



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2012**

**Dance**

**42302**

**(Specification 4230)**

**Unit 2: Set dance**

***Report on the Examination***

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## General comments

Approximately 74% of students entered this year chose to perform *Impulse* whilst about 26% chose *Find It!* Percentage achievement at each mark on the scale was again very similar across both dances which clearly indicates that they continue to provide equal challenge. Achievement in this unit was extremely high with over 50% of students gaining 23+ marks. Some of the work seen was outstandingly good and an absolute joy to watch.

Many more schools had offered both dances to students, giving them the opportunity to select their best performance for assessment. Schools are encouraged to consider the needs of the individual student rather than the school's own preference of choice of dance.

## Special consideration

A number of schools presented adapted work for students with specific physical needs and in almost all cases appropriate AQA approval had been sought using the procedure explained in the document ***Applying to Adapt the Set Dance*** on the AQA website in the Teacher Resource Bank. This needs to be done as soon as possible in the year of assessment and no later than two months before the DVD is submitted.

The music tracks as published must not be altered in tempo, cut, edited or altered in any way except in exceptional circumstances to meet the needs of a specific student. In this case, AQA approval must be sought before presenting the student's work for final assessment. (See ***Applying to Adapt the Set Dance*** document on the website.)

## Specific observations related to the criteria for assessment

### ***Technical ability***

Some students struggled with control, turnout, flexibility and strength. This was apparent when they performed pliés and landed from elevations (or missed out jumps entirely). Extension of the legs/ankles was often good and notably better than extension of the arms in some performances.

### ***Accuracy of reproduction of action, spatial and timing content***

Most schools were entirely accurate in the teaching of the set dances but many still had some minor inaccuracies in timing or direction/facings. Most inaccuracies were found in *Impulse* especially after the free-time section. *Find It!* was generally performed more accurately throughout. Teachers are reminded of the need to refer to the Set Dances DVD and the Teachers' Notes to regularly check what they are teaching against the original. This is particularly important as the dances become more familiar.

### ***Interpretation***

The most exciting performances happened when students had clearly understood the different dynamic emphases in the choreography. There were some lovely individual interpretations of light and shade and very clear evidence that most students were enjoying engaging with dynamics. Whilst it is pleasing to see students really working to highlight the dynamic interest of the performance, care must be taken to ensure that their personal interpretation is not over-emphasised to the detriment of demonstration of style.

### ***Demonstration of style***

Where students had studied and fully understood the characteristic features and the style of the original choreography, they achieved some stunning performances. However less able students tended just to replicate the movement in terms of whole body placement rather than unpicking the detail of where movements originated in the body.

### ***Safe practice as a performer***

There was a noticeable improvement in this criterion with most students achieving full marks for what they were wearing and most executed the safe practice moments with care and accuracy. Care still needs to be taken with some of the more demanding moments such as take offs, landings and floorwork as there is still evidence that some students are not being taught how to execute these safely. Generally it is clear that schools are expecting a much more professional approach from students and this is very reassuring, especially if it continues into everyday practice.

### ***Overall performance***

Commitment to the dance has improved and many students were able to pick up marks here when they really committed to the performance throughout. There were many very exciting performances seen by examiners where students had clearly been taught how to perform to camera and had had an opportunity to evaluate their performances in detail. Unfortunately where these skills are not specifically taught, students tend to just go through the motions and internalise their performance without really understanding how to project to an 'audience'.

### ***Impulse***

There were some delightful examples of performances of this dance but examiners identified the following areas where problems occurred with some students:

- Timing at the start was sometimes inaccurate and usually linked to inaccurate action content
- Variations of floppy arms and extra gestures in the opening section
- Incorrect footwork in the walking backwards phrase, this was also sometimes incorrect spatially and in timing
- Difficulties in maintaining strong, safe parallel and turn out positions
- Hesitancy and lack of sense of freedom in the runs before the floor work
- Lack of use of the core and the back
- A general lack of impulse, swing and initiation through various body parts and from within the body.
- Lack of fluidity and the punctuated stillness and strength which contrasts with it
- The slide to the floor was sometimes performed dangerously, sometimes omitted completely and sometimes inaccurately taught as a crouch rather than a slide.

### ***Find It!***

Again there were some really exciting performances of this dance with the following areas identified as being where problems occurred with some students:

- The quirkiness of the gestures in the opening section and the more percussive dynamic qualities of the study were sometimes missing
- Lack of engagement of the core to enable swift, neat rolls and a safe plank position
- Lacking the sense of narrative, often linked to poor use of focus
- The sequence of swings and turns after rising from the floor for the first time lacked a sense of momentum and control. This was sometimes accompanied by a loose circling of the arms rather than a purposeful follow through into the body
- The travelling section, across the back of the space, was sometimes performed incorrectly with inaccurate arms and strange variations of jumps and hops or no hops
- The slide to the floor was sometimes performed dangerously, sometimes omitted completely and sometimes inaccurately taught as a crouch rather than a slide
- Some students ran out of steam by the last section which impacted on several of the criteria.

## Administration and documentation

Most schools followed the guidelines and completed the documentation successfully which was a great help to examiners. However problems and delays to marking did occur for a number of reasons. It would be helpful if all schools could ensure that an attendance sheet and running order has been included in the pack which clearly indicates any absent students.

### **Candidate Record Forms (CRF) must be:**

- completed and included for every student being assessed
- collated in the order that students appear on the DVD
- completed in a clear, legible hand. It was sometimes difficult to read the student's name.
- printed or copied on a **single A4 sheet** with both sides of the Candidate Record Form so that the examiner can mark on the grid
- completed with a useful indication of each student's appearance as they appear on the film so as to help the examiner make a secure identification. Where this was left blank, examiners could not cross-reference what they were seeing on screen. Likewise, the same description for every student (e.g. 'black leotard and tights') did not help to identify individuals.
- completed with student names in exactly the same format as on the film and the attendance sheet. Alternative names cause confusion for examiners and jeopardise the marking process
- left blank on the marking grid. The examiner needs to use this and the school should not mark this unit.

### **Recordings**

Schools are reminded of the importance of good quality filming and clear identification of students. There was a clear improvement in the quality of the filmed work presented this year. Teachers are encouraged to study the wealth of good advice on how to film this unit successfully as provided in the document ***Guidance for Video Recording Candidates' Work*** on the website.

## Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available at [www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html](http://www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html) .

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