



2004 VCE VET Dance GA 2: Performance examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

This report addresses a range of issues to be considered in preparation for the performance examination.

Venue/performance issues

As part of safe dance practice, appropriate dance footwear for the selected style must be worn when performing the solos; socks are not appropriate.

If the performance is interrupted, the student should continue performing as soon as possible. The music should not be turned off unless the student clearly indicates to the assessors that he/she does not wish to continue with his/her performance.

Students should wear appropriate clothing that enables their body lines to be clearly seen and allows the student to move freely and safely. When presenting their solos, students may wear garments specific to their selected dance style (for example a ballet tutu for girls); however, marks are not given for costume. Neat grooming is expected. Attire that includes over-long trousers or full-length, non-transparent skirts is not suitable.

Students should consider appropriate spatial orientation when presenting their solos, for example they should perform at a reasonable distance from the assessors. The distance should enable the three assessors to clearly see all aspects of the student's performance throughout the entire solo.

It is important that the recordings accompanying performances are of a good quality, enabling both the students and assessors to hear without distortion. It is recommended that students have their music recorded at the beginning of a new audio cassette tape with sufficient 'lead in' time, as well as have a spare cassette tape that has a second recording of the music. To avoid unnecessary waiting, it is important that students have their music cued when assessors enter the assessment room. Students should check their music for accuracy and volume as well as orientate themselves in the performance area during the 'mark through' time given to them prior to the assessment. Teachers are reminded that all recorded music accompanying the student's performance should be provided on cassette tape and not CD. This requirement is included in the information which accompanies the Student Advice slips sent to schools in Term 3.

The Task

The task is designed to assess the student's ability and interpretive skills in performance. The two dances must not be in the same style and each should be presented as a single uninterrupted performance.

The Solos

Each student is assessed on two solos learnt from the dance repertoire of a choreographer/teacher. The dances should be between two and seven minutes long and in two distinct styles selected from ballet, jazz, contemporary, social, tap, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander styles, or another nominated culturally-specific style. The selected styles should have been nominated previously and should be stated on the student's examination advice slip. The dances selected should allow students to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have developed in the following modules from the Certificate II in Dance:

- VBJ677 Dance Technique – Elevation
- VBJ678 Dance Technique – Turning
- VBJ679 Dance Technique – Falling
- VBJ680 Dance Technique – Locomotion
- VBJ682 Dance Repertoire – Solo

Interpretation of Criteria

In order to distinguish between student levels of performance in the demonstration of skills, a common understanding of the term 'skill' must be reached. For the purpose of the VCE VET Dance performance examination, 'skill' will encompass: the level of ability that a student demonstrates in each criterion and the use of a range of skills in each criterion and the degree of difficulty involved in meeting each criterion.

All criteria are used for each solo performed by the student and must be applied in relation to the dance style performed.



The dances selected must include movements in each of the technique areas; elevation, turning, falling and locomotion. This is taken into account when allocating scores. If a student's dance did not include a range of movements in each of these areas, they scored a lower mark in the relevant criterion. Similarly, if the student's execution of the movements was not proficient in one or more of the technical areas they scored a lower mark. When selecting the solo, teachers should consider whether the dance allows the student to fulfil the technical requirements for each criterion and also the degree of difficulty in relation to the student's ability.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

The criteria for the award of grades are designed to assess performance skills and a range of movement skills, and are used for direct assessment. Each criterion is weighted equally and is marked on an eight-point scale (0–7).

Assessment Criteria

The following assessment criteria were used in assessing both solo performances:

1. Posture and alignment

This includes correct posture such as the appropriate use of muscle tone and the safe placement and alignment of the spine, shoulder girdles, hips, knees and ankle joints, head and body focus. In general, posture was satisfactory and appropriate to the selected style.

2. Bodyline

This includes demonstrated skill in creating appropriate bodylines and shapes using both upper and lower body parts. It is important that both upper and lower body shapes are appropriately shown; however in some cases one area was weaker than the other.

3. Elevation

This includes demonstrated skill in the safe use of elevation techniques involving a range of different elevations, with safe take off and landing techniques.

Teachers are reminded that the selection of the dance must allow the student to demonstrate a range of elevation in their solo. While this may be more overt in some styles than others, it is suggested that each solo allows the student to show three different types of elevation, for example from two feet to two feet and from one foot to two feet.

4. Turning

This includes demonstrated skill in the safe use of a range of turning movements while maintaining balance, flexibility, transference of weight, co-ordination, stamina, and control and articulation of individual body parts in an integrated manner. It is necessary that the selected dance allows the student to demonstrate their ability to turn in a number of ways. A dance lacking in this aspect limits the student's opportunity to address this criterion.

5. Falling

The selected dance should allow the student to demonstrate falling in a number of ways. It is appreciated that some styles (for example, ballet) do not have a broad range of falling techniques as part of the repertoire, but changes of level both upwards and downwards are possible. The execution of falls should involve balance, flexibility, transference of weight, co-ordination, stamina, and control and articulation of body parts in an integrated manner.

6. Locomotor

Students need to demonstrate their locomotor skills involving balance, flexibility, transference of weight, co-ordination and stamina. Some dances did not allow the student to demonstrate a variety of pathways and patterns of movement.

7. Spatial arrangement

This criterion involves aerial and floor pathways, and the transitions from one body shape to another.

8. Movement dynamics

This criterion involves the qualities of the movement imparted to the execution of technique as appropriate to the stylistic interpretation of the selected solo.



9. Energy

This criterion relates solely to the student's ability to sustain their energy levels throughout their solo. Some solos that were towards the upper time limit were beyond the student's capacity to sustain their performance consistently throughout the dance.

10. Movement transitions

This criterion refers to the way the student moves from one movement to another. Transitions need to be maintained throughout the dance. The movement transitions should be consistent with the selected dance style.

This is an area where a number of students experienced difficulties, and could be addressed in the rehearsal period.

11. Movement and music

In general, music selections were appropriate and most students addressed this criterion satisfactorily. Several did have difficulty in maintaining timing and tempo, but these were in the minority.

12. Performance presentation

The student should show projection through appropriate eye focus and the use of appropriate facial expression. Students should be reminded that this is a performance examination and this criterion is not to be considered lightly. A number of students were not able to demonstrate their understanding and application of this criterion. Performance skills should be developed during the rehearsal period.

The selection of the dance style is of paramount importance and it is recommended that teachers consider their choices carefully to enable students to demonstrate their skills in all criteria. It is appreciated that interpretation of styles can be broad, however teachers should give special consideration to addressing those criteria not overtly inherent in the selected style to ensure that the student is not disadvantaged (for example, falling in ballet or tap styles).