



Alternative Certification Model 2020–21: National QA Exercise Key Messages

Subject	Dance
Level	National 5

This report provides information on themes emerging from the national quality assurance exercise, which is part of the Alternative Certification Model for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses.

A sample of candidates' assessed work from selected centres was reviewed to determine whether assessment was in line with the national standard. The evidence submitted may have been partial or incomplete and is unlikely to have represented all of the evidence that will be gathered to allow the centre to determine a provisional result.

The centres selected for review in this subject and at this level have been provided with specific feedback on the evidence that they submitted. The comments below highlight key points about the assessment approaches and instruments used and the sampled centres' assessment judgements, for all centres delivering the subject at this level to reflect upon and make any appropriate adjustments.

Section 1: Comments on approach to assessment

We recognise that the delivery of practical subjects has been challenging this session, and that teachers and lecturers have had to adopt creative approaches to ensure candidates meet the course requirements. This resilience has allowed centres to gather meaningful evidence for provisional results for candidates. The evidence submitted for national quality assurance suggests that centres have worked tirelessly to make sure effective learning and teaching strategies were in place and candidates were supported in preparing for assessment in difficult circumstances.

Question paper

Many centres made effective use of the full SQA 2021 question paper assessment. Other centres adapted the SQA 2021 question paper and combined it with items from past papers and/or the specimen question paper to create a centre-devised assessment resource that was in line with the national standards.

It was evident from responses to section 3 that some candidates had not studied a full dance piece by a professional choreographer. Candidates must study a full dance piece by a professional choreographer to allow them to fully understand the intentions of the choreography.

Practical activity

Many centres took advantage of the course modification that allowed candidates to perform in their own choreographed duet. This modification was suggested to reduce the number of candidates working together. While this approach was acceptable to allow learning and teaching to continue, taking on the role of dancer and choreographer appears to have hindered many candidates' creative skills. It was evident that many candidates' choreography lacked creativity and originality, so the movements, devices and structure used did not fully communicate the intentions of the duet.

Performance

Centres are to be commended for their creative approaches to deliver the performance component and ensure candidates were well prepared. It was evident that candidates have learned tutor-choreographed solos in various settings and venues, as some found it challenging to then use the full performance space available for assessment.

Many centres' tutor-choreographed technical solos demonstrated a lack of technical content appropriate to the style, and instead solos included lots of stylised movements. Centres should ensure candidates can exemplify a wide range of style-specific skills within the time to provide appropriate challenge for National 5.

Section 2: Comments on assessment judgements

Question paper

The assessment judgements submitted for quality assurance were either accurate or lenient. Where centres were marking leniently, it was because they were not applying the marking instructions accurately. Candidates were given marks when their responses were straightforward or insufficiently detailed. For section 1 — evaluation of technical and performance skills, some candidates provided generic responses when the question asked for self-reflection on own skills.

Practical activity

Assessment judgements for the choreographic review were generally accurate, valid and in line with the national standards. Some centres marked leniently for the structure, devices, and spatial elements tasks.

The assessment judgements for the choreography were often lenient. Marking instructions were not applied correctly, and often centres were not using all the marks available within a band descriptor. Centres tended to use the upper mark within a band descriptor, so the accumulation of marks inflated the overall mark.

Performance

The assessment judgements for the performance component were often lenient, particularly for element 1: application of technique. Marking instructions were not applied correctly and often centres were not using all the marks available within a band descriptor. Centres tended to use the upper mark within a band descriptor, so the accumulation of marks inflated the overall mark.