



Qualifications and  
Curriculum Authority



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
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*Rewarding Learning*

# GCSE subject criteria for dance

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## Introduction

1. GCSE subject criteria set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all GCSE specifications in dance. They provide the framework within which an awarding body creates the detail of the specification.
2. Specifications must also meet the regulators' general requirements, including the common and GCSE criteria as defined in *The statutory regulation of external qualifications* (QCA/04/1293).
3. Subject criteria are intended to:
  - help ensure consistent and comparable standards in the same subject across the awarding bodies
  - ensure that the rigour of GCSE is maintained
  - ensure that specifications build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established by the national curricula for England, Northern Ireland and Wales, and facilitate progression to A level and relevant vocational qualifications and training
  - help higher education institutions, employers and other stakeholders such as learners and parents/guardians know what has been studied and assessed.
4. Any GCSE specification that contains significant elements of dance must be consistent with the relevant parts of these subject criteria.

## Aims and learning outcomes

5. GCSE specifications in dance should encourage learners to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. They should prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.
6. GCSE specifications in dance must enable learners to:
  - actively engage in the process of dance in order to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
  - develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of a range of dance styles through the interrelated processes of performing, creating and appreciating dances

- develop physical, technical and expressive skills through which they are able to communicate choreographic intention and develop their individual qualities as performers
- develop the skills, knowledge and understanding of choreography through which they are able to communicate ideas, thoughts and meaning drawn from a range of dance styles
- develop a critical appreciation of dance in its physical, artistic, aesthetic and cultural contexts
- develop their knowledge and understanding of health, fitness and safe working practices relevant to performing and choreographing dances.

## **Subject content**

7. The content of GCSE specifications in dance must reflect the learning outcomes.
8. GCSE specifications in dance must allow learners to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding specified below.
  - GCSE specifications in dance must require learners to experience a range of dance styles.
  - Specifications must be based on four assessment opportunities in at least two different dance styles. At least one of these must be as choreographer, one as performer and two others as performer, choreographer or critic.
9. GCSE specifications in dance must enable learners to:
  - demonstrate competence and effectiveness in different styles of dance from a wide range of cultural contexts
  - experience roles such as performer, choreographer and critic through:
    - applying and adapting a wide range of skills and techniques effectively in performing and choreographing dance
    - developing the ability to analyse, evaluate, critique and appreciate dance performance from a variety of cultures
    - developing the ability to improve their own and others' dance

- creating dances for a range of purposes and in response to different stimuli.

10. GCSE specifications in dance must enable learners to demonstrate their increasing physical competence and effectiveness as a performer through:

- developing the physical, technical and expressive skills necessary for effective performance in different dance styles
- understanding how to apply and adapt a wide range of skills and techniques in order to achieve high quality performances through which artistic/choreographic intentions are communicated
- developing the physical and mental capacity to respond to the demands of the performance
- developing the ability to perform with rhythmic timing, phrasing and musicality appropriate to the style and intention of the performance.

11. GCSE specifications in dance must enable learners to demonstrate their increasing effectiveness as a choreographer through:

- developing their ability to explore and synthesise ideas, thoughts and meaning through movement
- developing their understanding of how to use and select actions, dynamics, space and relationships to convey artistic intention
- developing their ability to create and structure dances using a range of choreographic and dance composition principles.

12. GCSE specifications in dance must enable learners to demonstrate their ability to appreciate and critique dance through:

- acquiring critical, perceptual, evaluative and reflective skills in response to their own work and the work of others
- understanding the relationship between choreography, performance and production
- being able to identify the defining characteristics of a range of dance styles
- understanding and using appropriate dance terminology

- acquiring knowledge and understanding of the physical, cultural, aesthetic and artistic contexts in which dance is created and performed
- developing knowledge and understanding of the work of different choreographers and professional dance works.

13. GCSE specifications in dance must enable learners to develop their knowledge and understanding of health, fitness and safe working practices relevant to performing and choreographing dances through applying and understanding:

- how to warm up and cool down and apply fundamental movement principles to dance styles/techniques
- dance practice when working on their own and with others
- the contribution of dance to their personal and social health, fitness and wellbeing
- the range of opportunities and pathways available in dance and other associated activities.

## Assessment objectives

14. All specifications must require candidates to demonstrate their ability to:

Assessment objectives		% weighting
AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of dance performance and choreography	20–30
AO2	Apply skills, knowledge and understanding to communicate choreographic/artistic intention through dance performance	45–55
AO3	Analyse and evaluate dance to bring about improvement	20–30

## Scheme of assessment

15. GCSE specifications in dance must allocate a weighting of 40% to external assessment and a weighting of 60% to controlled assessment in the overall scheme of assessment.

16. Question papers in dance must be targeted at the full range of GCSE grades.

## Grade descriptions

17. Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

18. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of candidates' performance in the assessment may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade	Description
A	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of the characteristics of dance styles and performance in a range of contexts, and of the work of different choreographers and dance works. They understand and use appropriate dance terminology effectively.</p> <p>They apply and adapt effectively an extensive range of skills, techniques and original ideas in choreographing and performing dance with a high level of competence. They show considerable imagination and sensitive personal interpretation to communicate the intention clearly and effectively. They demonstrate considerable understanding of choreographic and dance composition principles.</p> <p>They critically analyse and evaluate their own and others' performances, demonstrating a clear understanding of how fundamental dance principles, dance practice, composition and fitness impact on the quality and effectiveness of performance and choreography. They identify the strengths and weaknesses and the significant priorities and practices for improvement. They show a critical understanding of how to develop the physical and mental capacity to respond to the demands of dance.</p>
C	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of the main characteristics of dance styles and performance in different contexts, and of the work of choreographers and dance works. They use appropriate dance terminology effectively.</p> <p>They demonstrate their ability to apply and adapt a good range of skills, techniques and ideas in performing and choreographing dance with a good degree of competence. They show a good degree of individuality and artistry to communicate intention. They demonstrate a good understanding of choreographic and dance composition principles.</p> <p>They analyse and comment on their own and others' performances,</p>



	<p>showing a good understanding of the factors that affect the quality and effectiveness of performance. They identify most strengths and weaknesses and the significant priorities and practices for improvement. They identify a good range of ideas as they plan ways to improve their own and others' dance. They have a good understanding of how to improve their physical and mental capacity to respond to the demands of dance.</p>
F	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate basic knowledge of different dance styles and performance, and of the work of choreographers and dance works. They use basic dance terminology appropriately.</p> <p>They demonstrate their ability to select and apply a small range of skills, and a basic degree of technical awareness in performance and choreographing dance with a sound degree of competence. They use a small range of individual ideas and communicate the basic meaning of the dance.</p> <p>They provide a basic analysis of their own and others' performance, and can identify some major strengths and weaknesses. They identify a limited range of solutions and can make basic modifications and refinements to skills and techniques in order to improve their dance.</p> <p>They have a basic understanding of how to improve their physical and mental capacity to respond to the demands of dance.</p>