2023 VCE Dance performance external assessment report

General comments

In 2023, the Dance solo performance examination consisted of two components designed to showcase a range of technical and choreographic skills. Component 1 was a skills-based solo composed in Unit 3, Area of Study 2, while Component 2 was a cohesive composition composed in Unit 4, Area of Study 2. The examination criteria for both solos were based on key knowledge and key skills across Units 3 and 4.

While many students showed that they had prepared thoroughly, the following was noted:

* In the skills-based solo, some performances lacked variation and the range of skills demonstrated was not sufficient to access the higher bands. When the choreography didn’t challenge the student and relied too heavily on gestural movements, the work commonly lacked the pace to evidence stamina as well as the movement content to evidence alignment, transference of weight and balance. Students are expected to demonstrate a range of skills to meet the first four criteria successfully. Some students wore jewellery, or slippery or inappropriate footwear, which did not allow them to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of safe dance practice when executing the solo.
* In the composition solo, some students presented a work that did not align with the criteria, often choreographing in a lyrical style that interpreted the music's lyrics rather than address the key criteria. Students needed a clear intention to be able to successfully address the criteria and access the higher bands. Those who had researched their chosen stimulus were able to realise their Statement of Intention through an innovative response. Some students wrote an intention that was difficult to interpret when assessing the movement sections of the dance, which impacted on their ability to demonstrate all criteria successfully.

Specific information

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding, resulting in a total of more or less than 100 per cent

Unit 3 – Skills-based solo

Criterion 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 18 | 18 | 30 | 8.1 |

Criterion 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 33 | 8.1 |

Criterion 3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 0.8 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 14 | 17 | 18 | 32 | 8.2 |

Criterion 4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 12 | 16 | 14 | 40 | 8.3 |

Criterion 5

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 0.7 | 2 | 6 | 10 | 12 | 15 | 13 | 41 | 8.3 |

Criterion 6

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 13 | 16 | 12 | 44 | 8.5 |

Criterion 7

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 14 | 39 | 8.2 |

Criterion 8

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.9 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 15 | 15 | 21 | 36 | 8.4 |

In terms of intention, most students based their solo on an exploration of the criteria.

Criteria 1 to 4 required students to demonstrate control of all eight physical skills within a range of actions from the six movement categories.

High-scoring performances displayed proficiency in all eight physical skills by presenting a diverse range of movements from each movement category. These students skilfully integrated safe dance practices within their movement selection and executed precise body articulation, coordination and complex movements with ease.

In lower-scoring performances, students made movement selections that were not suited to their technical ability. Some students lost control by pushing beyond their physical limits or opted for more simplistic or repetitive movement choices. Others included challenging skills or risky choreography such as back bends where they struggled with alignment and muscular strength. Consideration needs to be given to refining these skills in rehearsals leading up to the examination. At times, students lacked the fitness to maintain stamina and muscular strength throughout the whole performance and didn’t finish as strongly as they had started.

Criteria 5 to 7 required students to demonstrate skill in the manipulation of each of the elements of time, space (shape) and energy throughout the phrases and sections of the solo.

High-scoring performances demonstrated a skilled arrangement of the movement phrases through innovative manipulations of time, shape and energy to structure the sections of the dance. They were able to create a high level of expression through their interpretations by working with and against the different accents and/or tempo changes of the music, using shapes that involved the whole body rather than just the arms, and manipulating the energy qualities with variations of force and flow.

In lower-scoring performances, some students included movement phrases that matched the rhythm/tempo of the music and showed limited changes in the manipulation of upper/lower body shapes or energy qualities, which resulted in the solo progressing without any variation. Students needed to better consider their music choice and make some analysis to find opportunities to demonstrate their artistry through the arrangement of time, shape and energy.

Criterion 8 required students to demonstrate skill in the projection of the whole body to demonstrate artistry and communicate to the audience.

High-scoring performances maintained the projection of the whole body throughout the dance. They presented smooth transitions between the phrases and sections and used their eyeline to confidently communicate their artistry to the audience.

In lower-scoring performances, students lacked the confidence to establish eye contact and project to their audience. At times they seemed underprepared in terms of rehearsal and often appeared focused on trying to remember the choreography.

Unit 4 – Cohesive composition solo

Criterion 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.3 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 13 | 14 | 16 | 16 | 10 | 19 | 7.1 |

Criterion 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.3 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 16 | 16 | 16 | 10 | 23 | 7.3 |

Criterion 3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.3 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 14 | 10 | 25 | 7.3 |

Criterion 4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.3 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 13 | 16 | 17 | 10 | 26 | 7.4 |

Criterion 5

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.3 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 13 | 18 | 14 | 9 | 25 | 7.3 |

Criterion 6

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.3 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 13 | 16 | 15 | 10 | 26 | 7.4 |

Criterion 7

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.3 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 13 | 11 | 25 | 7.3 |

Criterion 8

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.3 | 0 | 0.9 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 13 | 15 | 16 | 13 | 28 | 7.7 |

Statement of Intention

It is crucial to remind students that the Statement of Intention form, downloadable from the VCAA website, should be clearly written, and that they should adhere to the instructions.

Students were required to respond creatively to the task. Students who scored highly created a solo work that had fully explored their chosen stimulus through various choreographic processes to arrive at an innovative intention that could be fully realised within the prescribed time duration.

In some cases, the overall explanation of the intention prevented assessors from discerning the ideas for each dance section. Some students included intricate details, which were challenging to comprehend and did not correspond to the movement selections or sections of the dance. When the intention was concisely outlined without exceeding the word limit, assessors could more effectively compare the student's solo with the written statement.

When identifying their formal structure, students need to ensure it doesn't conflict with the solo's arrangement. Assessors often had difficulty aligning the actual solo's formal structure with what was documented in the statement. When defining the formal structure, students should ensure it is accurately represented to avoid confusion.

When completing the choreographic device section on the statement, students should ensure that the devices listed or outlined reflect the actual choreography. Some students either didn’t complete this section or the information they included was incorrect. This part of the statement needs to be clear to enable assessors to pick up on how the devices have been integrated throughout the solo.

Criteria 1 to 3 required students to select and arrange movement vocabulary to create an appropriate formal structure and demonstrate skill in the manipulation of various choreographic devices to help structure the sections and communicate the intention.

High-scoring performances selected an innovative movement vocabulary to reflect their stated intention and arranged the movement material into clear sections, effectively using choreographic devices to reflect the stated formal structure. They kept their choreographic intent uppermost in their minds throughout the process and selected innovative movement content that supported their dance idea from the beginning to the end. They also selected appropriate music to support the sections created in the solo.

In lower-scoring performances, the choice of movement vocabulary selections (Criterion 1) often didn’t fully relate to the stated intention and many students selected movement material that was better suited to a lyrical solo. It is important to remember that this choreographic task is about selecting bespoke movement content that consistently supports the stated intention.

In terms of the formal structure (Criterion 2), the inclusion of clear sections that transitioned into each other was often lacking. Some students either finished abruptly or didn’t incorporate an ending that brought the dance to a clear conclusion. While the sections don’t need to be of the same length, a section must be more than one phrase of movement. Giving more consideration to the resolution of sections would result in a work that had a clear organisation and a greater sense of cohesion. There was also a tendency to use multiple pieces of music to support the sections of the work. While this could be successful, the inclusion of too many tracks in a short work or unsympathetic editing also impeded the cohesion of the work.

There were also examples of solos where the movement vocabulary was not developed using choreographic devices (Criterion 3). Work that had considered how the use of choreographic devices could clearly support the dance idea resulted in a higher mark in this criterion.

Criteria 4 to 7 required students to manipulate the spatial organisation (including level, direction, eye/body focus, and dimension) to communicate their intention.

High-scoring solos purposefully arranged the movement vocabulary by integrating different combinations of spatial organisation to clearly construct the sections and convey the intended intention.

In lower-scoring performances, the arrangement of spatial organisation was not well planned and did not consistently support the intention of each section. At times the arrangement was not relevant to the stated intention. It was noted that level was generally better utilised than focus. The size of movement was less well developed and some direction designs lacked consideration.

Criterion 8 required students to demonstrate their skills in the use of performance practices and artistry to convey their intention to the audience.

High-scoring performances effectively projected their intentions through a strong focus on performance and artistry.

Lower-scoring performances often presented a solo that appeared to be under-rehearsed, which impacted on the overall artistry of the solo. Students needed to connect back to the intention of the dance so their use of performance skills could be appropriately communicated to the assessing panel.