

2017 VCE Dance performance examination report

General comments

Overall, students performed more proficiently in the Technique solo than the Composition solo. The Composition solo often appeared under-rehearsed and did not reflect understanding of the requirements outlined by the criteria in terms of the selection and arrangement of movement vocabulary into clear sections and an appropriate formal structure.

In the Technique solo, students were well groomed and wore safe and/or appropriate footwear. When presenting the Composition solo, students at times selected a costume that did not fully support the expressive intention, with some students choosing a sequined or theatrical costume to communicate a sombre idea and this detracted from the artistry of the choreography.

Some solos fell below the minimum of 2.5 minutes and this hindered students' ability to meet the criteria successfully across both components of the examination.

Where music with lyrics was selected for the Composition solo, students often choreographed to the lyrics, which limited their ability to demonstrate skill in relation to Criteria 5 as they relied too heavily on gestures or dance drama.

Most students avoided risky choreography and followed safe dance practice guidelines across both solos.

Unit 3 – Technique solo

Criteria 1–4 required students to demonstrate control of physical skills within a range of safely executed body actions.

Students who gave high-scoring performances demonstrated a personalised movement vocabulary that was safely executed throughout the movement phrases and addressed the criteria in a complex way. These students presented a skilled execution of body actions, with a high degree of strength and flexibility. Coordination was demonstrated through accomplished weight transferences, and control over the alignment of the body was consistently maintained.

Students who gave lower-scoring performances often repeated movement vocabulary in exactly the same way or used the upper body to add variation. This impeded the range of skills demonstrated as students did not combine different skills in complex ways. Another issue was a lack of control through the use of alignment and strength, especially through movements such as elevations and falls.

Criteria 5–7 required students to demonstrate skill in the varied use of each element of movement – time, space (shape) and energy – to create expression throughout the solo.

In high-scoring performances, students demonstrated a skilled and artistic interpretation of the movement by arranging various combinations of time, shapes and energy throughout the sections of the dance. These students understood the relationship between the movement vocabulary and

the manipulation of phrases through use of the elements of movement, and were able to organise and successfully link sections together to create a unified composition.

In lower-scoring performances, students often demonstrated an inconsistent application of the elements of movement and struggled to vary the combinations throughout the phrases and sections of the dance. Some students were not able to interpret the movement in relation to the manipulation of time, shape and energy, and therefore were not able to fully realise the dance with full expression or create a unified composition.

Criterion 8 required students to demonstrate skill in the projection of the whole body, including transitions between the phrases and sections, and use of eye line to communicate an artistic and expressive execution of movement.

Students who presented high-scoring performances were able to extend their focus and apply it effectively throughout their unified composition to present a confident performance under examination conditions. They were able to smoothly transition from one phrase to another, engage the audience, establish a mood and expressively communicate the choreography.

Students who presented lower-scoring performances often did not vary their projection and/or lacked clear or smooth well-controlled transitions between the movement phrases and sections.

Unit 4 – Composition solo

Statement of Expressive Intention

On this form, students were asked to record the expressive intention to be communicated throughout the different sections of the dance, record the formal structure and briefly comment on the main choreographic devices used to structure the solo.

When outlining their intention, some students gave a general overview that was too complicated and made it difficult for the assessors to follow. Others rushed the writing of their intention so different information was recorded on the three separate sheets given to assessors. The assessors were able to compare the student's solo with the written statement more effectively when the intention of each section of the dance was outlined.

Students need to take care when writing out their formal structure so that it does not conflict with other information they provide, especially in the expressive intention section. When stating the formal structure students should accompany this with the number of sections. No other information is required.

The form also required students to make a brief comment about how they had used choreographic device(s) to structure or progress the intention and the movement throughout the solo. Some students wrote in unnecessary detail; the purpose of the form is only to alert assessors to the main devices used. Students are required to comment only on the main devices they used.

Criteria 1–4 required students to demonstrate skill in the varied use of spatial organisation.

In high-scoring performances, students demonstrated an expressive arrangement of spatial organisation to communicate the expressive intention. It was evident that students had combined these elements through the movement sections in a skilful and purposeful way to progress the intention of the dance.

In lower-scoring performances, the arrangement of spatial organisation did not consistently support the development of the intention throughout the sections. In some cases, the arrangement was not relevant to the written intention or the use of one or more elements was overlooked.

Criteria 5–7 required students, throughout the sections of the composition with a formal structure, to demonstrate skill in:

- the expressive selection of movement vocabulary
- the varied arrangement of movement into related phrases and sections to create an appropriate formal structure
- the choreographic manipulation of choreographic devices
- expressing the intention of the choreographer.

In high-scoring solos, the performances were based on the clear communication of the intent. There was clear evidence that students had consistently generated a personalised movement vocabulary which was specifically selected to communicate the intention. The movement material was clearly arranged into a formal structure through the linking of phrases and sections, and the choreographic devices were skilfully manipulated to structure the movement vocabulary and link/progress the expressive intention throughout the sections of the dance.

In lower-scoring solos, the selected movement vocabulary was not always appropriate or abstracted to suggest a meaning significant to the student's dance idea and relied too heavily on stereotypical gestural movement or dance drama. There was often unrelated movement or use of stylistic movement for its own sake, and therefore the ideas in the stated expressive intention were not reflected in the dance.

Students often neglected to demonstrate an awareness of how phrases are thematically arranged to create sections, and how sections link in a unified way to suggest an overall pattern or a formal structure. When the relationship between the movement sections and the stated formal structure was not clear, the solo often lacked clarity, which made the expressive intention difficult to see.

Some students also did not demonstrate an understanding of the role choreographic devices played in effectively structuring the composition to progress and communicate the intention. This was because selected devices were often not appropriate to express the stated intention and/or the devices were disjointed or not integrated/developed to create unified links between the sections.

Students needed to focus more on achieving a cohesive composition through the integration of form and the organisation of the movement material relevant to their intention.

Criterion 8 assessed the use of performance processes, practices and artistry in communicating the choreographer's expressive intention.

Students who gave high-scoring performances demonstrated a strong ability to project into the space while maintaining control over the dynamics. There was purpose and commitment in the delivery of the intention, and these students were able to show a personalised and artistic interpretation of their ideas.

Students who gave lower-scoring performances were often under-rehearsed and seemed to internalise their performance without really establishing a connection to their intention or audience.