

Graded Qualifications Alliance

Regulated Qualifications Framework Levels 1 - 3

General Graded Examinations In Theatre Dance

Syllabus

**Endorsed
Classical Ballet,
Modern Jazz, Tap, Lyrical
Greek and Acrobatic**

**Graded Qualifications Alliance
Garden Street
Leicester
LE1 3UA**

Syllabus June 2016

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1. Rationale

Dance transforms images, ideas, and feelings into movement sequences that are emotionally and socially significant. It provides a context for understanding the world and contributes to cultural and personal development in both applied and expressive contexts. Dance offers opportunities for the exploration, discovery and development of natural instincts for movement and offers many benefits for candidates by encouraging aesthetic and emotional development as well as enhancing motor skills.

GQAL is committed to ensuring access to all candidates who have the capacity to safely participate in its examinations. GQAL Graded Examinations in Dance make a distinctive contribution to education and training in the expressive and performing arts. This is because they:

- encourage individual candidates to select pathways that provide for the development of expressive and/or applied abilities and interests;
- enable candidates to work towards qualifications that meet their aspirations for a range of careers (e.g. as performers, professional dancers, teachers or physiotherapists);
- place an emphasis on performance;
- provide all candidates with opportunities to experience, understand, and value the language and art of dance and enable them to develop a broad base of skills and abilities in different disciplines.

This specification offers candidates the scope to study several dance disciplines in order to make progress through performance thereby developing their knowledge, skills and understanding of dance. This encourages a broad and continuing interest and participation in dance as an expressive medium and appropriate progression for those who aspire to careers as theatre dance professionals or in related occupations. The specification aims and objectives emphasise the breadth of study and the development of practical abilities. There is an explicit requirement and emphasis upon performance and an expectation that candidates will be able to demonstrate the critical and contextual knowledge necessary for an understanding, skill and enjoyment of dance.

The content of the specification, the structure of the examination, and the method of assessment place a clear emphasis on making progress through the performance of the skills and artistry of dance and related disciplines. These include opportunities for the development of:

- creative expression;
- aesthetic perception;
- kinaesthetic sense;
- critical thinking and analytical skills;
- co-operation and teamwork;
- self-expression and self-esteem;
- organisation and problem solving;
- cultural literacy;
- communicating emotions through movement.

2. Specification Aims

A course of study based on this specification aims to:

- promote the progression of performance of dance as a medium for personal expression and enjoyment;

- encourage the acquisition and development of personal, social, emotional, creative and physical skills and abilities;
- provide opportunities for active and discriminating participation both as performer and as audience;
- encourage the acquisition of aesthetic and critical understanding and judgement;
- develop increasing awareness of the cultural contribution of dance.

3. Specification Objectives

The content is intended to enable the following objectives to be met through a course of study based on this specification, which provide opportunities for:

- interpretation and choice of styles and dance disciplines, within a coherent and structured context;
- progressing through the disciplines, skills and concepts of dance and demonstrating increasing levels of self confidence, physical co-ordination and inter-personal skills;
- practical work based on sound principles that pay due regard to the health, safety and well being of those involved;
- increasing spatial awareness and the capacity for an informed response to critical, creative and aesthetic judgements.

The purpose may be summarised as fostering intuitive, aesthetic and imaginative thinking expressed through dance and encouraging active and continuing participation in the performing arts.

4. Progression

Progression is achieved through the Graded Examination structure, with each of the eight grades being progressively differentiated by content and performance. Opportunities are available to further extend and develop individual abilities by courses leading to vocational, professional and teaching qualifications.

The opportunities for progression underline the contribution of the specification for Graded Examinations in Dance to the national provision of training and qualifications for dancers in the theatre and allied professions. Candidates are able to select pathways that provide for the development of expressive and/or applied abilities and interests and to work towards qualifications that meet their aspirations for a range of careers (e.g. as performers, professional dancers, or teachers).

5. Target Groups

This specification is designed to provide opportunities for candidates from four years of age and onwards, though are typically taken by the four to eighteen age range.

A typical candidate might be expected to take twelve years of study to progress from Grade 1 to Grade 8. Entry to the grades is not age related and is open to any prospective candidate who has the physical capability to safely undertake the study requirements. Candidates with additional educational needs are not targeted separately although special provision may be made for them.

Continuing Education candidates include those returning to learn dance as well as those starting to learn as mature candidates. No prior learning or ability is required but prospective candidates are expected to start at a grade appropriate to their

physical capabilities. There are no age restrictions, the age of candidates being entered for these examinations include those who are 70+. Mature candidates who are considering learning dance are encouraged to contact GQAL for a list of teachers in their area and for advice on what is appropriate to them.

Age or Description	Grades	RQF Level
4 – 7	Preliminary Grades	N/A
6 – 13	1 – 5	Level 1 and Level 2
11 – 18+	6 – 8	Level 2 and Level 3
Continuing Education	Grades 1 – 8	All Levels

6. Specification Overview

Examinations at **Grades 1 – 8** are available in Classical Ballet, Modern Jazz, Lyrical, Tap, Greek and Acrobatic. Progression through the Grades in each discipline is provided through a **Programme of Study** based on this specification. Each grade requires the practical demonstration of the minimum levels of achievement set out in the **Level Descriptions**. All the examinations require candidates to demonstrate achievement in Barre, Centre and Dance for each examination.

This specification provides opportunities for interpretation and choice of styles and dance disciplines within a coherent and structured context. The intention is to provide a firm foundation of technique that can be progressively built on. The structure allows candidates to selectively develop progress with their performance of their chosen disciplines and to use this as a basis for their education, vocational and professional training in dance and related fields.

7. Subject Content of Dance Disciplines

The specification offers the following **Disciplines** for candidates to choose from: Classical Ballet, Modern Jazz, Lyrical, Tap, Greek, and Acrobatic. The Subject Content summary of these as given below should be read in conjunction with the Grade Descriptions provided in the **Scheme of Assessment**. Information for teachers and advice on specification requirements is available from GQAL, Garden Street, Leicester LE1 3UA

Classical Ballet - A dance form combining elements of the English and French traditions of ballet. This discipline places an emphasis on the mastery of correct and safe technique, the vocabulary of dance, physical placement, spatial relationships, dramatic presence and artistic expression. As a form it requires the ability to make movement look effortless and graceful and the flexibility, strength, endurance, muscle memory, discipline, and attention to detail necessary to express emotion and feeling.

Modern Jazz - A popular dance form that makes extensive use of contemporary music. This discipline places an emphasis on the mastery of self-expression, energetic movement and response to rhythm and occasion. As a form it is athletic and physically demanding and requires high levels of co-ordination, concentration and stamina.

Lyrical - A popular dance form that makes extensive use of contemporary music. This discipline places an emphasis on the mastery of self-expression, gracefulness and the use of movement to convey a sense of romance and style, in response to rhythm and lyrics. As a form it requires dancers

to understand and interpret both lyrics and melody with increasing emotional maturity, physical flexibility and co-ordination.

Tap - A strongly rhythmical dance form that draws on music from many traditions. This discipline places an emphasis on the mastery of using the feet as a percussive instrument, on the response to rhythm, and on interpretation and expression. As a form it requires an understanding of beat, time signatures and musical expression as well as high levels of co-ordination, concentration and stamina.

Greek - A dance form drawn from classical Greek traditions of dance. This discipline places an emphasis on the mastery of expression through poised, graceful and athletic movement. As a form it requires the ability to give physical expression to a range of emotions by using elements of mime and dance.

Acrobatic - A physically demanding dance form derived from acrobatic traditions of entertainment. This discipline places an emphasis on athleticism, agility, strength, control and balance, in order to ensure graceful and apparently effortless movement and sculptural representation. As a form it uses transitions in body shape to express feelings and emotions by exercising control over space and movement.

8. Areas of Study (Examination Components)

There are no optional **Areas of Study**. The following summaries provide an overview of the Areas of Study for Grades 1 - 8 in Barre, Centre and Dance.

All the Disciplines follow a similar pattern comprised of the three Areas of Study in each of eight grades. These areas of study are referred to as **Examination Components**.

Barre (exercises performed with barre support) - The purpose of work at the barre is to develop a candidates strength, flexibility, co-ordination, balance and correct alignment with the support of the barre and is structured to develop candidates confidence. Work at the barre is the starting point for all work in both teaching and examinations. It is used to develop co-ordination, balance, posture, alignment and physical skills (i.e. transferring weight) and enables the dancer to concentrate on working with particular parts of the body. Its purpose is to build up and strengthen muscle groups, flexibility and control so that the dancer is able to progressively 'dance at the barre'.

Centre (exercises performed without barre support) - The purpose of work in the centre is to build on and control the qualities developed at the barre incorporating an awareness of space and direction. Work in the centre takes place away from the barre and utilises the space available to the dancer. Its purpose is to develop increasing spatial awareness, fluency of movement and mind-body co-ordination. It progressively builds on qualities of greater physical strength and increasing athleticism and allows for an increasing emphasis on the qualities of dance, presentation, movement and a feeling for music.

Dance (performance of short dance sequences) - The purpose of work in the dance section is to develop performance skills and the candidates own capacity for interpretation and self expression through the amalgamation of steps and sequences. Dance also utilises the space available to the dancer. Its purpose is to develop ownership of space, technique and expression, together with qualities of enjoyment, presentation, self-confidence, mastery of dance and interpretation of music. These qualities together with increasing physical awareness and ability find their realisation in a synthesis of music, dance and self. The progressive development of this synthesis, together with increasing knowledge, skills and understanding, forms an important part of both the teaching and the assessment of this specification.

Each Graded Examination from Grade 1 to Grade 8 follows the same pattern. This continuity ensures that both teachers and candidates have a clear understanding of

what is to be assessed. In each discipline the level of ability, expression and performance become progressively more demanding as the candidate enters the next grade.

9. Total Qualification Time

Each course for General Graded Examinations from Grade 1 to Grade 8 follows the same pattern and will require the following minimum amount of study:

Grade	Guided Learning	Other learning	Total Qualification Time	Current credit value
Grade 1	60	10	70	7
Grade 2	60	10	70	7
Grade 3	60	10	70	7
Grade 4	75	20	95	10
Grade 5	75	20	95	10
Grade 6	90	40	130	13
Grade 7	90	40	130	13
Grade 8	90	40	130	13

10. Availability of Examinations and Entry Details

These examinations are available to anyone who is capable of safely reaching the required standard. The entry requirements are intended to ensure that there are no barriers to restrict access and progression and that equal opportunities exist for all candidates. Centres and teachers are required to provide applicants with information and advice on the BTDA Programme of Study, the level of demand and associated physical requirements and the expectations of performance at the Grade sought. GQAL reserves the right to decline entry to an examination where previous qualifications, experience and level of physical fitness give rise to concerns about the safety and well being of the candidate during an examination performance. There are no prior entry requirements. No restrictions for entry are placed on candidates who are studying for other qualifications in Dance, whether this is with GQAL or other awarding organisations.

Examinations are available through the teacher with a minimum notice period of 8 weeks. Further details are available in the Entry Details Booklet.

11. Duration of Examinations

All examinations are performance based and are structured so that the duration of each examination provides opportunities for all candidates to demonstrate achievement in the chosen discipline whilst ensuring an appropriate level of demand across the disciplines at each grade. The duration of examinations at each grade is set out in the following table.

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Maximum duration of the examination in minutes	19	20	25	28	34	39	42	42

At each level and between some grades there is an increase in the time required to ensure that candidates have adequate opportunities to demonstrate the necessary levels of performance.

12. Scheme of Assessment

Assessment is by external examination.

During an examination candidates will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate performance of the following five **Assessment Categories**:

1. *Technique*
2. *Musicality*
3. *Appearance*
4. *Performance Skills*
5. *Knowledge and Understanding*

Coverage of the Assessment Categories			
Assessment Categories	Examination Components		
	Barre	Centre	Dance
1A Technique A			
1B Technique B			
1C Technique C			
2 Musicality			
3 Appearance			
4A Performance Skills A			
4B Performance Skills B			
5 Knowledge and Understanding			

The marking scheme comprises a balanced structure of **Examination Components** and **Assessment Categories**. Taken together they form a matrix that enables the performance of each candidate to be systematically assessed and marked in order to produce both a final score and a profile of achievement.

The **Examination Components** i.e. Barre, Centre and Dance are not weighted, i.e they are of equal importance in terms of their assessment.

The five **Assessment Categories** i.e. Technique, Musicality, Appearance, Performance Skills, Knowledge & Understanding are weighted as follows:

Weightings for Assessment Categories				
Technique	Musicality	Appearance	Performance Skills	Knowledge and Understanding
45%	15%	5%	20%	15%

The **Assessment Categories** are explained below:

- *Technique* includes Tech A, Tech B and Tech C.
- *Musicality*.
- *Appearance*.
- *Performance Skills* includes: PS A and PS B.
- *Knowledge and Understanding*.

The description of what is required at each Grade for each Assessment Category/Strand is termed **Assessment Criteria**. Each **Assessment Criteria** is exemplified by reference to a list of terms that describe how it is to be understood and applied. These lists of terms are provided to guide and direct examiner as a means of ensuring common levels of understanding and expectation.

13. Level 1 (RQF) Assessment Criteria

Level 1 (Grades 1 -3) dance examinations provide evidence that dance candidates have demonstrated dance skills and artistry at a **basic** level of achievement in the Assessment Criteria under the Assessment Categories of Technique, Musicality, Appearance, Performance Skills, Knowledge & Understanding. Differentiation between Grades 1, 2 and 3 is defined by the progressive requirements and expectations prescribed in the Programmes of Study for each Grade. These Programmes of Study provide a framework for the teaching and learning of **basic** dance skills and artistry, which are a foundation for those candidates who progress to the more demanding Level 2 Grades.

Level 1 Assessment Criteria		
Assessment Category		Assessment Requirements
Technique	Tech A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placement • stance • alignment 	Correct foot/ankle placement. Body posture, leg and arm position is secure .
	Tech B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balance • strength • control 	Able to maintain balance. Sufficient core strength and control of body and limbs in the required basic movements and combinations of steps.
	Tech C <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flexibility • elevation • stamina 	Sufficient suppleness and agility demonstrated. Elevation and stamina , where appropriate, is evident in the delivery of the required sequences.
Musicality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timing • interpretation • feeling 	Work is demonstrated with correct timing and awareness of rhythm and phrasing . There is some expressive interpretation.
Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as required in the programme of study 	Ballet, Lyrical, Greek, Modern Jazz, Tap, Acrobatic.
Performance Skills	PS A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personality • flair • projection 	Audience awareness and use of appropriate facial expression.
	PS B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attitude • responsiveness • spatial awareness 	Awareness of the dance space, positive attitude to the examination and responsiveness to the examiner's instructions.
Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge 	Knowledge of the Programme of Study is evident .

14. Level 2 (RQF) Assessment Criteria

Level 2 (Grades 4 - 5) dance examinations provide evidence that dance candidates have demonstrated an **increasing consolidation** of dance skills and artistry under the Assessment Categories of Technique, Musicality, Appearance, Performance Skills, Knowledge & Understanding. Differentiation between Grades 4 and 5 is defined by the progressive requirements and expectations prescribed in the Programmes of Study for each Grade. Level 2 Programmes of Study provide a framework for the teaching and learning of an **increasing consolidation** of dance skills and artistry in preparation for the demands of Level 3 Grades.

Level 2 Assessment Criteria		
Assessment Category		Assessment Requirements
Technique	Tech A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placement • stance • alignment 	Correct foot/ankle placement. Body posture, leg and arm position and alignment is co-ordinated and secure .
	Tech B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balance • strength • control 	Able to maintain balance, core strength and control of body and limbs is demonstrated in the required more complex movements and combinations of steps showing increasing precision .
	Tech C <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flexibility • elevation • stamina 	Suppleness and agility is demonstrated . Elevation and energy , where appropriate, is maintained in the delivery of the required sequences.
Musicality	Musicality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timing • interpretation • feeling 	Work is demonstrated with correct timing and an ability to interpret and display sensitivity to the expressive content.
Appearance	Appearance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as required in the programme of study 	Ballet, Lyrical, Greek, Modern Jazz, Tap, Acrobatic.
Performance Skills	PS A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personality • flair • projection 	Awareness of communicating to an audience with expression and some individuality .
	PS B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attitude • responsiveness • spatial awareness 	Appropriate use of the dance space, positive attitude to the examination and responsiveness to the examiner's instructions demonstrated .
Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge 	Secure knowledge of the programme of study

15. Level 3 (RQF) Assessment Criteria

Level 3 (Grades 6 - 8) dance examinations provide evidence that dance candidates have demonstrated **sound and established** dance skills, understanding and artistry under the Assessment Categories of Technique, Musicality, Appearance, Performance Skills, Knowledge & Understanding. Differentiation between Grades 6, 7 and 8 is defined by the progressive requirements and expectations prescribed in the Programmes of Study for each Grade. Level 3 Programmes of Study provide a framework for the teaching and learning of the vocabulary and the **sound and established** skills, understanding and artistry required for further training and study in the performance or teaching of dance.

Level 3 Assessment Criteria		
Assessment Category		Assessment Requirements
Technique	Tech A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placement • stance • alignment 	Precise foot/ankle placement is demonstrated. Body posture, leg and arm positions and alignment is fully co-ordinated and established .
	Tech B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balance • strength • control 	Secure balance is maintained . Core strength, technical accuracy and control of the body and limbs are demonstrated with assurance in response to the demands of required sequences and combinations.
	Tech C <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flexibility • elevation • stamina 	Suppleness and agility is demonstrated . Elevation and energy , where appropriate, is consistently sustained throughout.
Musicality	Musicality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timing • interpretation • feeling 	Work is demonstrated with correct timing and an ability to interpret and display sensitivity to the expressive content.
Appearance	Appearance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as required in the programme of study 	Ballet, Lyrical, Greek, Modern Jazz, Tap, Acrobatic.
Performance Skills	PS A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personality • flair • projection 	The communication of emotion/expression to an audience is fully integrated into the performance. Flair and individuality and an understanding of the relationship between performer and an audience is evident .
	PS B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attitude • responsiveness • spatial awareness 	The dance space is fully utilised as a part of dance expression. A positive and confident attitude and responsiveness to the examiner is evident throughout .
Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge • understanding 	Thorough knowledge and understanding of the movement vocabulary and requirements of the programme of study.

16. Marking

Marks are awarded for the extent to which the performance of a candidate matches each of the five **Assessment Categories** in each of the three **Examination Components** as shown in the **Mark Allocation** table below.

MARK ALLOCATION									
	Assessment Categories								
	Technique			Musicality	Appearance	Performance Skills		Knowledge and Understanding	
	Tech A	Tech B	Tech C			PS A	PS B		
Barre	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Centre	5	5	5	5			5	5	5
Dance	5	5	5	5			5	5	5

For each **Assessment Category**, a mark between 0 and 5 will be awarded indicating the degree to which the candidate has met the **Required Standard** as defined in the **Marking Grid** below. Appearance and Performance Skills A are only assessed once during the examination.

MARKING GRID						
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Mark Definition	Required standard not demonstrated	Required standard demonstrated in a very limited way	Required standard demonstrated in a way that is sometimes limited and sometimes partial	Required standard demonstrated in a way that is sometimes partial and sometimes of the required standard	Required standard demonstrated	Required standard exceeded

The descriptions in the **Assessment Criteria** are to be used in conjunction with the requirements of the **Programme of Study** for each Grade. The judgement is made by the examiner in relation to the appropriate **Level Description**.

17. Level Descriptions

Level Descriptions provide a guide to the qualities and extent of the level of performance that candidates achieving a particular grade are expected to demonstrate. Strength in one area of performance may compensate for weakness in another. The overall achievement necessary to match these descriptions will have been demonstrated by a candidate awarded a Pass. Candidates achieving a Pass with Merit, or a Pass with Distinction, will have matched and exceeded the qualities of performance described. The Level Descriptions form a context for the examiner judgement and when taken as a whole, are indicative of expectations; they are assessed through the Assessment Components and Assessment Criteria.

Foundation Level 1 Assessment Criteria cover **Grades 1, 2, 3.**

Middle Level 2 Assessment Criteria cover **Grades 4, 5.**

Higher Level 3 Assessment Criteria cover **Grades 6, 7, 8**.

The candidate's performance of the progressively challenging programmes of study within each level description determines the grade within that level range.

18. National Standards

Comparability across different dance awarding organisations against national level descriptors were established as set out below:

'The awarding organisations developed a national set of level descriptors for Graded Examinations in Dance for the original accreditation of these qualifications ... the recognised awarding organisations for dance qualifications under the auspices of the Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET) came together to collectively review the original set of descriptors. The resulting descriptors aim to deliver two functions (i) to provide a set of benchmarks to which future graded dance qualifications will be developed and (ii) to provide benchmarks which will provide a basis for ongoing comparability and maintenance of standards within and between awarding organisations. On reviewing the original set of descriptors, the awarding organisations feel that these remain an accurate reflection of level for any new qualifications developed ...'

Level Descriptors for General Graded Examinations in Dance		
General Descriptor	Knowledge Statement. <i>The candidate</i>	Skills Statement. <i>The candidate can</i>
Achievement at level 1 reflects the ability to understand and use and apply relevant knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to an increasing vocabulary of movement and artistic awareness	Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of technique, music and performance, which is reflected in the ability to co-ordinate simple movements to produce combinations of steps with appropriate precision and control or through discussion with examiners.	Demonstrate basic techniques through using an increasing vocabulary of movement in their chosen dance discipline/genre/genre. Demonstrate the ability to interpret music with a sense of appropriate timing and rhythm for their chosen dance discipline/genre/genre. Demonstrate performance with an increasing confidence and responsiveness to an audience.
Achievement at level 2 reflects the ability to build upon skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to an increasing vocabulary of movement and artistic understanding showing an increased confidence and assurance in application.	Demonstrates a clear knowledge and understanding of technique, music and performance which is reflected in the ability to co-ordinate more complex movements to produce combinations of steps with increasing precision and control or through discussion with examiners.	Demonstrate an increasing consolidation of technical skills in their chosen dance discipline/genre. Demonstrate an increased ability to interpret music and display sensitivity to musical content and style appropriate to the dance discipline/genre/genre. Demonstrate an increased range of movements in sequences of greater length and complexity and the ability to sustain an appropriate sense of style of the dance discipline/genre/genre. Demonstrate confidence in performing the movement sequences required.
Achievement at Level 3 reflects the ability to build upon a range of skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to an increasingly refined vocabulary of movement and artistic interpretation showing an increased confidence, assurance and sensitivity in application.	Demonstrates a sound and established knowledge and understanding of the technique and music of a particular dance discipline/genre. Demonstrates an increased awareness of performance and an increased understanding of the relationship between performer and audience.	Demonstrate a wide range of movements performed consistently and confidently with technical accuracy and control. Demonstrate an increased sensitivity to a range of musical content and style appropriate to the dance discipline/genre/genre. Demonstrate dynamics and fluidity of movement incorporating the use of space and a maturity and individuality in interpretation and expression.

19. Candidates with Additional Needs

Information on assessment, examination and entry requirements for candidates with additional needs are published in the leaflet 'Advice for Candidates with Additional Needs'. Copies of this are available from GQAL and are also provided in the Teachers Handbook.

20. Examination Results

Repeats of Examinations - Where a candidate is not able to reach the minimum standard for a pass in an examination, application for re-examination at that Grade is permitted. All examination components must be completed on re-examination. Marks from examination components may not be carried forward or credited.

Issuing Results - Results and certificates will normally be issued six weeks after the date of the examination. This time is necessary to ensure that all results are properly standardised and checked by GQAL.

21. Awards of Pass, Pass with Merit, or Pass with Distinction

Depending on the level of performance demonstrated during the examination a candidate may be awarded either a Pass, or a Pass with Merit, or a Pass with Distinction. Each award broadly corresponds with the following descriptions of achievement and requires that the candidate obtains or exceeds the minimum number of marks set as the boundary for the award.

Award	Description of Achievement	Mark Boundary
Pass	<p>To achieve the award of a Pass the performance of a candidate must reach or partially reach the required standard of dance skills in most but not necessarily all of the assessment criteria.</p> <p>The performance of some candidates may have exceeded the required standard in one or more aspects of the examination and this reflects the fact that strength in one aspect may compensate for weakness in another.</p> <p>A defining characteristic of the overall performance of a candidate awarded a Pass is that it reaches or partially reaches the required standard of dance skills indicated in the Level Descriptions, and the Grade Descriptions defined in the Programme of Study.</p>	44%
Merit	<p>To achieve the award of a Pass with Merit the performance of a candidate must reach the required standard of dance skills in the majority of assessment criteria.</p> <p>The performance of some candidates may have exceeded the required standard in one or more aspects of the examination and this reflects the fact that strength in one aspect may compensate for weakness in another.</p> <p>A defining characteristic of the overall performance of a candidate awarded a Pass with Merit is that it consistently matches and occasionally may exceed the required standard of dance skills indicated in the Level Descriptions, and the Grade Descriptions defined in the Programme of Study.</p>	59%

Distinction	<p>To achieve the award of a Pass with Distinction the performance of a candidate must reach and exceed the required standard of dance skills in the majority of assessment criteria.</p> <p>The performance of some candidates may have exceeded the required standard by a considerable margin in one or more aspects of the examination and this reflects the fact that strength in one aspect may compensate for weakness in another.</p> <p>A defining characteristic of the overall performance of a candidate awarded a Pass with Distinction is that it consistently exceeds the required standard of dance skills indicated in the Level Descriptions, and the Grade Descriptions defined in the Programme of Study.</p>	77%
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22. Language and Bias

Every effort has been made to ensure that this specification and associated mark schemes, procedures and materials are free from any form of bias, and have no hidden requirements for entry or assessment. Care has been taken to ensure that the specification, grade descriptions and examination requirements make appropriate demands on candidates both in terms of their physical safety, well being, and expectations of physical and cognitive performance in relation to their age and level of ability.

23. Statutory Requirements

It is a requirement that all centres, teachers of this qualification and examiners make themselves aware of and comply with the relevant current legislation, relating to safeguarding, health and safety, and equalities.

24. Validity of Specification

This specification is valid from the 1st June 2016 until 31st May 2019