

2018 VCE VET Dance performance examination report

General comments

The VCE VET Dance performance examination assesses students' technical ability and interpretive skills in performance. Students perform two solo dances of different styles from a list of styles as prescribed in the CUA201113 Certificate II in Dance, with selected units of competency from the CUA301113 in Dance qualification and documented by VCAA. The dances are learnt from the established dance repertoire of a choreographer or teacher. Each solo should be presented as a single, live, uninterrupted performance and be between two and five minutes in duration. Each of the solo dances performed must correlate to the elective units of competency the student is enrolled in as part of the Units 3 and 4 sequence of the VCE VET Dance program. Each of the two dances must demonstrate use of a distinctly different style and movement vocabulary as consistent with their selected dance styles.

The dances selected should allow students to demonstrate their style-specific technical and expressive skills as developed in the following units of competency from selected units of competency from Certificate III.

- CUADAN305 Increase depth of jazz dance technique
- CUADAN306 Increase depth of ballet dance technique
- CUADAN307 Increase depth of cultural dance technique
- CUADAN308 Increase depth of contemporary dance technique
- CUADAN309 Increase depth of street dance technique
- CUADAN310 Increase depth of social dance technique
- CUADAN311 Increase depth of tap dance technique

The styles most frequently selected for performance this year were contemporary, jazz and street, with tap, social, cultural and ballet selected but not with the same frequency.

Generally the solos selected were suitable and enabled students to demonstrate their achievement in all criteria. The movement vocabulary chosen was predominately safe and appropriately referenced the stated dance style with sufficient technical challenge for individual student skillsets in both solos and meeting the two-minute minimum duration requirement. The accompanying music for both solos was stylistically appropriate and enabled students to create an authentic connection between music and their solo, maintain appropriate tempos and phrasing and respond to variations in tempo, movement accents and rhythmic patterns within the choreography.

However, there were some instances where there was no defined ending to the music or resolution to the movement, and the student simply stopped while the music continued.

Overall, students performed equally proficiently in both solos, demonstrating well-developed and sustained memory retention, concentration, focus and stamina throughout their performances, indicating effective preparation for their performance examination.

Students were generally well groomed but there were instances where long hair covered the face, which made spotting while turning problematic. Some students broke their artistic interpretation by

adjusting their hair. Most footwear selected was stylistically appropriate, but there were instances of students presenting in bare feet for styles that required shoes. Protective knee pads were occasionally worn, and in the interests of safe dance practices, this is encouraged to protect students' knees, particularly in contemporary solos with high-impact falling movements in the movement vocabulary.

The Industry Statement

Some Industry Statements did not accurately reflect the performances presented. The VCAA Industry Statement samples on the VCAA website should be referred to for best practice examples. The referencing of specific practitioners, historical periods, movement practices and principles in statements should be observable in the movement vocabulary and stylistic characteristics of the solos presented. Students should not name their school or their teacher in these statements.

In terms of the 'specific style of the performance', students could respond with, 'The style is street, defined by the movement choices in the dance that show the hallmarks of street dance, such as popping, locking, breaking, isolation of body parts and the artistic qualities reflecting the emergence of the style from the street'.

In terms of 'context' it is intended that students respond with comments regarding the appropriate setting or settings for their dance. This may include black box theatre, as part of a music video clip, cruise ship entertainment or audition piece. Comments regarding emotion, intention or narrative are not appropriate.

'The appropriate market/audience for this performance' refers to the intended audience for the piece, and students usually responded appropriately to this aspect of the Industry Statement.

Specific information

Interpretation of criteria

For the purpose of the VCE VET Dance performance examination, skill encompasses: the level of ability that a student demonstrates in all criteria, the use of a range of skills in each criterion and the degree of difficulty involved in meeting each criterion. This is the means used to distinguish between levels of performance in the demonstration of various criteria.

Both solos are assessed using the same set of criteria. The published assessment criteria are designed to assess a range of both performance skills and technical dance skills specific and consistent with the stated dance style. Each criterion is weighted equally and is marked on a ten-point scale (0–10).

1. Correct posture and body alignment

Most students demonstrated correct posture and skeletal body alignment throughout their solos, but in some solos there was a lack of style-specific gravity and levity and connection to the floor.

Students who scored highly in this criterion maintained style-specific gravity and levity and their postural and skeletal body alignment when stationary and when moving throughout their performance.

Students who scored lower did not demonstrate style-specific gravity and levity and their postural and skeletal body alignment was not always maintained when stationary and when moving.

2. Balance

This criterion was generally well executed by students, and solos that had been selected or crafted to performances demonstrated style-specific balances.

Students who scored highly in this criterion performed complex movement phrases that integrated balance using a wide range of body parts as balance points.

Students who scored lower in this criterion performed movement phrases at a lower level of complexity that demonstrated balance, used less of a range of body parts as balance points and balances were less integrated in the movement phrases. Lack of stability when executing static balances and when moving in and out of phrases impacted on achievement in this criterion.

3. Flexibility

Flexibility should be embedded within the choreography in a style-specific manner and be underpinned by safe dance practices, rather than through static acrobatic or gymnastic movements that may not reflect the movement vocabulary of the selected dance style.

Students who scored highly in this criteria demonstrated complex movement phrases that integrated style-specific flexibility using an extensive range of body parts, including the limbs, joints and spine.

Students who scored lower in this criterion demonstrated movement phrases at a lower level of complexity and demonstrated less flexibility in the limbs, joints and spine.

4. Stamina

This criterion assesses the level of muscular and cardio-respiratory stamina students can sustain throughout their performance.

Students who scored highly in this criterion were able to sustain their levels of muscular and cardio-respiratory stamina throughout their entire performance.

Students who scored lower in this criterion were less consistent in maintaining their levels of muscular and cardio-respiratory stamina during their performances or fatigued as the performance continued.

5. Isolation, coordination, weight transference

The coordination and control of style-specific movements including isolation and articulation of upper and lower body parts, and the safe transfer of weight and movement transitions within movement sequences was assessed in this criterion. The movement transitions in some solos were not always anatomically logical, and these proved to be problematic for some students to execute with ease and finesse. Some contemporary solos used movement transitions that were stylistically aligned to jazz, particularly into and out of turns and leaps.

Students who scored highly performed complex style-specific movements that enabled them to demonstrate sustained coordination and control of style-specific movements, with finesse in the isolation and articulation of upper and lower body parts. Their weight transferences, changes of direction and movement transitions were secure.

Students who scored lower in this criterion performed less-complex or fundamental style-specific movements and their execution lacked some clarity in regards to the isolation and articulation of upper and lower body parts, weight transferences, changes of direction and movement transitions.

6. Travelling and spatial awareness

Most students' use of travelling and spatial awareness, both personally and within the general performance space, was good, with the selection of solos that had well-defined pathways and patterns integrated into the choreography.

Students who scored well expertly performed solos that contained a wide range of complex varied patterns, pathways and locomotor techniques embedded into the movement phrases of their solos. They orientated their dance at an appropriate distance from assessors and used their personal and general performance space effectively.

Lower scoring performances used simple pedestrian actions such as walking or running to change orientation within the performance space, or were performed on the spot with minimal evidence of travelling movements or too close to assessors.

7. Expressive use of movement dynamics

Most students demonstrated variations in the style-specific use of expressive movement dynamics within their solos; however, the range of movement dynamics and variations in the force and flow of movements was limited in some contemporary solos.

Students who scored highly in this criterion demonstrated an extensive range of style-specific expressive movement dynamics and their variations within their performances. Their release of energy was integrated, coordinated and controlled throughout their performance.

Students who scored less well demonstrated a more limited range of style-specific expressive movement dynamics and their variations within their performances. Their release of energy was inconsistent, and there were some lapses in its controlled and coordinated release.

8. Musicality, rhythm and timing

Most students demonstrated an authentic connection with their accompanying music, maintaining appropriate tempos and phrasing through tempo, movement accents and rhythmic patterns throughout their performances.

Students with solos that scored highly demonstrated multiple complex variations in tempo, accents and rhythmic patterns within movement phrases as well as demonstrating an authentic connection between the music and dance.

Students who scored less well maintained an authentic connection between the music and dance, but their use of variations in tempo, accents and rhythmic patterns was less complex, or they were not able to sustain their timing, racing ahead or falling behind the accompanying music.

9. Memory retention, concentration and focus

Most students were able to demonstrate unwavering concentration, focus and movement memory when performing their solos.

Students who did not score highly in this criterion had lapses in their movement memory or lost their focus and concentration in one or more parts of their performance.

10. Artistic and interpretive expression and polish

Some high-scoring performances were generated by students with moderate technical skills.

Students who scored highly gave stylistically authentic performances, maintaining the intention of their Industry Statement.

Students who scored less well presented solos with less stylistic nuance and/or with some lapses in performance presence.