseverance, independence and resilience; responsibility and reliability; confidence and enterprise.

The course is practical and experiential. Candidates develop a range of technical and choreographic skills in dance to produce creative and imaginative performances. The course provides scope for personalisation and choice.

The course encourages candidates to be creative and to express themselves in different ways. Learning through dance helps candidates to develop an appreciation of aesthetic and cultural values, identities and ideas.

Learning in the course includes active involvement in creative activities and performance, and the creative use of technical and choreographic dance skills.

Purpose and aims

The purpose of the National 5 Dance course is to enable candidates to develop a range of dance and choreographic skills. Candidates develop and reflect on technical and creative skills through practical learning. They gain an understanding of the origins of dance and the impact of theatre arts.

The course aims to enable candidates to:

- demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of dance
- develop a range of technical dance skills
- develop performance skills to enhance performance
- develop knowledge, understanding and appreciation of dance practice
- understand and apply knowledge of a range of choreographic skills to create a dance
- evaluate their own work and the work of others
- work imaginatively and demonstrate creativity
- co-operate, support and work with others
- consider how theatre arts can enhance a performance
- apply the principles of safe dance practice

Who is this course for?

This course is suitable for all candidates with a general interest in dance or for those hoping to progress onto higher levels of study.

The learning experiences in the course are flexible and adaptable, with opportunities for personalisation and choice. This makes the qualification highly accessible, as it can be contextualised to suit a diverse range of candidate needs and aspirations. The course is largely candidate-centred, with practical and experiential learning opportunities.

Course content

The National 5 Dance course has an integrated approach to learning that develops practical and evaluative skills, knowledge and understanding of technical dance and performance and choreographic skills. Candidates learn how to evaluate their own work and the work of others and use this knowledge to inform and influence their own creative thinking and performance. Candidates experiment with a range of choreographic principles and consider the impact of theatre arts on performance. They also explore the origins of dance.

Choreography

Candidates respond to stimuli using imagination and creativity, conveying thoughts, meanings and ideas through movement to communicate their intentions. They learn how to apply choreographic principles to enhance intention. They also apply problem-solving skills in order to create and deliver choreography. Candidates evaluate the work of professional choreographers to help explore and develop their own choreographic ideas.

Technical skills

Candidates benefit from the experience of learning specific dance techniques and use these to develop a range of technical skills as a dancer.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course

The following provides a broad overview of the subject skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the course:

- exploring a range of dance skills and techniques
- exploring a range of performance skills as appropriate to a specific dance style
- using evaluative skills in relation to self and others
- demonstrating and applying knowledge and understanding of dance
- exploring choreographic principles, devices and structures
- using evaluative skills within the creative process through choreography
- responding to stimuli using imagination and creativity
- conveying thoughts, meaning and ideas through movement
- exploring the origins of a specific dance style
- gaining knowledge and understanding of safe dance practice
- exploring the impact of theatre arts in choreography
- exploring the origins of a specific dance style

Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment

The following provides details of skills, knowledge and understanding sampled in the course assessment:

Question paper

The question paper assesses candidates' ability to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- technical accuracy
- areas of strength
- areas for development
- development methods to improve dance technique
- development methods to improve performance skills
- use of spatial awareness
- use of timing and musicality
- use of quality and dynamics
- self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus in relation to self and others
- origins and developments of a dance style
- key characteristics of a selected dance style
- style-specific steps
- historical impact on a selected dance style
- evaluation of professional live or recorded choreography for two or more people
- impact of choreographic structure
- impact of choreographic devices
- impact of spatial elements
- impact of music and/or sound
- impact of theatre arts

Practical activity

The practical activity has two sections:

Choreography

The choreography section assesses the candidate's ability to demonstrate 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

Choreography review

The choreography review assesses the candidate's ability to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- research findings appropriate to the theme or stimulus
- use of structure in relation to the choreographic intentions
- use of choreographic devices, choices and relevance to the choreographic intentions
- use of spatial element in relation to the choreographic intentions
- use of music and/or sound in relation to the choreographic intentions
- evaluation of one strength and one area for development in the choreographic process

Performance

The performance assesses the candidate's ability to demonstrate the following:

- application of technique
- fluency and transitions within performance
- strength, stamina and flexibility
- spatial awareness
- application of performance skills as appropriate to the chosen style
- timing and musicality
- quality and dynamics
- ability to control nerves, concentrate and focus

Skills, knowledge and understanding included in the course are appropriate to the SCQF level of the course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level, and are available on the SCQF website.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

This course helps candidates to develop broad, generic skills. These skills are based on the Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work framework and draw from the following main skills areas:

3 Health and wellbeing

3.1 Personal learning
3.3 Physical wellbeing

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

4.3 Working with others

5 Thinking skills

5.4 Analysing and evaluating
5.5 Creating

These skills must be built into the course where there are appropriate opportunities, and the level should be appropriate to the level of the course.

Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the course support notes.

Learning for Sustainability

Qualifications Scotland is committed to identifying opportunities to develop the values, skills, knowledge and understanding of Learning for Sustainability within all National Courses.

Course assessment

Course assessment is based on the information provided in this document.

The course assessment meets the key purposes and aims of the course by addressing:

- breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the course
- challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This enables candidates to:

- apply knowledge from across the course and depth of understanding to answer questions about dance
- apply choreography skills, knowledge and understanding to create and present a choreography for two dancers, and review the choreographic process
- extend and refine technical and performance skills gained in the course; perform a tutor-choreographed technical solo lasting a minimum of 1 minute and 30 seconds and a maximum of 2 minutes

Course assessment structure: question paper

Question paper 30 marks

The question paper requires candidates to draw on and apply a sample of all the skills, knowledge and understanding listed for the question paper in the 'Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment' section of this document.

The question paper has 30 marks. This is 20% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

The question paper has three sections. All questions are compulsory and candidates are expected to use dance terminology throughout.

Section 1: evaluation of technical and performance skills (10 marks)

This section asks candidates to give a personal evaluative response of self. This may include technical ability; turnout; parallel; centre; balance; alignment and posture; stamina; strength and flexibility; spatial awareness; timing and musicality; quality and dynamics; self-expression; sense of performance; and concentration and focus.

Section 2: knowledge and understanding of a dance style (10 marks)

This section asks candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a chosen dance style. This may include its origins and developments; style specific steps; key characteristics/stylistic features; historical influences; iconic style of influential choreographers and key movements.

Section 3: evaluation of a professional choreography (10 marks)

This section asks candidates to give a personal evaluative response to a professional piece of choreography for two or more dancers. This may include theme and/or stimulus; key movements or motif, structure; devices; spatial elements; music and/or sound and theatre arts.

Note: to prepare candidates for the question paper, teachers or lecturers must select a professional dance choreography to study in full.

Setting, conducting and marking the question paper

The question paper is set and marked by Qualifications Scotland and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by Qualifications Scotland.

Candidates complete this in 1 hour.

Specimen question papers for National 5 courses are published on Qualifications Scotland's website. These illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the question papers candidates sit. The specimen papers also include marking instructions.

Course assessment structure: practical activity

Practical activity 55 marks

The purpose of the practical activity is to assess the creation and presentation of choreography for two dancers and the application of problem-solving, critical-thinking, interpretation and reflective practice.

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

Practical activity overview

There are two sections: choreography and choreography review.

Section 1: choreography (35 marks)

Candidates create and present a dance for two people, **excluding self**, lasting a minimum of 1 minute and 30 seconds and a maximum of 2 minutes. The process requires candidates to:

- select and research a theme or stimulus, and develop creative movement from this
- select and apply an appropriate choreographic structure, devices, spatial elements, and music and/or sound
- prepare the choreography for presentation
- present the choreography

Section 2: choreography review (20 marks)

This section assesses breadth of knowledge from across the course, depth of understanding, and application of this knowledge and understanding. Candidates produce an extended response which reviews the choreography they have created and their skills as a choreographer.

The choreography review gives candidates the opportunity to demonstrate the following knowledge and understanding:

- research findings
- movement and/or motif ideas
- choreographic intentions
- use of structure
- use of two choreographic devices
- use of one spatial element
- use of music and/or sound
- a skill considered to be a strength in the choreographic process
- a skill considered to be an area for development in the choreographic process

Candidates must select two different sources of research and only use one image-based source.

Setting, conducting and marking the practical activity

The practical activity is set by centres within Qualifications Scotland guidelines and conducted under some supervision and control.

The choreography of 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.

The choreography review is pre-marked by the centre assessor prior to the visiting assessment event taking place and is then marked by a Qualifications Scotland visiting assessor at the centre, under conditions set by Qualifications Scotland.

Assessment conditions

Time

The choreography is a live single assessment event that should last a minimum of 1 minute and 30 seconds and a maximum of 2 minutes for each candidate.

The choreography review is carried out over time and must be completed in advance of the external assessment event.

Supervision, control and authentication

The choreography is marked by a Qualifications Scotland visiting assessor and a centre assessor and conducted in centres under conditions specified for visiting assessment by Qualifications Scotland.

The choreography review is conducted under some supervision and control. This means:

- candidates do not need to be directly supervised at all times
- the use of resources, including the internet, is not tightly prescribed
- the work an individual candidate submits for assessment is their own
- teachers and lecturers can provide reasonable assistance

Resources

There are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access while preparing for their choreography or producing their choreography review.

Reasonable assistance

Candidates must undertake the assessment independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. The term ‘reasonable assistance’ is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be ‘reasonable assistance’, they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis.

It is not acceptable for a teacher or lecturer to provide:

- model answers, which are specific to a candidate's task
- specific advice on how to rephrase wording
- key ideas, or a specific structure or plan

It is not acceptable to use software such as generative artificial intelligence to provide:

- model answers, which are specific to a candidate's task
- specific advice on how to rephrase wording
- key ideas, or a specific structure or plan

Assessors can provide candidates with some formative assistance prior to the formal assessment event.

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

- section 1: choreography
  - a live performance of choreography lasting a minimum of 1 minute and 30 seconds and a maximum of 2 minutes
- section 2:
  - responses to choreography review assessment task

Volume

Written responses to the choreography review should be maximum 1,500 words. If the word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty is applied. There is no minimum word count.

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

Candidates may choose to include supplementary material, for example diagrams, interview transcripts, pictures, poems or photographs if they need to reference these in their responses. Supplementary materials are not a requirement and are not included in the word count or marked.

Candidates must submit the word count with the completed choreography review.

Practical activity marking instructions

In line with Qualifications Scotland's normal practice, the following marking instructions are addressed to the Qualifications Scotland visiting assessor and designated centre assessor. They are also helpful for those preparing candidates for course assessment.

General marking principles

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

a Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.

b If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.

Detailed marking instructions for choreography

For each element of the choreography, assessors allocate a mark up to the maximum available as detailed below. The assessor should select the band descriptor which most closely describes the standard of the presented choreography. Once the best fit has been selected:

- where the choreography just meets the standard described, award the lowest mark from the range
- where the choreography almost matches the band above, award the highest available mark from the range
- if the band descriptor has 3 marks, and the choreography does not fit the instructions above for awarding either the highest or lowest mark in the band, award the middle mark
- if the choreography meets all the standards described in the top band descriptor, and demonstrates particular originality or creativity, award the highest available mark for the element being assessed

Section 1: choreography

Activity	Max mark	Mark band descriptors	Additional guidance
Use of theme or stimulus to create and develop movement	**10**	**9–10** The theme or stimulus is used creatively and consistently throughout to communicate meaning and ideas through movement. **7–8** The theme or stimulus is used with some originality and consistency to communicate meaning and ideas through movement. **5–6** The theme or stimulus is mainly evident in the movement developed within the choreography. **3–4** The theme or stimulus is evident at several points in the choreography. **1–2** The choreography demonstrates little use of theme or stimulus. **0** There is no theme or stimulus evident.	

Activity	Max mark	Mark band descriptors	Additional guidance
Use of choreographic structure	**4**	**3–4** A structure is used effectively throughout. **1–2** There is some evidence of a structure. **0** There is no use of structure.	Candidates are instructed to use one structure from the following: ♦ binary ♦ narrative ♦ ternary If an unlisted but valid structure is used, accept and mark as normal.
Use of choreographic devices	**12**	**10–12** The choreography demonstrates effective use of a range of choreographic devices to convey all of the choreographic intentions. **7–9** The devices used help to convey most of the choreographic intentions. **4–6** The devices used help to convey some of the choreographic intentions. **1–3** Devices are used, but these convey little about the choreographic intentions. **0** No choreographic devices are used.	Three devices should be used. These may include: ♦ motif and development ♦ unison ♦ canon ♦ repetition ♦ mirroring ♦ partner work ♦ retrograde ♦ contact work If an unlisted but valid device is used, accept and mark as normal. Each device need not be used equally; they may be used to varying extents and, therefore, should not be assessed separately. Assessors

Activity	Max mark	Mark band descriptors	Additional guidance
			should verify that at least three have been used and consider the use or effectiveness of these together. If only two devices are used, award a maximum of 8 marks. If only one device is used, award a maximum of 4 marks.
Use of spatial elements	**6**	**5–6** Spatial elements contribute effectively to convey the choreographic intentions. **3–4** Spatial elements mainly contribute towards conveying the choreographic intentions. **1–2** There is little effective use of spatial elements. **0** There is no effective use of space.	Spatial elements may include: ♦ direction ♦ floor patterns ♦ pathways ♦ levels Assessors should consider the overall contribution of spatial elements to convey the choreographic intentions.
Use of music and/or sound	**3**	**3** Selected music and/or sound enhances the choreographic intention. **2** Selected music and/or sound is appropriate to the choreographic intention.	

Activity	Max mark	Mark band descriptors	Additional guidance
		1 There is little relationship between the selected music and/or sound and the choreographic intention. **0** There is no relationship between the selected music and/or sound and the choreographic intention.	

Detailed marking instructions for choreography review

The tasks in the choreography review ask candidates to either explain or evaluate elements of the choreographic process.

For explain questions, candidates must relate cause and effect and/or make clear the relationships between things. Offer reason behind the response.

For evaluate questions, candidates must make a judgement based on criteria and determine the value of something.

Section 2: choreography review

Question	Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
1a	Candidates are asked to explain in what way(s) **two** research findings inspire their choreographic intentions. They must use two different sources of research. In relation to each area of research, award up to 2 marks as follows: **2+2** Award **2 marks** for a detailed explanation of the way(s) the research finding inspired the choreographic intentions. Award **1 mark** for a straightforward explanation of the way(s) the research finding inspired the choreographic intentions.	**4**	Choreographic intentions may be described in terms of, for example, meanings, theme or effects. Research sources may include: ♦ article ♦ podcast ♦ personal experience ♦ film, series, TV show, documentary ♦ internet finding, stats ♦ music, lyrics ♦ poem ♦ picture ♦ statue, art installation Candidates must select **two different** sources of research such as a poem and a picture. If they select the same source type, then the maximum mark would be 2. Candidates can only use **one** image-based source. If candidates provide more than two sources, assessors should mark the best two.

Question	Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
1b	Candidates are asked to explain in what way(s) a motif or key movement(s) communicates their choreographic intentions. Award **2 marks** for a detailed explanation of the way(s) a motif or key movement(s) communicates their choreographic intentions. Award **1 mark** for a straightforward explanation of the way(s) a motif or key movement(s) communicates their choreographic intentions.	**2**	Choreographic intentions may be described in terms of, for example, meanings, theme or effects. If a candidate describes a motif or key movements without an explanation, no marks will be awarded.
2	Candidates are asked to explain in what way(s) the structure communicates their choreographic intentions. Award **2 marks** for a detailed explanation of the way(s) the structure communicates their choreographic intentions. Award **1 mark** for a straightforward explanation of the way(s) the structure communicates their choreographic intentions.	**2**	Choreographic intentions may be described in terms of, for example, meanings, theme or effects. Structures may include: ♦ narrative ♦ binary ♦ ternary If candidates only describe the structure or each section without an explanation, no marks will be awarded.

Question	Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
3	Candidates are asked to explain in what way(s) **two** choreographic devices communicate their choreographic intentions. In relation to each device, award up to 2 marks as follows: **2+2** Award **2 marks** for a detailed explanation of the way(s) a choreographic device communicate their choreographic intentions. Award **1 mark** for a straightforward explanation of the way(s) a choreographic device communicates their choreographic intentions.	**4**	Choreographic intentions may be described in terms of meanings, theme or effects. Candidates must explain the use of **two devices.** If a candidate only explains the use of one device, then the maximum mark awarded would be 2. If candidates explain more than two devices, assessors should mark the best two. Choreographic devices may include: ♦ motif and development ♦ unison ♦ canon ♦ repetition ♦ mirroring ♦ partner work ♦ retrograde ♦ contact work
4	Candidates are asked to explain in what way(s) **one** spatial element communicate their choreographic intentions. Award **2 marks** for a detailed explanation of the way(s) a spatial element communicates their choreographic intentions. Award **1 mark** for a straightforward explanation of the way(s) a spatial element communicates their choreographic intentions.	**2**	Choreographic intentions may be described in terms of, for example, meanings, theme or effect. Spatial elements may include: ♦ levels ♦ proxemics ♦ pathways ♦ directions or facings ♦ floor patterns If candidates provide more than one spatial element, the assessor should mark the best one.

Question	Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
5	Candidates are asked to explain in what way(s) their use of music and/or sound communicates the choreographic intentions. Award **2 marks** for a detailed explanation of the way(s) their use of music and/or sound communicates the choreographic intentions. Award **1 mark** for a straightforward explanation of the way(s) their use of music and/or sound communicates the choreographic intentions.	**2**	Choreographic intentions may be described in terms of, for example, meanings, theme or effects. Candidates should explain the ways music and/or sound communicates the choreographic intentions. This could be through a variety of ways, for example: ♦ crescendos to create a highlight ♦ staccato for sharp or jumpy effect ♦ creating a particular mood and/or atmosphere ♦ use of lyrics to convey a particular meaning
6a	Candidates are asked to evaluate one skill they consider to be **an area of strength** in the choreographic process. Award **2 marks** for a detailed evaluation of one skill they consider to be **an area of strength** in the process. Award **1 mark** for a straightforward evaluation of one skill they consider to be **an area of strength** in the process. Award **0 marks** if they give no evaluation of **an area of strength**.	**2**	The evaluation must include valid examples from their work and/or the process. Strengths may include the following skills: ♦ organisation ♦ leadership ♦ time management ♦ creativity ♦ communication

Question	Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
6b	Candidates are asked to evaluate one skill they consider to be **an area of development** in the choreographic process. Award **2 marks** for a detailed evaluation of one skill they consider to be **an area of development** in the process. Award **1 mark** for a straightforward evaluation of one skill they consider to be **an area of development** in the process. Award **0 marks** if they give no evaluation of **an area of development**.	**2**	The evaluation must include valid examples form their work and/or the process. Areas for development may include the following skills: ♦ organisation ♦ leadership ♦ time management ♦ creativity ♦ communication

Course assessment structure: performance

Performance 35 marks

The purpose of the performance is to assess a solo performance in one dance style and the candidate's ability to apply and combine technical skills and performance skills.

The performance has 35 marks. This is 35% of the overall marks for the course assessment).

The performance is a tutor-choreographed technical solo in a selected dance style. It must last a minimum of 1 minute and 30 seconds and a maximum of 2 minutes.

The candidate is assessed on application of technique and performance skills as follows:

Application of technique

- technical accuracy and use of turnout/parallel as appropriate to the dance style
- centring, balance, alignment and posture
- stamina, strength and flexibility
- spatial awareness and accurate recreation of choreography

Application of performance skills

- timing and musicality
- quality and dynamics
- self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus

Setting, conducting and marking the performance

The performance is set by Qualifications Scotland centres within the following Qualifications Scotland guidelines:

- Teachers and lecturers are responsible for choreographing the dance, guiding rehearsals, and providing feedback and ongoing support for candidates during preparation until the assessment event.
- The dance should incorporate a range of style-specific steps and principles to allow candidates to demonstrate sustained technical skills.
- When choreographing the dance, teachers and lecturers may wish to consult the course support notes for information about style-specific steps that may be included.

The performance is conducted under a high degree of supervision and control.

The performances of a sample of 12 candidates are 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.

Assessment conditions

Time

The performance is a live single assessment event that should last a minimum of 1 minute and 30 seconds and maximum of 2 minutes for each candidate.

Supervision, control and authentication

The performance is marked by a Qualifications Scotland visiting assessor and conducted in centres under conditions specified for visiting assessment by Qualifications Scotland.

Candidates can learn and rehearse the choreographed dance in a group setting. However, for the external assessment event, the candidate must perform the dance individually.

Resources

There are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access while preparing for their performance.

Assessment should take place in an appropriate location such as a dance studio, gym, assembly hall or stage, preferably with a wooden or sprung floor.

To ensure that technical skills can be reliably observed and that safe dance practice is observed, appropriate clothing and footwear which allows the assessor to see the shape and line of the body should be worn during the performance.

Reasonable assistance

Candidates must undertake the assessment independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. The term ‘reasonable assistance’ is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be ‘reasonable assistance’, they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis.

Assessors can provide candidates with some formative assistance prior to the formal assessment event.

Evidence to be gathered

Assessors must use assessment recording documentation provided to record candidate achievement. This must show clearly the basis on which assessment judgements are made.

Volume

The following evidence is required for this assessment:

- evidence of a single live performance of a technical solo in one dance style

Performance marking instructions

General marking principles

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

a Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.

Detailed marking instructions for performance

Elements of technique and performance are grouped together under broad criteria which incorporate a number of related or interdependent skills or performance qualities. The importance or prominence of particular skills/qualities within broad criteria may vary between dance styles and it is therefore not always appropriate to consider each one individually. In making an assessment judgement about broad criteria, the constituent parts should be considered together within the context of the dance style being performed.

Assessors allocate a mark up to the maximum available as detailed below. The assessor should select the band descriptor which most closely describes the standard of the candidate's performance. Once the best fit has been selected:

- where the candidate's performance just meets the standard described, award the lowest mark from the range
- where the candidate's performance almost matches the band above, award the highest available mark from the range
- if the candidate's performance meets all the standards described in the top band descriptor, and demonstrates particular competence, award the highest available mark for the criteria being assessed

Element 1: application of technique

Criteria	Max mark	Mark band descriptors
a Technical accuracy and use of turnout and/or parallel as appropriate to dance style	**5**	**4–5** As appropriate to the dance style, there is sustained control, fluency and smooth transitions throughout. **2–3** As appropriate to the dance style, there is some evidence of control and fluency. **0–1** There is little or no evidence of control or fluency appropriate to the dance style.
b Centring, balance, alignment and posture	**5**	**4–5** Centring, balance, alignment and posture are sustained throughout. **2–3** Centring, balance, alignment and posture are mainly sustained. **0–1** Centring, balance, alignment and posture are not, or are barely, sustained.
c Stamina, strength and flexibility	**5**	**4–5** Stamina, strength and flexibility are sustained throughout. **2–3** Stamina, strength and flexibility are mainly sustained. **0–1** Weaknesses in stamina, strength and flexibility significantly affect performance.
d Spatial awareness and accurate recreation of choreography	**5**	**4–5** There is effective use of personal and general space, and accurate recreation of choreography. **2–3** There is some effective use of space and mainly accurate recreation of choreography. **0–1** There are significant weaknesses in both use of space and recreation of choreography.

Element 2: application of performance skills

Criteria	Max mark	Mark band descriptors
a Timing and musicality	**5**	**4–5** Timing is accurate and musicality enhances performance. **2–3** Timing is mainly accurate and musicality contributes to performance. **0–1** Performance is significantly affected by a lack of timing and musicality.
b Quality and dynamics	**5**	**4–5** Quality of movement and varied dynamics enhance performance. **2–3** Quality and dynamics contribute to adequate performance. **0–1** Performance is significantly affected by a lack of quality and varied dynamics.
c Self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus	**5**	**4–5** Self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus are clearly evident. **2–3** There is some evidence of self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus. **0–1** There is little or no evidence of self-expression, sense of performance, concentration and focus.

Grading

Candidates' overall grades are determined by their performance across the course assessment. The course assessment is graded A–D on the basis of the total mark for all course assessment components.

Grade description for C

For the award of grade C, candidates will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

Grade description for A

For the award of grade A, candidates will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

Equality and inclusion

This course is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible.

Qualifications Scotland's equality of access to qualifications policy outlines our commitment to:

- the Equality Act 2010
- anti-racist education
- protecting children's rights
- corporate parenting

Teachers and lecturers must consider the needs of individual candidates when planning learning experiences, designing learning resources, or choosing texts.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page.

Further information

- Assessment arrangements
- Building the Curriculum 3–5
- Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework
- Guide to Assessment
- Recent Qualifications Scotland research
- Remote assessment
- SCQF Handbook
- Know Your SCQF Level — Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
- Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work framework

Appendix 1: course support notes

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance to teachers and lecturers on approaches to delivering the course. Please read these in conjunction with this course specification and the specimen question paper and coursework.

Developing skills, knowledge and understanding

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the course. Teachers and lecturers should refer to this course specification for the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment. Teachers and lecturers have considerable flexibility to select coherent contexts which will stimulate and challenge their candidates, offering both breadth and depth.

The 'approaches to learning and teaching' and 'preparing for course assessment' sections provide suggested experiences and activities that teachers and lecturers can build into their delivery to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding of the course.

Approaches to learning and teaching

Teachers or lecturers should guide candidates through the many opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning throughout the National 5 Dance course.

Teachers or lecturers should encourage personalisation and choice to promote inclusive approaches to teaching and learning. Teachers or lecturers should use a variety of learning and teaching strategies to suit the needs of all candidates, including those who have additional support needs.

Active learning strategies encourage candidates to critically reflect on their learning. For example, through watching live or recorded performances, and through self-check or peer review, candidates could compare their performance to that of a model performer. Candidates could further develop their understanding of good technique by evaluating each other regularly as part of classwork.

Technology can be a valuable resource in creating innovative learning and teaching approaches. Using technology to support the development of personal learning in dance can stimulate individual creativity and can further extend access, opportunity, personalisation and choice to all candidates.

The course is particularly suited to the following learning approaches:

- teacher or lecturer-led
- partner or peer
- group work (small and large)
- improvisational and creative tasks

- research tasks
- mini projects
- presentations
- reflection tasks

Learning approaches should be supported by quality feedback that could be:

- verbal
- visual
- written
- kinaesthetic

This feedback should be based on criteria set by the teacher or lecturer and given to candidates in one or more of the following ways:

- on a one-to-one basis, delivered by the teacher or lecturer
- in a small group or whole-class setting, delivered by the teacher or lecturer
- on a one-to-one basis, delivered by a peer
- in a small group setting, delivered by peers

Candidates' ability to self-evaluate will support the development of their own performance and their ability to discuss strengths, weaknesses and impact on performance. Candidates should self-evaluate through verbal, visual, written and kinaesthetic feedback, reflecting on the process, impact and possibilities for improvement.

Preparing for course assessment

Performance

Developing personal performance

Dance styles

Some candidates have limited experience, knowledge and/or understanding of dance styles. As a starting point, teachers or lecturers could share a piece of professional choreography from a selected dance style and discuss the key principles, skills, steps and qualities of a successful performance. From this, candidates can form an idea of what is expected from a performance in their chosen style.

Appendix 5 contains information about some suggested choreographies.

Throughout the course, candidates benefit from the experience of learning two contrasting dance styles. They should focus on one style initially to absorb the key fundamental principles and performance skills appropriate to all dance genres.

Technical principles	Performance skills
Use of turnout/parallel	Timing
Posture	Musicality
Alignment	Quality
Centring	Dynamics
Balance	Self-expression
Control	Sense of performance
Stamina	Projection
Strength	Concentration and focus
Flexibility	Spatial awareness
Fluidity and smooth transitions	

Developing personal performance presents an opportunity for integrated learning. Candidates should work both practically and theoretically to gain knowledge and understanding of technique and performance qualities. They should be able to apply knowledge and understanding appropriately to their performance within their chosen style of dance.

Teachers or lecturers should integrate safe dance practice into every dance class to ensure it becomes standard practice for all candidates:

- warm-up
- cool-down
- hydration
- correct attire
- clear and safe performance space

Classwork should provide an opportunity to focus and inform the body and mind. Teachers or lecturers should teach set exercises that are repeated on the right and left side of the body. All exercises should be taught in a technically correct manner. Teachers or lecturers should provide candidates with constructive feedback to support and develop their performance, with achievable and realistic targets for improvement. Repeating and consolidating good technique, and supporting this with quality feedback, provides the foundation for successful performance and a body of knowledge that to support the other areas of the course.

A structured class could include:

- cardiorespiratory work
- set exercises: centre work, floor work, barre work
- corner and/or travelling exercises
- introductory classwork

Teachers or lecturers should optimise learning opportunities by incorporating appropriate style-specific technical elements into the exercises chosen. For example, including a focused

approach to work on contraction and release is more relevant for a candidate studying contemporary dance than it is to a candidate studying tap dance.

Sample classwork

Appropriate classwork for National 5 Dance in a number of styles is included below.

Jazz

Warm-up:

- roll-downs
- isolations using head, shoulders, ribs, hips, feet
- lunges
- foot exercises
- preparation for jumps — first, second position
- cardiorespiratory movements

Centre:

- use of feet and legs — parallel, turnout, turn-in — first, second position
- use of arms — first, second position
- tendus and glissés
- jazz pliés (parallel, turnout — first, second position)
- isolations sequence to include head, shoulders, ribs, hips
- ripples including dolphin and snake movements
- preparation for développé and développés in first position
- preparation for pirouettes
- pas de bourrée
- kicks (both flick and high)

Floor work:

- stretches in first, second position, parallel and turnout
- core work
- contraction and high release
- sweeps and swings
- transitions from standing to floor and reverse

Travelling:

- elevation including step-hops, sautés, jetés
- turns including open turns and jazz turns
- step-ball-change, cross-ball-change, flick-ball-change
- jazz walks
- straight-leg kick combinations: including forwards, back and side
- combination of travelling movements

Contemporary

Warm-up:

- roll-downs
- isolations using head, shoulders, ribs, hips, feet
- lunges
- foot exercises
- preparation for jumps — first, second position
- cardiorespiratory movements

Centre work:

- lateral spine curves
- high release
- contractions
- roll-downs in parallel
- pliés in parallel and turnout (first and second position)
- tendus and foot work in parallel and turnout

Floor work:

- swings
- curves
- high release
- tilts
- transitions from standing to floor and reverse

Swings:

- standing swings
- figures of eight
- ski swings

Travelling which includes runs:

- triplets
- leaps
- skips
- turns
- movement phrases using directions, floor patterns and floor work

Hip hop

Warm-up:

- roll-downs
- isolations — shoulder, rib and hip
- cardiorespiratory movements
- cardiorespiratory movements incorporating dynamic arm movements

Centre:

- lunges
- side stretches
- pliés
- weight transference movements such as front, back and step-ball-change and step knee lifts in second position
- slide and glide
- top rock
- ripples, dolphins
- popping and locking
- heel groove
- freeze
- tutting
- Bart Simpson
- cabbage patch
- Scooby Doo
- shoulder lean
- The Reebok

Floor work:

- core work
- planks
- push-ups
- floor slides
- four step
- pin drop

Travelling:

- hip hop walks
- glides
- combinations from centre and floor work

Classical ballet

Barre:

- demi and full pliés
- battement tendu en croix
- battement glissé en croix
- battement fondu
- rond de jambe à terre
- développé devant and à la seconde
- grand battement

Centre:

- using positions of the feet in first, second and third positions
- positions of the arms — first, second, third, fourth (open and crossed), fifth
- port de bras en face
- battement tendu
- battement glissé
- preparation for pirouette (relevé, retiré position, relevé devant, quarter and half turns)
- first, second, third arabesque arm alignment with dégagé derrière
- chassé — en avant, en arrière, à la seconde and passé

Travelling steps:

- classical walks
- pas de bourrée, devant and derrière
- balance de coté
- glissade, devant and derrière
- couru

Allegro:

- sautés, échappé, changements (jumps in first, second, and third positions)
- preparation for assemblé — dessus and dessous
- petite assemblé
- petite jetés
- coupé — dessus and dessous
- temp levé in retiré derrière
- pas de chat

Tap

Warm-up:

- springs and tap springs
- toe taps
- tap-step-ball-change
- tap-step-heel
- tap-heel-ball
- shuffle-ball-change
- hop
- flap
- stomp
- ball and heel beats

Close work:

- shuffles front and side
- pick-ups on two feet
- four-beat cramp rolls
- paddles
- crawl
- single-time step, with break (pick-up or shuffle)

Travelling steps:

- four-beat riffs
- shuffle spring
- waltz step
- pick-up hop step
- pick-up spring step

Turning steps:

- step-turn-step
- pencil turn
- step-ball-change turning
- combinations from centre and close work

Highland

Warm-up:

- jumps in first, second, third, fourth and fifth positions
- springs from foot to foot
- hopping right and left foot
- combinations of the above
- combinations of the above using hand positions — first, second, third, fourth and fifth

Basic positions:

- standing in first position and point in second, third, fourth and fifth — both feet
- hopping and using the same positions as above
- standing in first position and working foot to second aerial, third aerial, third-rear aerial, mid-fourth and mid-fourth aerial, fourth intermediate, fourth-intermediate aerial
- hopping and using the same positions as above

Basic movements and steps:

- bow
- shedding
- back-stepping
- toe and heel
- shake
- rocking
- cross-over
- pas de basque
- open pas de basque
- high-cutting
- brushing
- shuffles
- hop brush beat beat
- shake shake down
- leap
- Strathspey
- highland reel
- spring points
- propelled pivot turn
- last shedding
- addressing the sword
- pointing
- crossing and pointing quick step
- side travel

Appendix 2 contains a detailed description of a sample of skills and techniques appropriate to National 5 Dance.

Performance skills

Candidates should practise performance skills alongside technical skills. Teachers or lecturers should provide a learning environment which allows candidates to develop the following performance skills with a sound technical base:

- accurate recreation of movement
- spatial awareness
- timing
- musicality
- quality
- dynamics
- self-expression
- sense of performance
- concentration and focus

Teachers or lecturers should ensure that these performance skills are underpinned by a sound technical base.

Question paper — section 1

Evaluating of technical and performance skills

Candidates should be able to define, describe, compare and evaluate their own performance using knowledge and understanding that they gather in a practical setting.

In the question paper candidates could be asked to:

- define specific skills, techniques and performance qualities from their chosen style
- discuss the impact of these skills and techniques on their own performance
- discuss to what extent performance qualities enhance or inhibit their overall performance
- provide examples of development methods to improve all areas of personal performance: technical and performance skills
- consider the impact of improvement on their overall performance
- discuss further areas for improvement

The evaluation task described overleaf can help candidates to improve their evaluation skills and their personal performance.

Evaluating and improving personal performance within a specific dance style

Candidates could:

- record a personal performance
- watch a professional performance/model performance in the style and mood that best reflects their chosen style
- identify, describe and discuss the key technical and performance qualities they observed
- compare these technical and performance qualities to their personal performance
- use feedback from their teacher or lecturer or peers to assist them with this comparison
- consider development methods that would help to improve technique and performance
- repeat all of the above many times to consolidate learning, noting progress and areas for improvement

Question paper — section 2

Knowledge and understanding of a dance style

The question paper requires candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a chosen dance style. Teachers or lecturers should supplement practical learning with classroom activities which allow candidates to explore their chosen style in more detail.

Teachers or lecturers could help candidates gain a deeper understanding of their chosen dance style by focusing on:

- style-specific steps, skills, characteristics and performance qualities that make the chosen style identifiable
- key characteristics that make the chosen style identifiable, for example movement quality, music and/or sound and theatre arts such as costume and/or attire, make-up, lighting, props and set design
- the origins and key historical developments of the style over time
- influences and key developments that contribute to the style as seen today
- an in-depth study of one piece of work from an influential choreographer in the chosen style that considers all of the above

Appendix 4 contains a list of suggested influential choreographers and dance companies to prepare learning and teaching activities for section 2.

Integrated approaches to prepare for course assessment

Approach 1

The following teaching approach illustrates how teachers or lecturers can combine preparation for sections 1 and 2 of the question paper with preparation for the performance.

Step 1 — setting the scene

Teachers and lecturers should set the scene for candidates. Teachers and lecturers should gather visual, verbal and kinaesthetic information to aid their knowledge and understanding. (Refer to appendix 4 and 5 for a list of suggested influential choreographers and choreographies to study.)

Teaching activity

- As an introduction, share a piece of professional choreography with candidates.
- Discuss the key characteristics and style-specific steps that make it identifiable.
- Discuss the desired performance qualities that are essential to delivering a successful performance in the style chosen.
- Begin practical work in the knowledge that candidates have gained information about technical and performance qualities of their chosen dance style to support their learning.

Step 2 — practising the chosen dance style

Teaching activity

Structure classwork to include appropriate skills, techniques and desired performance qualities for the chosen dance style through set exercises and amalgamated sequences. Provide regular and appropriate feedback to candidates. Repeat these exercises and sequences until the performance becomes automatic and is technically correct.

Step 3 — personal performance

The aim of this activity is to provide short, succinct and meaningful feedback to candidates. The criteria used to measure performance should be clear. Teachers and lecturers should work with candidates to set achievable targets.

Feedback activity (teacher or lecturer, peer or self-assessment)

Consider all areas of candidates' personal performances within a chosen style.

- Record a personal performance.
- Watch a professional performance or model performance in the style and mood that best reflects the style being studied.
- Identify, describe and discuss the key technical and performance qualities observed.
- Compare these technical and performance qualities to the personal performance.
- Discuss and evaluate any weaknesses and the impact they have on personal performance from a technical and performance quality perspective.
- Discuss and evaluate any strengths and the impact they have on personal performance from a technical and performance quality perspective.
- Use feedback from teachers or lecturer and peers to improve personal performance.
- Describe skills and exercises that could be incorporated into structured classwork to help improvement.

- Evaluate the impact of these skills and exercises on personal performance.
- Repeat all of the above to ensure a clear understanding has been gained and can be demonstrated.

As an ongoing activity, ensure that candidates' practical learning in steps 2 and 3 is supported through class and homework tasks which consider definitions, explanations and descriptions of skills, techniques and performance qualities.

Step 4 — evaluating personal performance

Evaluation activity

- Use set written tasks to explore the impact of strengths and weaknesses on performance. Explore development methods that candidates could apply to improve identified areas of weakness and/or methods to maintain candidates' strengths.
- Candidates should articulate their knowledge and understanding and evaluation skills through short descriptive responses to questions on each element or principle, and through practical demonstration.

Step 5 — studying a chosen dance style

Teaching activity

Teachers and lecturers could prepare candidates to articulate their knowledge and understanding and write short descriptive answers in response to task and activities about:

- style-specific steps, skills, characteristics and performance qualities that make a chosen style identifiable
- key characteristics that make a chosen style identifiable, for example movement quality and theatre arts such as costume/attire, make-up, music and/or sound, lighting, props and set design
- the origins and key historical developments of a style over time
- influences and key developments that contribute to a style as seen today
- an in-depth study of one piece of work from an influential choreographer in a chosen style that considers all of the above

Step 6 — consolidating learning

The tasks below give candidates the opportunity to consolidate their learning from steps 1 to 5. Teachers or lecturers could set these tasks independently throughout the year. Candidates could complete the work as homework tasks, classroom tasks or a mixture of both.

Candidate tasks

Work individually, in pairs or small groups. Use the information you have gathered and:

- write a newspaper article that demonstrates all or a specific part of what you have learned
- create a mood board that visually depicts what you have learned
- create a slide presentation, for example PowerPoint, and present what you have learned

Step 7 — preparing for external assessment in a chosen dance style

Teachers or lecturers should refer to the marking instructions for the National 5 Dance performance (in this course specification) when preparing candidates for the performance.

Teachers or lecturers should choreograph and teach a technical solo in one dance style that lasts a minimum of 1 minute and 30 seconds and a maximum of 2 minutes that demonstrates the candidate's ability to apply technical and performance skills as appropriate to the chosen dance style. The teaching process for the technical solo should cover knowledge and understanding of the chosen dance style, performance skills, and evaluating personal performance.

Teachers or lecturers should give candidates opportunities to perform solo under examination conditions before their final assessment. This helps to alleviate exam-day pressure and gives them time to work on coping strategies. Feedback from teachers or lecturers and peers is critical at this point in the course to sharpen performance.

Approach 2

The following teaching approach illustrates how teachers or lecturers can combine preparation for the practical activity with section 3 of the question paper.

Approach 1 covers evaluating personal performance and studying a chosen dance style. Teachers or lecturers should use their professional judgement to decide when to introduce this next part of the course to candidates.

Approach 2 continues to suggest experiential/kinaesthetic, verbal, written and visual learning opportunities; however, these opportunities have a creative focus. Learning and teaching activities should cover the basic principles of choreography and act as a springboard for creativity. To prepare candidates for the practical activity, teachers and lecturers could plan and prepare structured improvisation and creative tasks to explore choreographic principles.

Key considerations when planning

Teachers or lecturers should plan tasks which are:

- relevant to the candidate's age and stage of development
- stimulating and presented to allow candidates to make the connection between stimulus, creativity and the end product of developed movement
- open-ended so that candidates can use all movement creatively and experiment with choreographic principles (without the teacher or lecturer having to choreograph new movement)

Developing movement from a stimulus

There is no right or wrong way to approach choreography. It can be a challenge to equip the mind-set of the candidate to creatively play with movement beyond the set steps that have been the focus of learning to date. To this end it is recommended that tasks ignite the imagination and set the scene for what we mean by the use of creative and original movement and ways to convey choreographic intentions to an audience through a piece of choreography.

Discussing professional choreography

To set the scene, teachers or lecturers could begin by selecting a piece of professional choreography for candidates to discuss. (Appendix 5 contains suitable examples.)

Teachers or lecturers could then:

- discuss and share ideas on the impact that the choreography has on the audience
- identify and discuss the theme or stimulus of the choreography and how it was conveyed through movement
- lead a discussion around creativity and choreographic intentions
- address the challenging idea that the choreographic process requires an emotional investment from the choreographer to ensure the intent is communicated
- discuss how a choreographer works to get to the final point of performance
- discuss the personal skills that may be required to successfully choreograph a dance
- take time, over a number of weeks, to look at the impact and use of structure, choreographic devices, spatial elements and theatre arts
- set a number of homework tasks where candidates have to explore and discuss the use and impact of theme or stimulus, structure, choreographic devices, spatial elements and impact of theatre arts
- ask candidates to present to the class to share learning
- introduce candidates to descriptive words for dance (see appendix 6), to develop vocabulary that can be used in both the choreography review in the practical activity and the evaluation of professional choreography section of the question paper

Exploring different types of stimulus ideas through movement

Teachers or lecturers could introduce candidates to different types of stimulus ideas. The table below includes some examples.

Type of stimulus	Example
Visual	a picture of a thunderstorm
Written	a poem that initiates feelings or emotions, for example ‘Dulce et Decorum Est’ by Wilfred Owen
Audio	a radio news report about the horror of war
Tactile	the impact on us of the various ways we are physically touched by people and things, for example in Pina Bausch's ‘Full Moon’ performed by the Tanztheater Wuppertal.
Kinaesthetic	this stimulus is inspired from movement itself, it could be everyday movements, movements of a sports person or a dance phrase to form a piece of choreography
Ideational	creating movements to show the choreographic intention through conveying an idea or unfolding a story. This could be war, body image, car crash or anything that provokes movement ideas for the candidate

Initial motifs

What is an initial motif?

The initial motif should be a sequence of movement that underpins and supports everything created thereafter. The initial motif should be that first out-pouring of movement that represents something urgent that the choreographer has to use to portray their choreographic intentions and it should have the potential to be developed.

To ensure an integrated learning experience, candidates should be set tasks that challenge their ability to describe the movement being developed. Descriptive language for dance should be encouraged to convey the dynamic of the emotion being portrayed. (See list of descriptive words for dance in appendix 6.)

Teachers and lecturers should work to develop initial motifs or key movements from chosen stimuli in an experiential learning environment.

Some ideas for a theme or stimulus:

- recycling
- rainforests
- the carbon footprint
- opposites
- films
- phobias
- the weather
- the four elements (earth, air, fire, water)
- addiction
- a labyrinth
- a city street
- everyday movements
- storm at sea
- the stages of growing older

Teachers or lecturers should set candidates activities, like the one described below, to challenge their ability to describe the movement being developed. Teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to use descriptive language for dance to convey the dynamic of the emotion being portrayed (see appendix 6).

Learning and teaching activities

- Candidates could bring a personal item to class. It could be anything: a photo, picture, object, book, clothing, poem.
- In a workshop setting, candidates could explore feelings and thoughts provoked by their item. Candidates could then create a spider diagram of movement ideas and dynamics.
- Candidates could use their spider diagram to transfer feelings, thoughts, emotions and words into movement. They could create a motif or key movements to reflect their personally chosen theme or stimulus.

- Candidates could share their motifs or key movements in a group or class sharing exercise. The group could identify and discuss the theme or stimulus — a game of dance charades could keep everyone engaged.
- The group could discuss and explore the impact that it can have when a choreographer experiments with movement.

Research

To fully support an integrated learning experience and help prepare for the written review and evaluation of professional choreography, teachers or lecturers should guide candidates through research of their chosen theme or stimulus. Having completed the previous tasks, candidates should be able to carry out independent research under the guidance of the teacher or lecturer. A choreography for two dancers, lasting between 1 minute and 30 seconds and 2 minutes is particularly suitable for this task. Candidates should carry out research before devising any movement.

Sources of information

- newspapers
- documentaries
- life events
- films
- theatre and/or live performances
- books
- poems
- song lyrics
- interviews
- personal experiences
- online information
- museums
- video clips, series, TV show
- historical journals
- pictures, photographs
- paintings

Key points to remember

Candidates will be unable to tell a long story in the time given (between 1 minute and 30 seconds and 2 minutes). They should focus on one specific aspect from their chosen theme or stimulus and convey their choreographic intentions, for example the portrayal of heartbreak, rather than the story of a long relationship, ensures meaningful movement can be developed.

Research should provide candidates with an insight into their theme to inspire movement ideas. Two different sources of research are required for external assessment, such as a poem and a picture. Candidates must only use one image-based source.

As an initial starting point, research could be organised information in the form of a written paragraph, a spider diagram of words and ideas that relate to the theme or stimulus. It could include images, pieces of music and artwork that relate to the theme or stimulus with descriptive words to demonstrate the emotional connection that the candidate feels. Candidates often enjoy putting all of their ideas onto a mood board before writing their final choreography review. After this process, candidates should select the two most appropriate research sources to include in the extended response.

Integrating learning

Teachers or lecturers could timetable the following areas simultaneously:

- evaluating a professional dance performance
- choreographic principles
- exploring candidates' own choreography

Integrated teacher or lecturer-led activities could focus on the development of theme or stimulus through:

- motif development
- choreographic structure
- choreographic devices
- spatial elements
- impact and use of theatre arts

The movements that candidates choreograph should be inspired by their research and therefore embody the essence of the chosen theme or stimulus and convey their choreographic intentions.

Motif development

Developing a motif can help candidates to build up a sense of climax or tension, evoke emotional states, or convey the mood or theme of a dance.

When developing motifs, candidates should consider what movements:

- feel right
- fit into the image to be portrayed
- have meaning and are relevant to the dance idea
- are interesting
- are original
- have potential for development

Motif development is a way of producing a lot from a little, while avoiding too much repetition (which may be monotonous for the audience).

Motifs are the ‘building blocks’ of a dance. Rather than continually inventing new movements for a dance, once a motif has been developed, variations can be used to develop it into a final piece of choreography. By varying the motif the choreographer is making the dance unique.

Candidates can vary their motifs in a number of ways, including:

- using different parts of the body
- adding or changing direction
- changing the size
- changing the level
- increasing or decreasing the speed
- changing the dynamics or quality

Choreographic structure

Choreographic structure refers to how the sections are linked together. Sections are typically known as ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ for ease of explaining the well-known structures. Using choreographic structures can be a helpful way for candidates to put their ideas in order. They should use them in a way that is appropriate to the theme or stimulus that their dance is trying to convey.

Candidates may find the following table helpful.

Structure	Description
Binary (A, B)	Commonly used in dance composition. The first section A is contrasted by a new section B, but both have a common thread which binds one to the other. Each section may have contrasting elements, but there must be something similar in nature too.
Ternary (A, B, A)	A conventional and satisfying form because going back to the beginning ‘rounds it off’. The return to section A can be achieved by exact repetition of the initial section, or by reversing, highlighting parts, changing a few elements and changing the order of the elements. They must be closely linked, while section B forms the contrast.
Narrative form (A, B,C)	Narrative is a choreographic structure that follows a specific storyline and should have a beginning, a middle and an end.
Rondo (A, B, A, C, A, D, A)	This provides the choreographer with a verse and chorus framework that gives room for variation in the verses and development in the chorus. Variation can produce something new each time, but it must still have enough of the original to be considered a related part to the whole. Development can recall the original in many ways without changing the essence. This is a satisfying form to watch, as the viewer can quickly identify the chorus movement and enjoy its repetition – it becomes a ‘joining-in’ process.

Integrated task — identifying choreographic structure and evaluating professional choreography

Teachers or lecturers could select a professional choreography (see appendix 5 for ideas), watch it with the class and then discuss the choreographer's choice of structure and how it is used to convey the theme or stimulus. For homework, candidates could produce a description of how the structure was used and how it helped to communicate the theme or stimulus to the audience.

Choreographic devices

There are many devices for developing a motif. Devices appropriate to National 5 level include repetition, retrograde, unison, canon, mirroring, partner work, and contact improvisation.

Candidates might find the following information helpful.

Repetition

In repetition, the same actions are performed in the same order in the same place on the stage. A direct repeat can be effective if the choreographer is trying to communicate or reinforce:

- a meaning or idea
- a feeling of boredom or tedium
- a sense of pattern in an abstract piece

Retrograde

Retrograde is reversing the order in which a motif is performed, like rewinding a film, and can produce work that is more abstract but still relates to the theme.

Unison

When dancers are performing in unison, they are performing the same movements at the same time and so it can reinforce the theme behind the movement.

Mirroring

This is when dancers copy each other, face-to-face, move-for-move, as if they are reflections of one another.

Partner work

Partner work involves working with another person's personal space, possibly with lifts, sharing weight or making contact.

Canon

Canon is a compositional form in which the original motif is reinforced and amplified as it is stretched over a longer period of time. Individuals and/or groups perform the same movement or phrase beginning at different times. This device involves at least two dancers

performing one or more motifs at different times. Canon creates interesting relationships within the group such as leader and follower, question and answer, co-operation and confrontation. It has unity and variety built into it and gives a sense of progression. The fact that the motif is shared gives the dance a sense of unity.

The most basic form of canon is a simple canon. Each dancer performs an entire motif and then stays still while another dancer takes over. This device can be developed by having the dancers begin the motif four counts after each other, placing demands on the dancers' musicality and ability to perform in a group.

Contact improvisation

During contact improvisation, physical contact between two dancers is maintained while movement is improvised. One person leads and the other follows, but the dynamic between people can shift constantly.

Other devices that may be appropriate for National 5 are:

Juxtaposition

Juxtaposition is where more than one dancer dances at the same time, however each dancer performs different steps or a different motif.

Accumulation

Accumulation is where new movements are added to existing movements in a successive manner, for example A, AB, ABC, ABCD.

Integrated learning task — learning, practising, refining, creating, describing and evaluating

- The teacher or lecturer could teach the class a motif based on a shared theme and/or stimulus.
- The teacher or lecturer could divide the class into pairs and give each pair a written choreographic device to apply to the motif.
- The class could play dance charades, guessing and discussing the impact and effect of the devices used.
- The teacher or lecturer could ask the pairs to join their motifs together. They could teach each other and then the teacher or lecturer could give each group an emotion to apply to their motif.
- The class could play dance charades and guess the emotion and have a follow-up discussion.
- In groups, candidates could combine the original motif taught with the movement created to perform extended pieces of creative movement. Finally, the class could consider performance qualities in relation to the choreographic intention or theme.

Spatial elements

Candidates might find the following information about spatial elements helpful.

Definitions of spatial elements

Personal space	space around you or on the spot
General space	around the room or performing space
Levels	high, medium and low
Direction	forwards, backwards, sideways, up, down, diagonal
Body shape	wide, narrow, rounded, twisted, symmetrical, asymmetrical
Size	large or small
Proximity	near or far
Pathways	straight, curved, angular, circular

The stage area is typically split into nine areas and shown from the performers' point of view:

up stage right (USR)	up stage centre (USC)	up stage left (USL)
centre stage right (CSR)	centre stage (CS)	centre stage left (CSL)
down stage right (DSR)	down stage centre (DSC)	down stage left (DSL)

Audience

Centre stage area can fluctuate between strong and weak in a solo: if the actions are small and vulnerable the dancer can look lost in an enormous space, but if the actions are strong and commanding then the dancer seems to own the whole stage.

The choreographer should use up stage when trying to communicate ideas such as:

- solitude
- alienation
- vulnerability

The down stage areas build:

- intimacy
- familiarity
- detail

Integrated task — identifying spatial elements and evaluating professional choreography

Teachers or lecturers could select a piece of professional choreography which exemplifies the use of spatial elements. ‘Overdrive’, choreographed by Richard Alston is a particularly suitable example. Teachers or lecturers could use this as the starting point for a discussion about the use of spatial elements in professional choreography.

Impact of music and sound and theatre arts

Candidates might find the following information helpful.

Music and/or sound

- helps create mood and atmosphere
- helps show time (period and time of day)
- helps show location
- creates special effects, for example gunfire
- can highlight an emotional or dramatic moment in dance

Voice

Spoken words can add to a performance, for example a poem, or extracts of a letter could be read aloud. Voice and music can be used in the same choreographed piece.

Lighting

- the audience see the performance
- creates mood or atmosphere
- helps show time (period and time of day)
- helps show location
- focuses attention on an area of the stage
- creates special effects, for example lightning

Wash of light

This is created by stage lights having different coloured gels attached to them. The different colours can easily create different moods and atmosphere. For example blues create a cold and eerie feeling, while reds and yellows create a warm feeling.

Spotlights

This is where a single, strong beam of white light is directed specifically on certain dancers. It is used to highlight certain characters or movements. It creates a more intimate feeling, and the audience are drawn to watch specifically what is being focused on.

Corridor of light

This is similar to a spotlight. However, the light appears as a long vertical shaft. This is often used from the sides of the stage as opposed to from the audience’s perspective. ‘Swansong’ (Christopher Bruce, 1987) uses a corridor of light shining from up stage left towards which the dancer seems to be performing.

Side lights

These give depth and mould well to the flexible body of the dancer due to the height at which they are positioned.

Cross light

Light is directed onto the stage from more than one direction. Large amounts of light from front-of-house above will give a stagey look, while light shone from a low level only can create eerie shadows.

Cross fade

As some lights fade up, others fade down. This is an effective approach to change from one scene to another.

Set design

- establishes place and time
- provides information on the character, for example if it is their home or office
- helps create mood or atmosphere
- identifies a change in location

Costume

- establishes time (period and time of day)
- gives information about the character
- helps to show the location
- can show status or occupation of a character
- helps create mood or atmosphere

Make-up and hair

- helps highlight performers' features under lighting
- can be used for fantasy and symbolic characters
- gives information about characters' personality and age
- can be used for special effects, for example a scar
- can show time and place of dance

Props

- can be personal (a handbag which is specific to one character) or pre-set (a telephone which is used by all)
- can establish place and time
- gives information about characters
- shows location
- can show status or occupation of character
- helps create mood and atmosphere

Integrated task — identifying use and impact of theatre arts and evaluating professional choreography

This task is useful preparation for section 3 of the question paper and both sections of the practical activity.

Teachers or lecturers could select a piece of professional choreography that features theatre arts. ‘Cats’ (the musical) or ‘Ghost Dances’ by Christopher Bruce are appropriate examples.

Candidates could identify and describe the theatre arts in these examples of professional choreography. Teachers or lecturers could use this task as the starting point for a class or group discussion about the use and impact of theatre arts in choreography.

Integrated specific learning task appropriate for a dance for two people

Teachers and lecturers should dedicate time to ensure each candidate is equipped with the essential skills and tools to create a choreography for two dancers that is creative and original with a clear theme or stimulus.

Teachers or lecturers could give candidates a theme or stimulus such as ‘escape’. Both dancers could start up stage right and move down stage on the diagonal, creating movement for two people that is developed by the choreographic principles they have learned. The aim of this activity is to bring all of the learning together to create movement that depicts a theme.

In a dance for two people, tasks could include:

- how, what, where, when actions are performed in relation to conveying a theme or stimulus when there are only two dancers
- developing dynamics as appropriate to the theme or stimulus
- exploring the relationship between two dancers in terms of choreographic devices as appropriate to the theme and/or stimulus
- creating a floor plan that helps convey the theme or stimulus when there are two dancers on stage

Reflecting on choreography skills task

The following task can be used to prepare candidates for the choreography review section of the practical activity. It could take the form of a class discussion, homework, logbooks or any other appropriate format that allows candidates to review their strengths and areas for development as a choreographer. Tasks could be set around:

- creativity
- leadership
- organisation
- communication
- any other relevant skill required for choreography

Throughout the choreographic process candidates could reflect on their strengths and areas for development, considering how these link directly to their practice. They could reflect on

their choreographic work to date and think about feedback they have received from teachers, lecturers and peers.

While considering their own choreographic process, candidates could consider the following questions:

- Is there a motif or key movement that can be identified in some way to communicate the choreographic intentions?
- Has this motif or key movement been developed to communicate the intentions?
- Is there creative movement? Consider set dance steps and the way they are helping to convey the intentions. If they do not help to convey the choreographic intentions, their use should be questioned.
- Does the structure used communicate the choreographic intentions?
- Have devices been used to communicate the choreographic intentions?
- Have spatial elements been used well and with purpose to communicate the choreographic intentions?
- Does the choice of music and/or sound contribute to communicating the choreographic intentions?

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Teachers and lecturers should identify opportunities throughout the course for candidates to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Candidates should be aware of the skills they are developing, and teachers and lecturers can provide advice on opportunities to practise and improve them.

Qualifications Scotland does not formally assess skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Some examples of potential opportunities to practise or improve some these skills are provided in the following table.

Skills for learning, skills for life, skills for work	Methodology	Guidance
3 Health and wellbeing 3.1 Personal learning 3.3 Physical wellbeing	♦ candidate demonstrations ♦ personal reflection	Candidates should develop performance skills by participating in physical activity and applying creative expression.
4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship 4.3 Working with others	♦ peer evaluation ♦ choreographic responsibility ♦ performance	Candidates should be encouraged to take responsibility for organising their own learning during choreography.
5 Thinking skills 5.4 Analysing and evaluating 5.5 Creating	♦ individual support logs ♦ problem-solving activities through choreography ♦ evaluating the work of professional choreographers	Candidates could make video clips to chart progress of personal performance. A variety of stimuli could be presented for choreography of short sequences. Two contrasting choreographers could be identified for candidates to study.

There may also be opportunities to develop additional skills depending on approaches being used to deliver the course in each centre. This is for individual teachers and lecturers to manage.

Skills for learning, skills for life, skills for work	Methodology	Guidance
1 Literacy 1.3 Listening and talking	♦ discussion forums	Candidates should be encouraged to share knowledge and ideas and how they have translated these into movement.
3 Health and wellbeing 3.2 Emotional wellbeing	♦ participation in active learning	Candidates should develop performance skills by participating in physical activity and applying creative expression.
5 Thinking skills 5.3 Applying	♦ problem-solving activities through choreography	Candidates should be encouraged to apply their understanding of dance to overcome problems when creating a choreography.

Appendix 2: sample skills and techniques

Jazz dance

Technical skill	Description
Pliés	Pliés can be performed as a demi-plié or as a grand plié. They can also be performed in first positions parallel and turnout and second positions parallel and turnout.
Tendus	A tendu is a 'point' — a movement of the leg away from the body, culminating in an extension of the foot into a pointed position. It can be performed in a variety of directions around the body.
Isolations	An isolation is a signature movement in jazz dance. It occurs when one part of the body moves on its own. The head, shoulders, ribs and hips are the areas that can easily move in isolation. Bob Fosse, the choreographer, used this movement to great effect.
Jazz turns	Pencil turn: pirouette with both legs straight. Pirouette: turn on one leg that begins in plié and goes to relevé from a plié. Chassé with turn.
Kicks	A kick is a key technique in jazz dance. It can be used when travelling and can be performed to the front, side and rear. It can also be performed on a flat foot, from a plié and in relevé. The kicking action is normally through an extended leg, but it can also be performed through a développé action then into the extension.
Pas de bourrée	The jazz pas de bourrée is a pattern of three steps performed in a rhythm of 1, 2, 3. The three steps: behind, side, in front.
Jazz walks	There are many varieties of jazz walks. Jazz walks can be performed, with isolation movements, in any direction and at any tempo. The jazz walk is performed low and into the floor with the ball of the foot making contact with the floor first. The jazz walk is demonstrated with jazz arms going through first position up to fifth and out to second.
Travelling combinations	A combination of walks, leaps, ball changes and turns.

Contemporary dance

Technical skill	Description
Roll-down	This begins with a heavy head that leads the curvature of the spine. Ensure shoulders stay connected to back and do not hunch forward. Connect and engage abdominal muscles.
Lateral curve	(Side contraction) Body tips on the door plane sideways (laterally) by contraction of the oblique muscles. Shoulders stay even throughout and head should be in line with the spine.
Contraction	Begins with pulling in of abdominal muscles and creates curve in the spine. Head will follow naturally. Ideally, stomach should resemble an ice cream scoop and breath out should accommodate to facilitate. Ensure shoulders stay connected on back.
Grand plié	Same as demi-plié but heels are allowed off the floor as body goes all the way down. Ensure dancer does not 'sit' in grand plié. Muscles should still be working and engaged. Heels stay on the floor until necessary that they come off and are pressed back onto the floor as soon as possible on recovery. This encourages the stretching and lengthening of the Achilles tendon.
Tendu and/or glissé	Foot extends out to point and heel stays pressed into the floor for as long as possible. Foot is fully pointed in line with the leg, not extending toes forward (sickling) or backwards (fishing). When closing, heel is pressed into the floor as soon as possible. Think of the foot cleaning or massaging the floor when tendu is opening and closing. Ensure no weight is put on the working foot but weight is slightly transferred onto the supporting leg. The leg should be fully straight and thigh pulled up. Follow the same action for glissé, however the foot extends until it slightly leaves the floor.
Leg swings	Dancer is in a semi-supine position with arms out to sides on floor. Knees drop to one side and the opposite side leg traces a quarter circle along the floor. Leg then recovers back and finishes in starting position. Ensure feet and arms stay connected to the floor at all times.
Standing swing	Arms begin in fifth position (held upwards) arms swing forwards and accompany bending and straightening motions in knees to recover. Breath is an essential component.
High release	Imagine a belt around the torso just below the sternum. Body stays still below and above and spine arches backwards and rib cage expands. Breath in will allow for this. Imagine that you are presenting a saucer and teacup on your sternum. Head will slightly tip back to be in line with the spine.
Demi-plié	Knees bend as far as possible without heels coming off of the floor. Pelvis is slightly tipped forward to ensure it is not sticking out backwards and gluteal muscles are tightly engaged. Knees track over the toes to prevent knee injury. Body should go up and down without any other changes (not forward or back). Tension should be applied to leg muscles and two-way stretch engaged.

Hip hop dance

Technical skill	Description
Tutting	Isolations of the arms and hands. Aim to make 90-degree angles with hands and elbows. Isolate each part as much as possible.
Cabbage patch	Step on right foot, step back on left foot, step-ball-change right foot (1, 2, 3 and 4). Rock forward with first step and back with second step. Arms can vary, for example push forward and back, push elbows out, one hand pushing.
Bart Simpson	Step right foot to right side, twisting knees to right side and bring feet together (1, 2). Arms travel to opposite side.
The Reebok	Use the shoulders and chest to slightly pop while brushing the arms and fists in front of each shoulder. Variations can include stepping to each side, jumping to the side where the arm is going.
Body wave and ripple	Use the upper body to create a wave effect. One part starts and another finishes the wave off. For example: head to toe, fingertips to knee, hips to head.
Shoulder lean	Bend knees using only the shoulders to move from side to side or front to back.
Knee slide	Place one hand down, bending both knees. The back knee should be a little higher than the front knee and slide forward on to hip or upper half of thigh. Drive hips forward. Push off the back foot.
Scooby Doo	Scuff right foot forward, finishing with thigh parallel to floor and foot flexed. Jump on to right foot and step forward and lunge on left leg (1 and 2). Arms move as though you are running. Movement should be high then low.
Top rock	Cross the right foot across to left-diagonal front then return to starting position (1, 2, 3, 4). Push hips forward. Body leans back. Push heel forward.
Kick cross step	Kick one foot, step across the other one, release the foot behind to the side. Add in arms — arms go straight out in front on the kick and cross, arms out to a T-shape on the step.

Appendix 3: example of knowledge and understanding for a chosen dance style

Featured style: ballet

Style-specific steps

Candidates should research style-specific ballet steps and be able to describe them if required, for example grand battement (a kicking motion of the leg), fondu (a peeling up of one foot as the supporting leg bends), assemblé (a jump from one foot to two feet).

Key characteristics

Candidates should reference key characteristics specific to the style such as movement quality, costume, music, typical performance venue, props, make-up. For example: ballet dancers wear special pointe shoes, which have hard toes, made of resin, to allow female dancers to dance on the tips of their toes. Traditionally, female ballet dancers wear tutus and dance to classical music. Ballet is a very technical style — turnout has to be maintained in every step, and ballet had its own particular vocabulary of steps. Ballet is the foundation of many other dance forms.

Where and when the chosen dance style originated

The candidate could reference its origins in 15th century Italian renaissance courts, and how it was developed in France by Louis XIV.

Changes over time

Candidates could give a brief explanation of the key points of development of the style since its origins. This could be historical facts about the style, or how use of the dance style in shows has changed over time, or an interpretation of how the style has morphed and mixed with other styles.

Candidates could make reference to the fact that ballet has undergone many developments in style:

- classical (with styles often determined by country, especially Russia, France, Italy) which features traditional technique and vocabulary
- neoclassical which combines traditional technique with non-traditional music tempos and use of space
- contemporary which is a form of dance influenced by both classical ballet and modern dance, which combines fundamental ballet techniques with modern dance concepts such as floor work and ‘turned in’ legs

Reference could be made to change in ‘tutus’, from long to short as it became more acceptable in a modern society.

Influential choreographer

Candidates could make reference to the ballet choreographer George Balanchine. He was the co-founder and ballet master of New York City Ballet and choreographed over 400 ballets including ‘Agon’, ‘Stars and Stripes’ and ‘Jewels’. He is often referred to as the founder of the neoclassical style of ballet.

Characteristics of choreographer’s style

This may relate, for example, to the recurring themes, music selection, costume style, specific movement style.

Candidates could identify that Balanchine, as a choreographer is known for his musicality; he expressed music with dance and worked extensively with Igor Stravinsky. Key characteristics of Balanchine’s style include:

- athletic dance quality, extreme speed and use of a very deep plié
- a strong emphasis on line, with use of unconventional arm and hand placement
- pirouettes en-dehors, taken from a lunge in fourth, rather than the conventional plié in fourth
- a distinctive arabesque line with the hip open to the audience and the side arm pressed back

A further example could be the study of ‘Ghost Dances’ by Christopher Bruce, which offers many opportunities to discuss the imaginative use of costume and masks within a choreographed ballet to portray a theme.

Appendix 4: learning and teaching resources

Candidates can develop their learning further by reading, researching, watching live or recorded performances. The following list of choreographers may help teacher and lecturers prepare learning and teaching activities for section 2 of the question paper and direct candidate to further study.

Influential choreographers

These include:

Alvin Ailey, Richard Alston, George Balanchine, Ashley Banjo, Pina Bausch, Matthew Bourne, Christopher Bruce, Jack Cole, Merce Cunningham, Siobhan Davies, Isadora Duncan, Bob Fosse, Itzik Galili, Martha Graham, Gregory Hines, Doris Humphrey, Shobana Jeyasingh, Akram Khan, Rudolf Laban, José Limón, Édouard Lock, Gillian Lynne, Matt Mattox, Henri Oguike, Ann Reinking, Wade Robson, Ashley Page, Shane Sparks, Paul Taylor, Jasmin Vardimon.

Dance companies and organisations

These include:

- Council for Dance Education and Training
- Creative Scotland
- Dance UK
- DV8 Physical Theatre
- Foundation for Community Dance
- National Dance Resource Centre for Dance
- New York City Ballet
- Rambert
- Royal Ballet
- Scottish Ballet
- Scottish Dance Theatre
- The Stage (newspaper for dance and theatre)
- YDance
- Youth Dance England

Dance teachers' associations also have websites which contain valuable information, as listed below:

- BATD — British Association of Teachers of Dancing
- BDC — British Dance Council
- CDMT — Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre
- IDTA — International Dance Teachers Association
- ISTD — Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing
- One Dance UK
- RAD — Royal Academy of Dance
- SDTA — Scottish Dance Teachers' Alliance
- RSOBHD — Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing
- UKADance — United Kingdom Alliance Dance

Appendix 5: recommended list of professional choreographies

The following list may be useful when preparing candidates for choreography and selecting an appropriate professional dance to study for section 3 of the question paper.

Title of choreography	Choreographer	Dance company
Broken (contemporary)	Kevin Finnan	Motionhouse
Charge (contemporary)	Kevin Finnan	Motionhouse
Wild (contemporary)	Kevin Finnan	Motionhouse
Hidden (contemporary)	Kevin Finnan	Motionhouse
A Linha Curva (contemporary)	Itzik Galili	Rambert
Ghost Dances (contemporary)	Christopher Bruce	Rambert
Hush (contemporary)	Christopher Bruce	Rambert
Swansong (contemporary)	Christopher Bruce	Rambert
Shadows (contemporary)	Christopher Bruce	Phoenix Dance Theatre
Peaky Blinders: The Redemption of Thomas Shelby: Rambert (15+) (contemporary)	Benoit Swan Pouffer	Rambert
Park (physical theatre)	Jasmin Vardimon	Jasmin Vardimon Company
Pinocchio (physical theatre)	Jasmin Vardimon	Jasmin Vardimon Company
W*hat On Earth* (contemporary)	Janet Smith and Sally Owen	Scottish Dance Theatre
Overdrive (contemporary)	Richard Alston	Richard Alston Dance Company
Faultline (contemporary)	Shobana Jeyasingh	Shobana Jeyasingh Dance
Rush (contemporary)	Akram Khan	Akram Khan Company
Until The Lions (contemporary)	Akram Khan	Akram Khan Company
Akram Khan's Giselle (ballet)	Akram Khan	English National Ballet
Lady Macbeth (ballet)	Akram Khan	Royal Danish Ballet
White Space (contemporary)	Henri Oguike	Henri Oguike Dance
Emancipation of Expressionism (hip hop)	Kenrick ‘H20’ Sandy	Boy Blue Entertainment
Still Life at the Penguin Café (ballet)	David Bintley	The Royal Ballet
Infra (contemporary ballet)	Wayne McGregor	The Royal Ballet
Edward Scissorhands (2005) (ballet)	Matthew Bourne	New Adventures Company
Red Shoes (2016) (ballet)	Matthew Bourne	New Adventures Company
The Car Man (15+) (contemporary)	Matthew Bourne	New Adventures Company

This list is not exhaustive or prescriptive.

Professional dance choreographies

The following duets, from Duets by Mia Michaels ‘So You Think You Can Dance’ are not suitable for the question paper; however, they may help to prepare candidates for their practical activity choreography:

- *Adagio for Strings*
- *Addiction* (2012)
- *Calling You* — Travis and Heidi
- *Reunion in Heaven* — Lucy and Neil

Appendix 6: word bank

The table below contains words that candidates could use to describe movement:

Angry	Big	Bolt
Bounce	Chase	Creepy
Dart	Dash	Drive
Dynamic	Elevation	Effortless
Expand	Fast	Flee
Flick	Fly	Gallop
Gentle	Graceful	Hurl
Hurry	Melt	Plummet
Plunge	Powerful	Propel
Release	Sharp	Slow
Small	Soft	Soar
Soft	Spring	Strong
Sustained	Swerve	Swing
Swoop	Zoom	

Administrative information

Published: June 2026 (version 4.0)

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Course support notes added as an appendix.	August 2017
3.0	Amendments made to clarify dance terminology, and to help align to the Higher course specification. Appendix 4 and appendix 5 updated to clarify appropriateness of professional choreographies.	September 2018
4.0	**Practical activity assessment task** 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. **Section 2: choreography review** We've reduced the marks for section 2: choreography review from 30 to 20 marks. We've made clear the skills, knowledge and understanding for this section in relation to the choreographic intentions. We've revised the task and marking instructions for this section, and removed the command word 'describe' and clarified the command words for this section: explain and evaluate. We've reduced the use of choreographic devices from three to two, and to use only one spatial element. Candidates must select two different sources of research and only use one image-based source. We've added further guidance on reasonable assistance. We've introduced a maximum word count of 1,500 words and a penalty for exceeding this by more than 10%. In 'Appendix 1:course support notes', we've updated the 'Approach 2' section to include 'choreographic intentions' and 'key movements', and updated sources of information. We've changed references to 'SQA' to 'Qualifications Scotland' throughout. We've updated the title to include the SCQF level.	June 2026

Version	Description of change	Date
	We've added a new 'Learning for Sustainability' section and updated the 'Equality and inclusion' and 'Further information' sections. We've made changes to the format and layout of the document to improve accessibility. **What you need to do differently** 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.	

Note: please check Qualifications Scotland's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.

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