



Department  
for Education

# Dance

**GCSE subject content**

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# The content for dance GCSEs

## Introduction

1. The GCSE subject content sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills common to all GCSE specifications in a given subject. Together with the assessment objectives it provides the framework within which awarding organisations create the detail of their specifications, so ensuring progression from key stage 3 national curriculum requirements and the possibilities for development into A level.

## Subject aims and learning outcomes

2. Through the study of GCSE dance students learn to choreograph, perform and appreciate dance as an art form. This holistic engagement with dance informs their development as creative and artistic individuals, and broadens their aesthetic, social and cultural experience.

3. GCSE specifications in dance must enable students to engage as choreographers through the:

- creative and imaginative response to a range of stimuli
- use of imagination, problem solving, creativity and the synthesis of ideas
- application of knowledge, skills and understanding of choreographic forms and devices
- communication of ideas, feelings, emotions, meanings and moods

4. GCSE specifications in dance must enable students to engage as performers through the:

- application of knowledge, skills and understanding of performing
- development of physical, technical, mental and expressive skills
- communication of choreographic intention and artistry

5. GCSE specifications in dance must enable students to appreciate dance through the:

- articulation of knowledge and critical reflection to inform artistic practice
- critical appreciation of dance in its physical, artistic, aesthetic and cultural contexts

- critical analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and appreciation of professional dance works
6. GCSE specifications in dance must enable students to:
- participate in and appreciate dance from more than one style
  - critically appreciate at least two professional works by at least two choreographers
  - work collaboratively with others
  - develop knowledge, skills and understanding of health, well-being and safe and professional practice relevant to dance
  - improve own work through analysis, critical self-reflection and evaluation
7. GCSE specifications in dance must reflect the learning outcomes in the content.

## Subject content

8. This document sets out the minimum range of content for GCSE specifications in dance. Awarding organisations may, however, increase depth, breadth or context of study.

### Performing:

9. Have knowledge and understanding of:
- **physical skills and attributes** including actions, posture, alignment, balance, coordination, control, flexibility, mobility, strength, stamina, extension, isolation
  - **technical skills** including accuracy of action, timing, dynamic, rhythmic and spatial content, the reproduction of movement in a stylistically accurate way, physical relationship to other dancers
  - **mental skills and attributes** including commitment, concentration, confidence, movement memory, systematic repetition, mental rehearsal, rehearsal discipline, planning of rehearsal, response to feedback, capacity to improve
  - **expressive skills** including projection, use of focus, spatial awareness, musicality, phrasing, facial expression, interpretation and communication of mood and/or meaning and/or intention, sensitivity to other dancers
  - **safe working practices** including safe execution, appropriate dancewear, effective warming up and cooling down, nutrition and hydration

10. Through the application of knowledge, skills and understanding demonstrate the ability to:

- communicate artistic/choreographic intention
- use appropriate physical, technical and expressive skills
- demonstrate safe working practices
- perform one or more dances which requires an appropriate level of sophistication, complexity and challenge

### **Choreography:**

11. Have knowledge and understanding of:

- the elements of dance: action, dynamics, space, relationships
- choreographic processes: including research, improvisation, selection, development, structuring, refining
- choreographic devices: including motif and development, repetition, contrast, transitions, highlights, climax, manipulation of number, unison, canon
- structuring devices: including binary, ternary, rondo, narrative, episodic
- dance for different performance environments: including proscenium/end stage, site-sensitive, in-the-round, dance for camera
- different stimuli and aural settings and their effect on choreographic outcomes

12. Through the application of knowledge, skills and understanding demonstrate the ability to:

- respond creatively to a stimulus or stimuli
- refine and synthesise ideas
- generate, select, develop and structure movement material
- select and use appropriate aural settings
- communicate choreographic intention
- be wholly responsible for the creation of a complete dance which includes movement material and an aural setting

## Appreciation:

13. Have knowledge and understanding of:
  - two or more professional works by two or more choreographers which reflect different styles of dance and different approaches to choreography and production, and support practical learning in performance and choreography. At least two works should be studied in depth
  - different dance styles through the study of professional dance works including identification of the defining characteristics of different dances and recognition of similarities and differences between them
  - the contributions of choreography, performance and features of production to professional works including staging, lighting, properties, costume, dance for camera and aural settings
  - the relationships between choreography, performance and features of production including staging, lighting, properties, costume, dance for camera and aural settings and the ways in which these can be used together to enhance audience understanding of mood, meaning and choreographic intention
  - the purpose or significance of different performance environments in which dance can be created and performed including proscenium/end stage, site-sensitive, in-the-round and dance for camera
14. Through the application of knowledge, skills and understanding demonstrate the ability to:
  - use appropriate dance terminology and/or subject specific language in written communication
  - appreciate different styles of dance and different approaches to choreography and production
  - communicate in written contexts about the choreographic processes
  - communicate in written contexts about performing skills
  - critically appreciate own dances through describing, analysing, interpreting, evaluating and reflecting
  - critically appreciate professional works through describing, analysing, interpreting, evaluating and reflecting



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