

## DANCE

### Overall grade boundaries

#### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 15	16 - 35	36 - 55	56 - 65	66 - 73	74 - 83	84 - 100

#### Standard level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 15	16 - 35	36 - 55	56 - 65	66 - 73	74 - 83	84 - 100

### Introduction

Overall, the work of the dance pilot schools is proceeding in a positive direction.

For the schools that have been teaching the course for a while, very few diverging interpretations of the curriculum seem to have taken place during the May 2007 examination session. Teachers seem, for the most part, to be interpreting and delivering the course well. Teachers' capacity to use the guide also improves with each revision of that document and, with only minor adjustments to be made, we now hope to have addressed in the guide all issues with clarity. Teachers are also reminded to check the Vade Mecum for dance.

As has been the case since the beginning of the pilot, schools, because of their individual cultures, exhibit stronger work in different areas of the curriculum. An increasing number of schools seem to be developing a delivery of the curriculum that allows candidates to bring considerable creativity to their dance making, doing, and writing while addressing a breadth and depth of dance knowledge consistent with the intention of those who developed the DP dance curriculum.

The report that follows begins with general comments relating to form in examination material presentation and then comments on each of the areas in dance: composition and analysis, performance, and investigation.

### General Comments

Teachers are asked to recognize the importance of organizing packages for moderation in a consistent manner. (It is preferable to put written and videotaped information for each component for each candidate in a separate file folder. A zipped plastic wallet is ideal.) Doing so is of significant importance for the examiner and moderator who view a large number of samples.

It is once again recommended that teachers in the pilot continue to share information with one another via the dance email list concerning questions, and solutions, about their interpretation/s of the curriculum. Developing a community dialogue among dance pilot schools should have the effect of strengthening the clarity and flexibility of each individual school's teaching of the course.

### Practical issues in presentation of material:

1. In filming the performance component, make sure that the candidate's full body is in the frame. This is also important in group works. (Tape the floor to indicate boundaries for framing the dancer/s so they will not go outside of camera range.)
2. Please remember to distinguish the candidate clearly, either by means of a large number or a distinctly different colour of attire. The identifying tag must be clearly visible on the recording.
3. Teachers are required to include their comments regarding each candidate in the spaces provided on the performance cover sheets. A few teachers did not do so. This is unfortunate as doing so gives important information to the examiner.
4. Schools are reminded that materials must be sent to examiners in a timely manner. Not doing so has the result, among others, of compressing the examiner's schedule for marking.

## Composition and analysis

### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 17	18 - 20

### Standard level

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Overall, the compositions submitted for assessment this year once again demonstrated a good understanding and application of the curriculum. While some schools clearly would benefit from further development of the basic presentation of dance elements (space, time, force/dynamics) in their composition curriculum, others submitted work that consistently demonstrated a varied and carefully structured course.

Overall, the weakest exploration in composition continues to relate to dynamic range, with many candidates investigating either only one dynamic or jumping drastically between ends of the dynamic continuum, but not presenting nuance. This is an area for fruitful further study and is one where teachers can lead through composition assignments. Particularly useful in this regard are explorations derived from Rudolf Laban's Effort actions and/or his Effort/Shape teachings, (see Cecily Dell). Teachers are encouraged not to favour the use of mimetic movement or text over interpretive movement in composition teaching. Please encourage

candidates, particularly those presenting at higher level, to explore compositions in groups larger than duets, which tend to overuse symmetry and mirror effect.

Teachers are reminded to check that each candidate has entered on the cover sheet the length of each piece being submitted. Candidates and teachers are cautioned to abide by the minimum and maximum time guidelines. Not doing so will result in a lowering of the candidate's marks. (Please refer to the assessment criteria.)

The title of the piece being described and analysed in the composition statement should be included in the title of the paper. (It must also match the title given on the cover sheet and on the video.) The statement should be reflective of the work itself, not a lengthy discourse on motivations for the dance. The statement should be a synthesis of the candidate's experience as composer/arranger of one work, not a daily journal. Discussion relating to the work's structure, performance, and research leading to the final presentation, should be emphasized.

The writing regarding compositions was not as strong as is desired. Teachers are encouraged to include short writing assignments related to composition studies throughout the course. Specifically, teachers are encouraged to create short assignments that require candidates to describe, interpret, and analyze both their own studies and those of their peers. If teachers give consistent feedback on these shorter tasks over the course, once candidates reach the final writing assignment, they will be better prepared to include appropriate discussion.

As implied above, we continue to encourage stretching boundaries: greater contrasts in dynamics, development of texture, more diverse use of rhythms in composition will all assist the candidate in conveying an intention that has more nuance. Teachers are encouraged to press further in exploring a variety of musical styles for composition assignments and to encourage candidates to submit dances that demonstrate as wide a musical palette as possible.

With regard to music containing lyrics, in particular popular music, we suggest that candidates be strongly encouraged not to rely on lyrics as the sole motivation for their work. Further, we suggest that a candidate not submit more than one composition using such accompaniment. Teachers are strongly encouraged to work with candidates in assisting finding musical pieces that can be presented in their entirety as accompaniment for dances. The practice of fading out or simply cutting music often demonstrates disregard for another art form and also suggests a less than complete investigation of the musical aspect of one's choreography. The problem of fading and cutting music is rampant and all teachers are cautioned that its use is to be strongly discouraged. When props are used, it is important to be certain that they are integral to the dance and not merely decorative in nature.

In those cases where a marked number of candidates in a school received lower marks in composition, we continue to strongly suggest that the teacher consider supporting that component by study of composition texts as well as, when possible, by offering workshops with area professionals.

## Performance

### Higher level

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The material listed under this part of the report is, for the most part, a replication of that given in past years. The reason for this is that certain practices and problems continue to be present in the presentation of many candidates. Teachers are strongly encouraged to work with candidates in moving towards these suggestions.

At all times and all skill levels, the art of dance is about vitality and the life force. Therefore, whatever the level of technical difficulty, movement material needs to be performed with full physicality and commitment. This implies that material will be chosen that allows each candidate to be challenged appropriately.

The choice of using an étude such as those available from the American Dance Legacy Institute or standard repertoire, such as codified ballet variations, is generally a good one. It allows the candidates to be challenged technically and interpretively in performance. It also provides a connection to dance history in an immediate physical manner. The performance of such an étude can also allow the moderators to see a useful comparison between candidates. However, teachers are cautioned to select an étude which does not require maturity in performance beyond that accessible to a senior school student. A piece that seems undemanding technically is not necessarily a simple one. The choice of material should be challenging, but neither way above nor below a candidate's technical and interpretive capacity.

Candidates should be reminded to pay particular attention to the use of space, quality of flow, and dynamic range in addition to step and gesture vocabulary in any performance selection presented. In particular, these elements should more specifically and clearly relate to the subject matter of the dance and not be arbitrarily applied for the sake of variety. They should also present a graduated scale: from smallest to largest, slowest to fastest, sharpest to liquid, and so on. It is recommended that more than one such work be available for study. This will allow for a wider range of choice and also make possible a better "fit" between individual candidates and the material presented for assessment.

Programme notes should be clear and succinct. Nonetheless, a simple listing of title, choreographer, performers, music, and so on, is insufficient. Teachers are reminded to check that each candidate has entered on the cover sheet the length of each piece being submitted. Candidates and teachers are cautioned to abide by the minimum and maximum time

guidelines. Not doing so will result in a lowering of the candidate's marks. (Please refer to the assessment criteria.)

## Investigation

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Overall, there was an improvement in the quality and standard of the papers submitted compared to last year's submissions. It appears that the intention of the assignments and the means of their achievement are better understood by the candidates than previously. This no doubt speaks to the better understanding of the process by teachers. However, there are still some areas of the component in need of clarification.

Several of the candidates' papers began with a testimonial statement about the universal virtues of dance, reading more like a public relations pitch for the subject than an introduction to the task at hand. In general, more attention needs to be directed to the objectives of the paper and the substance of the arguments to follow. The introduction should be an abstraction of the contents of the paper.

There is still a great deal of reliance on the Internet and textbooks for basic information, particularly so with the unfamiliar form of dance chosen for the paper. Given the unfamiliar forms chosen in most of these particular papers, this reliance is perhaps understandable. In several cases there were probably not opportunities for attendance at workshops or classes relative to the assignment, nor to have discussions or interviews with experts of the unfamiliar form. Consequently, secondary sources predominated. The better papers resulted from personal involvement with the unfamiliar dance form. Teachers are advised to give practical suggestions to encourage students to choose dances better able to be supported by primary sources, including personal, physical involvement in the form. Teachers are also reminded that Criterion D refers to both primary and secondary sources.

More attention should be given to the word count requirement. Candidates should be advised that more words written than stipulated effects the mark negatively. A good paper depends more on concise, clear thinking than the number of words written. On the other hand, parts of the paper which are quotations should be identified as such and not be included in the word count. This is a point which seems not be well understood. (Please refer to the guide.)

Overall, the objective of the world dance investigation requirement is being fulfilled successfully - that being the broadening of understanding and attitudes to other world cultures and traditions through the medium of dance.