

Dance A level comparison

Comparison of A level subject content and assessment objectives (released January 2015 by the Department for Education and Ofqual respectively), the existing RAD specification for graded examinations in dance grades 6-8 (syllabus from 2015) and the ISTD specification for Intermediate Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance (syllabus from 2015).

Comparison headings	A level subject content (DfE January 2015)	Grades 6-8	Intermediate Imperial Classical Ballet (ISTD)
<p>Aims and objectives</p>	<p>AS and A level specifications in dance must encourage students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop knowledge, understanding and experience of performance, choreography and appreciation of dance as an art form. This will be achieved through exploring and making connections between theory and practice, critically engaging in the analysis of own work and that of professional repertoire, leading to a holistic approach to the study of the subject develop the necessary skills as a performer through the areas of technical training and performance development • develop the necessary skills as a choreographer through further experimentation and application of choreographic and structuring devices develop the necessary skills to engage in critical enquiry about the art form through the areas of written communication, reflection, analysis and evaluation • develop the necessary awareness of safe practice extend their artistic and historical knowledge of dance in the wider cultural context develop 	<p>Aims and purpose of the qualifications</p> <p>The aims of the graded qualifications are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the study of ballet and related dance disciplines as a leisure and/or vocational activity • provide a means of measuring the acquisition of technical, musical and performance skills in ballet and related dance disciplines • promote and encourage enjoyment of movement as a form of physical exercise • provide all candidates, particularly children and young people, with an opportunity of experiencing various dance disciplines accompanied by live music • encourage personal self-confidence and group awareness through the experience of dancing solo, in partners and in small groups • develop a general appreciation of music through dancing to various musical styles and rhythmic patterns • motivate students by providing a series of clearly defined goals which have been structured to reflect the principles of safe dance practice • provide teachers with a vehicle to measure the individual progress of their students. 	<p>AIM</p> <p>The aim of the ISTD Vocational Graded Examinations in Imperial Classical Ballet is to provide an assessment scheme, which gives the basis for the measurement of the individual candidate's progress and development, in preparing to be a professional dance performer or teacher. There are four practical examinations graded to measure appropriate stages of development from a general standard of Imperial Ballet education to that of professional competence and readiness.</p> <p>OBJECTIVES</p> <p>The syllabus objectives of the Imperial Classical Ballet Vocational Graded Examinations are to develop candidates':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct alignment and placing of the body to the best of the individual physical facility • Controlled and appropriate use of limbs, with an understanding of the purpose of each exercise • Strength and stamina • Good sense of line and co-ordination of movement • Highly developed rhythmic and musical awareness

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	<p>particular strengths, skills and interests which will encourage life-long learning, equip students for study in higher education and provide access to future careers in dance develop a range of skills relating to problem solving, organisation, team work and leadership</p>	<p>A course of study based on these qualifications is intended to provide students with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an increasing ability to demonstrate practical knowledge of the dance disciplines of ballet, free movement and character • a graduated measure of attainment against specific criteria • increasing self-confidence through the learning, memorising and performing of prescribed sequences of movement, studies and dances • an awareness and understanding of working with others • an appreciation, through practical experience, of three contrasting dance disciplines with their accompanying music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artistry and an appreciation of the nuances of style, both in own movement and that of others • Spatial awareness
<p>Content – practical</p>	<p>Performance Have knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical skills and technical principles, including correct alignment, flexion, extension, rotation, whole body participation and/or isolation, transference of weight, locomotion, elevation, balance, flexibility, strength, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, agility, neuromuscular coordination and kinaesthetic awareness • interpretative skills in order to communicate the dance idea in a clear and considered manner, including projection, focus, expression, emphasis, 	<p>The Grade 8 award develops solo performance as a culmination of the graded examination syllabus. Candidates are required to perform solos in the three styles of dance previously studied - classical, free movement and character - preceded by a short warm up barre. The first dance (Etude Lyrique) is compulsory, but in all other sections there is a choice of dance.</p> <p>Classical exercises Barre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pliés • Battements tendus and battements glissés • Ronds de jambe à terre and battements 	<p>Intermediate content is set at a level of complexity appropriate for the grade. As well as knowledge, understanding and skills from earlier grades, there are specific steps and movements which cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barre (with demi-pointe) • Centre practice • Port de Bras • Adage • Pirouettes • Allegro • Petite Batterie • Grand Allegro <p>Female candidates perform pointe work at</p>

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	<p>musicality and an awareness of style the skills required by an individual both as a soloist and within an ensemble, including spatial awareness, timing, sensitivity and focus with other dancers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safe practice, including an awareness of correct alignment, technical accuracy when dancing, appropriate dancewear and presentation of self, and a healthy approach to training, rehearsal and the lifestyle of a dancer <p>Through application of embodied knowledge and understanding demonstrate the ability to:</p> <p>AS level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and apply physical, technical, interpretative and performance skills to practical presentation through both a duet/trio which investigates characteristics of style within a genre(s) and a solo performance of own choreography. • develop and apply safe practice in performance skills and practical presentation <p>A level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform a solo based on a specific practitioner demonstrating embodied knowledge of the practitioner’s movement/choreographic style. This will link to analytical exploration and understanding gained from theoretical investigation within one of the two areas 	<p>fondus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battements frappés • Adage • Grands battements <p>Entrée polonaise</p> <p>Classical solos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Etude lyrique • Valse printemps or demi-caractère <p>Movement solos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mouvement libre poétique or Mouvement libre dramatique • Character solos • Mazurka desalon or danse Russe • Finale polonaise and révérence 	<p>the Barre.</p>
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	<p>of study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and apply skills as part of an ensemble, through a quartet performance, which link practical experience with critical investigation and appreciation of one of the two areas of study • develop the artistic intention of the dance idea(s) in communication with other dancers • apply and develop safe practice in performance skills and practical presentation <p>Choreography</p> <p>Have knowledge and understanding of: choreographic process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research and experimentation, including studio and non-studio investigation • selection of appropriate constituent features in relation to research and experimentation, including action, dynamic and spatial elements, dancers, aural setting and physical setting • manipulation of the movement components through the use of a variety of choreographic devices • use of a range of choreographic structures professional choreographic approaches, including historical and current practice <p>Through application of knowledge and understanding demonstrate the ability to:</p>		
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	<p>AS level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experiment, develop ideas, craft and structure dance material, applying knowledge and understanding of choreographic process and approaches through the presentation of a solo dance <p>A level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experiment, develop ideas, craft and structure dance material, applying knowledge and understanding of choreographic process and approaches through the presentation of a group dance consisting of three, four or five dancers • develop the artistic intention of the dance idea(s) in communication with other dancers 		
<p>Content – knowledge and understanding</p>	<p>Critical engagement</p> <p>Have knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the interrelationship between the creation, the presentation and the viewing/appreciation of dance works the development of dance placed within the artistic and cultural context professional dance works, including the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significance of the character of each dance, its subject matter and treatment form of each dance and its effectiveness in communicating the subject matter constituent features of each dance including movement components, dancers, physical and aural setting and the relevance of these features in embodying the subject matter 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • professional choreographers, including the: • technique and style of the choreographer • influences affecting the choreographer's development • contribution of the choreographer to the development of dance within the artistic and cultural context • subject specific terminology and its use <p>Through application of knowledge and understanding demonstrate the ability to:</p> <p>AS level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse, interpret, reflect on and evaluate the performance, choreographic process and outcome relating to own practice through written communication • analyse, interpret, reflect on and evaluate the performance and choreographic experience through written communication • comment critically on the development of dance placed within the artistic and cultural context through the study of two areas of study • develop the understanding and insight appropriate to dance study which will inform clear, succinct written communication and use specialist vocabulary appropriately <p>A level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse, reflect on and evaluate the performance and choreographic experience, including that of professional repertoire, through written 		
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	<p>communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop an in-depth critical appreciation of two specific works linked to two different areas of study²⁰. <p>Synoptic assessment of AS and A level dance should require students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a broad and deep understanding of the connections between the knowledge, understanding and skills set out in the specification as a whole demonstrate their understanding of the relationships between theory and practice and the ways in which dancers and choreographers make and implement artistic decision develop an in-depth critical appreciation of two specific choreographers linked to two different areas of study develop an in-depth critical appreciation of the artistic and cultural context of each set work linked to an area of study - in relation to its content, the choreographer and other works by the choreographer extended writing skills in order to present responses which are clear, coherent, perceptive and use specialist vocabulary appropriately 		
Content – historical and contextual			
Assessment objectives practical	<i>NB the assessment objectives are likely to contain a mixture of practical and theoretical elements which will be assessed using a variety of means.</i>	<p>Technique</p> <p>Ballet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate secure posture and correct 	<p>ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE</p> <p>Candidates are assessed on their ability to show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical accuracy with correct

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	<p>AO1 Perform dance through the application of physical, technical, interpretative and performance skills AS 25 to 30% A level 25 to 30%</p> <p>AO2 Create dance, applying choreographic skills, to communicate artistic intention AS 25 to 30% A level 25 to 30%</p> <p>AO3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of performance and choreography from different periods and genres AS 20 to 25% A level 25 to 30%</p> <p>AO4 Critically appreciate and assess performance and choreography, through making analytical, interpretative and evaluative judgements AS 25 to 30% A level 20 to 25%</p>	<p>weight placement in the performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a wide range of more complex movements • Demonstrate an ability to perform a wide range of complex movements with coordination of the whole body, well stretched legs and articulated footwork • Demonstrate line through the body and use of épaulement • Demonstrate an ability to perform more complex movements with accurate alignment and use of space • Demonstrate well co-ordinated turning actions with correct use of supporting leg and placement of working leg • Demonstrate elevation with controlled landings in a wide range of more complex steps. <p>Free movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a wide variety of simple and complex steps with free flowing movement • Use of space and co-ordination of the whole body, showing a secure Understanding of weight transference, use of gravity, suspension at the climax of a movement and controlled endings • Demonstrate use of gravity and relaxation of upper back to project more complex movements into and through space • Demonstrate an ability to show a variety of lines through the whole body using a wide range of complex movements • Demonstrate varying heights of 	<p>placement to the best of the physical facility. An appropriate use of limbs showing an understanding of the purpose of each exercise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of line and well co-ordinated movement with an awareness of the use of space An assured performance showing the differing qualities of movement and style required by each section of the exam structure • An instinctive musicality and a highly developed sense of rhythm <p>Students are marked on the following areas of their performance:</p> <p>Technique (70 marks) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barre and centre practice • Porte de bras throughout the examination • Adage • Pirouettes • Petit allegro and batterie • Allagro • Pointe work/boys' virtuosity <p>Presentation, musicality and response (30 marks) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variation • Artistry and musicality • Approach to free work, syllabus knowledge and theory
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		<p>elevation with spring off one leg in more complex movements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate proficient use of long scarf <p>Character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a wide range of complex steps with firm hold of the body, upper back and head, accurate placement of the arms and hands, use of deep fondu, use of space and articulated footwork relevant to the style, use of épaulement • Demonstrate an ability to contrast differing qualities of movements and steps • Demonstrate a more complex co-ordinated turning action <p>Music</p> <p>Ballet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform with correct and accurate timing and appropriate response to the music. <p>Free movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform with correct and accurate timing and appropriate response to the music. <p>Character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform with correct and accurate timing and appropriate response to the music; • Perform exercises to music with varied rhythmic structures. 	
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		<p>Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform with expression and communication 	
<p>Assessment objectives knowledge and understanding</p>			