



# **IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF TEACHERS OF DANCING**

## **Classical Indian Dance Faculty**

### **CLASSICAL INDIAN BHARATANATYAM EXAMINATIONS**

### **SYLLABUS OUTLINE**

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## FOREWORD

Bharatanatyam originated many centuries ago in the temples of Tamil Nadu in South India. It is known for its strong lines that make geometric and symmetrical shapes as well as its turn-out position by which it is commonly recognised. The dance form is embellished with intricately expressive hand gestures and elaborate facial expressions that lend to the story-telling aspect of this style.

The *mārgam*, which is the format of a traditional Bharatanatyam presentation, was formalised by the Tanjore Quartet in the second half of the eighteenth century. Traditionally, the training programme for Bharatanatyam dancers has been organised around this *mārgam*. Bharatanatyam dancers, to this day, generally follow this format in a traditional presentation. The ISTD syllabus is designed closely to reflect traditional teaching whilst considering the needs and experiences of present-day students worldwide.

Students of classical Indian dance, other than those in India, are in an environment that may not necessarily complement their experience of Bharatanatyam training. This syllabus, therefore, is based on the investing of time and effort in the early Grades, to create the necessary physical and cultural infrastructure for the dancer in training.

The syllabus also accommodates some changes in the traditional learning progression of dance material. It promotes holistic dance experience at the initial stages, even before each aspect of the physical training has been mastered. Students are also encouraged to see dance performances in order to gain a cultural and critical understanding, and a lively interest in Bharatanatyam and in the wider horizons of dance.

The ISTD syllabus provides a structure equally suited to students of any of the different *bāṅis* of Bharatanatyam, without favouring one over another.

The syllabus for each examination is presented in three sections:

- Ancillary Skills
- Technical Skills and Performance
- Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File

For essential information on good teaching practices related to the syllabus, and for the full detail and explanation of the syllabus content, see the Bharatanatyam Examination Specifications available for purchase from the ISTD Shop at Headquarters.

# PRIMARY CLASS EXAMINATION

## INTRODUCTION

### RATIONALE

This syllabus is common for Bharatanatyam and Kathak, in preparing children for the Graded Examinations of either genre. It may equally be taught by teachers of either genre, using the movement vocabulary which is familiar and which would be of use in later learning. This syllabus has been designed to introduce younger learners to classical Indian dance and as such has been designed to meet their needs.

Extensive notes on the syllabus are to be found in the Classical Indian Dance Primary Examination Specifications, which may be purchased from the ISTD Shop, Imperial House, 22/26 Paul Street, London EC2A 4QE, tel: 020 7377 1577, email: sales@istd.org

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

### AGE LIMITS

The Primary examination has no lower or upper age limit but is recommended for those between the ages of six and eight.

### GENDER DISTINCTIONS

The examination does not require the dancer to make a gender specific presentation. Males and females can be presented together.

### TIME ALLOWANCES / NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

EXAMINATION	1 or 2 CANDIDATES	3 or 4 CANDIDATES
Primary Class	Only in exceptional circumstances	20 minutes

For the Primary Class Examination the teacher teaches three to four candidates in the presence of the examiner, demonstrating their experience of the syllabus material, followed by presenting them in a prepared dance sequence. The examiner will then have the opportunity to request syllabus material to be shown on an individual basis if necessary.

### MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

The teacher is responsible for the musical accompaniment in a recorded format. For the Primary Class Examination only, the teacher may be the operator.

### DRESS REQUIREMENTS

There are no marks for grooming for the Primary Class Examination; it is considered an essential aspect of training, giving poise and confidence. The following are expected:

- Candidates should be suitably dressed in clothes that enable the examiner to see the dance and allow the candidate to perform without distraction.
- Females should wear a suitably tailored *salwār* or *curidār kamīz*.
- Males should wear a suitably tailored *kurtā pyjāma*.
- All candidates should have their waist firmly bound.
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a single plait or bun. A long plait should be secured at the back to prevent its movement distracting from the dance.
- No dance costumes or jewellery should be worn.
- Ankle bells are optional.

## SYLLABUS CONTENT

This syllabus outline must be applied in conjunction with the Primary Class Examination Specifications.

### 1. Body Awareness

- 1.1 Warm-up
- 1.2 Cool-down
- 1.3 'Everyday' stance/the 'dance' stance
- 1.4 Awareness of body parts
- 1.5 Placing of the legs and feet
- 1.6 Carriage of the arms, shoulders, neck, head and eyes
- 1.7 Mobilisation of the arms, wrists, hands, fingers, shoulders; head and neck; face and eyes

### 2. Rhythm and Timing

- 2.1 Hand clapping, foot beating
- 2.2 Variations in the sound of stamping

### 3. Dynamics

- 3.1 Firm and gentle
- 3.2 Quick and slow
- 3.3 Rising and sinking
- 3.4 Action and stillness

### 4. Expression

- 4.1 Communication of feelings and emotions
- 4.2 Lucidity of mimetic statements

### 5. Spatial Awareness

- 5.1 Direction relating to body
- 5.2 Direction relating to space
- 5.3 Travelling and floor patterns
- 5.4 Turns and spins

## ASSESSMENT

The examination takes place in the presence of the teacher.

Normally three to four candidates are examined simultaneously. All candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously.

- The first part of the examination is conducted by the teacher, leading a pre-rehearsed dance or warm-up sequence, for 5 minutes, covering all aspects of the syllabus. This part demonstrates candidates' ability to follow instructions.
- The second part is a prepared dance performance of around 3 - 4 minutes. This can be a sequence of dance movements, which need not be genre specific.
- The final part is the examiner requesting material from the syllabus individually from each candidate.

Twenty minutes is allowed for the completion of the examination for each group of up to four candidates.

## MARK SCHEME

### PRIMARY CLASS

<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Body awareness and control	15
Rhythm / timing: accuracy in keeping foot beats and clapping	15
Dynamics	10
Expression	10
Spatial awareness and use of space	10
Response to teacher	10
Movement memory	10
Performance quality	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The Primary Class Examination is assessed externally by visiting examiners recruited and trained by the ISTD.

The titles of the components and the marks attainable are detailed above. The overall mark is given out of 100 and the overall result is indicated as follows:

GRADE	MARKS
Distinction	80-100 marks
Merit	60-79 marks
Pass	40-59 marks
Not Attained	0-39 marks

## ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

Candidates are assessed on their ability to show:

- Technical accuracy with correct placement to the best of their physical facility.
- Appropriate use of limbs showing an understanding of the purpose or significance of each movement or sequence of movements.
- A sense of line and well-coordinated movements.
- An assured performance showing the different qualities of movement required by each section of the examination structure.
- Musicality and rhythmic awareness.

# GRADED EXAMINATIONS: GRADES 1 - 6

## INTRODUCTION

### RATIONALE

Bharatanatyam makes a distinctive contribution to the education of all students, in that it uses movement, which is the fundamental mode of human expression. It offers a range of learning opportunities and enables participants to enjoy physical expression as well as develop intellectual sensibilities. As they work together in Bharatanatyam, candidates learn about cooperation and develop an understanding of the shaping of movement into artistic forms of expression.

Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam are concerned with progressive mastery in defined stages within the context of safe dance practice.

### AIM

The aim of Graded Examinations is to provide an assessment scheme for dance, which gives the basis for the measurement of the individual candidate's progress and development, whether the candidate is pursuing dance as a leisure activity or as preparation for a professional career as a dance teacher or performer. There are six practical examination grades, numbered from 1 to 6, in order to indicate the increasing order of difficulty (6 represents the highest level of attainment).

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Bharatanatyam Graded Examination syllabus are set out below:

- To impart practical skills in Bharatanatyam as it is manifest today in its traditional form, complemented by appropriate background knowledge and understanding of the art, through a programme of training and assessment.
- To lay a holistic foundation either as an element in a liberal education or as a preparation for vocational training in Bharatanatyam or other dance-based careers, integrating the major aspects of the art form, including the movement vocabulary, the experience of performance and an understanding of the relevant music and literature.
- To develop an awareness and appreciation of Bharatanatyam in the context of a wider dance world.

### LEARNING AND PROGRESSION

Candidates develop the skill and understanding of Bharatanatyam, at the same time as building a sound technique, by developing the physical ability to communicate through movement in an expressive and artistic way. A clearly defined structure allows learning to take place in the context of safe dance practice. The Graded Examinations build up progressively, ensuring that steps and skills learned at lower levels prepare for more complex movements as the candidate progresses.

Each Bharatanatyam Graded Examination allows candidates to progress to the next higher grade in the Bharatanatyam genre. Also, a range of transfers to other dance genres becomes possible as the candidate develops physically and learns common skills such as running, gesture, posture, timing and rhythmic awareness. In this way, with additional teaching input, the candidate is able to develop a broad base of dancing skills. Following on from the Graded Examinations, candidates may wish to progress to the Vocational Graded Examinations as preparation for employment as a professional dancer or as preparation for dance teaching qualifications.



The Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam also allow for those participating solely for recreational purposes to produce quality work in a safe dance context.

## ENTRY CONDITIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

### AGE LIMITS

There is no upper or lower age limit for entering the Bharatanatyam Graded Examinations. It is recommended, however, that teachers ensure that candidates are at an appropriate level of maturity to meet and enjoy the demands of the syllabus.

It is recommended that children and adults are not entered at the same time.

### PRIOR LEARNING

The Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam are intended to be taken consecutively and most candidates will wish to progress through them in sequence in order to develop and demonstrate the requisite skills. However, in cases where examinations are undertaken without success at the previous grade, the candidate needs to be at an appropriate level of physical and artistic development. Before a candidate enrolls in a class leading to a Graded Examination, teachers are under a particular duty, therefore, to assess the achievement of the candidate, particularly with regard to safe

### GENDER DISTINCTIONS

The examination does not require the dancer to make a gender specific presentation. Males and females can be presented together.

### TIME ALLOWANCES / NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

Candidates are normally examined in groups of three. Where this is not possible, candidates should be entered in pairs. In exceptional circumstances, a single candidate can be entered, for example if the teacher is not entering any other Grade 1 candidates who have learnt the same prepared dance sequence.

For Grades 1 - 6 the three candidates show a prepared dance sequence simultaneously, following which they each in turn answer questions about the prepared dance sequence they have shown, about other elements of the syllabus, and they may be asked to dance to demonstrate their understanding.

The examination of the candidates takes the following total time-

EXAMINATION	1 CANDIDATE	2 CANDIDATES	3 CANDIDATES
Grade 1	15 minutes	25 minutes	30 minutes
Grade 2	20 minutes	30 minutes	35 minutes
Grade 3	25 minutes	35 minutes	45 minutes
Grade 4	25 minutes	40 minutes	50 minutes
Grade 5	30 minutes	45 minutes	60 minutes
Grade 6	40 minutes	60 minutes	80 minutes

These timings include an allocation of time for the examiner to assess candidates' files.

## MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

The teacher is responsible for the provision of accompaniment which must be in recorded format for which an operator will be required.

On no account may the teacher or another candidate in the same session be present to operate or accompany for the six Graded Examinations.

CDs with sample music appropriate for the examination presentation are available from the ISTD shop.

## DRESS REQUIREMENTS

There are no marks for grooming for the six graded examinations; it is considered an essential aspect of training, giving poise and confidence. The following are expected:

- Candidates should be suitably dressed in clothes that enable the examiner to see the dance and allow the candidate to perform without distraction.
- Females should wear a dance practice *sāri* or suitably tailored *salwār kamīz*.
- Males should wear a *dhoti* or a suitably tailored *kurtā pyjāma*.
- All candidates should have their waist firmly bound.
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a single plait or bun. A long plait should be secured at the back to prevent its movement distracting from the dance.
- No dance costume or jewellery should be worn.
- No ankle bells should be worn for the Grade 1, 2 and 3 examinations. In Grades 4, 5 and 6 these are optional.

## SYLLABUS CONTENT

This syllabus outline must be applied in conjunction with the Bharatanatyam Graded Examination Specifications and the General Statement on Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and Level Descriptors, available on the ISTD [website](#).

### GRADES 1, 2 & 3 (LEVEL 1)

Candidates demonstrate an increasing vocabulary of movement in the chosen technique. An understanding of the technique is reflected in the ability to coordinate simple movements to produce combinations of steps and quality of movement ie precision and control within the range of their own physical capacity.

Candidates communicate an increasing confidence in performance. They are able to interpret music and display sensitivity to musical content and style. Candidates' performances show a developing spatial awareness, an ability to work with others and responsiveness to an audience.

### GRADE 1

**THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS**

#### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and *Tāla*

1.1 Recitation of *śolkattū* for *aḍavus* in two *kālas* and appropriate *tāla*.

- 1.2 Recitation of *śolkattu* for the *korvai* with *ādi tāla*.
- 1.3 Recitation of *jātis* covered.
- 1.4 Knowledge of *ādi tāla* and *rūpaka tāla*.

## 2. Music

These may be sung by following written notation.

- 2.1 A minimum of twelve *Sarali Varisai* in either *Māyamālavagowla* or *Śankarabharana*, to be sung in two speeds to *ādi tāla*.
- 2.2 One *gīta* in *rūpaka tāla*.

Although assessment of the singing is based on the candidate's adherence to *tāla* as opposed to pitch or melody, it will be required for the candidate to sing, not simply recite the notes / words to rhythm.

## Technical Skills and Performance

### 3. Aḍavus

Assessed in first and second speed only, recommended to be practised in all three speeds - . below are some examples of *aḍavus* for each category.

- 3.1 *Tattu aḍavu* – A minimum of seven varieties of stamping in *sthānaka* and *araimaṇḍi*.
- 3.2 *Kattu aḍavu* - three varieties using crossing and stamping patterns (using *kaṭakāmukha* and *alapadma* or *tripatāka hasta*).
- 3.3 *Meṭtu aḍavu* - stamping on the ball of the foot.
- 3.4 *Nāṭtu aḍavu* - eight varieties of stretching the leg.
- 3.5 *Paraval aḍavu* - three varieties of *tā tai tai ta*
- 3.6 *Di di tai* - in sequences exploring various arm movements for one step, different foot positions for the same rhythm and a variety of floor patterns.
- 3.7 *Naḍai* - the basic Bharatanatyam walk incorporating awareness of three *jātis* - *caturaśra*, *tiśra* and *miśra*.

### 4. Nritta

- 4.1 Selection of *aḍavus* from the above section.
- 4.2 One *korvai* spanning a minimum of four *āvartanas* of *ādi tāla*, in first and second speed only and employing at least two *jātis*, using the *aḍavu* vocabulary of this Grade. This must be presented in the prepared dance sequence in a distinctly separate manner for easy identification by the examiner, and should be preceded by a voice recording stating “*korvai*”.

### 5. Abhinaya / Nritya

- 5.1 Gestures and expression for two *ślokas* such as the *Guru* and *Siva ślokas*.

### 6. Creative Exercise

- 6.1 Using *di di tai*, a candidate will be expected to create a variety of floor patterns using different hand gestures with arm movements, and foot positions on instruction from the examiner.

## Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File

### 7. Safe Dance Practice

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD to learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

## 8. Theory

- 8.1 *Ślokas* - *Guru vandana*, *Siva stuti*, *sahanāvavatu*, or any other *śloka* – knowing the words and meaning. At least two *ślokas* must be prepared for the examination.
- 8.2 *Śira*, *driṣṭi*, *grīva* and *maṇḍala bheda ślokas*, *asamyuta* and *samyuta hasta ślokas*.
- 8.3 *Nāṭya Kramaha śloka*.
- 8.4 *Deva hastas* relating to *ślokas* learnt.
- 8.5 Nomenclature of *aḍavus*.

## 9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student’s own work and in their own handwriting)

- 9.1 A record of musical notations.
- 9.2 A record of the *aḍavus*, prescribed *korvai*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *ślokas* covered.
- 9.3 Brief notes on the origin of Bharatanatyam (4-5 independent points).
- 9.4 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

### The Grade 1 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of six minutes’ duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the *aḍavus* in two speeds, the *korvai* and *ślokas* as prescribed in the syllabus. This should include as many different varieties of *aḍavus* for the Grade, with the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance to be as follows:

*aḍavus* – 3.5 minutes

*korvai* – 1 minute

*ślokas* – 1.5 minutes.

All candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for compulsory material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.
- Individual response to:
  - the creative exercise task
  - demonstration of safe dance practice exercises
  - theory questions
  - questions generated from the file contents
  - tāla* tasks
  - singing tasks

## GRADE 2

**THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS**

### **Ancillary Skills**

#### **1. Rhythm and Tāla**

- 1.1 Recitation of *śolkaṭṭu* for *aḍavus* in *trikāla* and appropriate *tāla* in ascending and descending speeds.
- 1.2 Recitation of *śolkaṭṭu* for the *korvai* with *tāla*.
- 1.3 Knowledge of *pancajāti* and recitation to the appropriate *eka tāla* in two speeds.
- 1.4 Knowledge of *tāla* and its *angas* (limited to *ādi tāla* and *rūpaka tāla*).

#### **2. Music**

These may be sung by following written notation.

- 2.1 *Janṭa Varisai* - students will be expected to sing a minimum of seven exercises in two speeds, in *ādi tāla*.
- 2.2 At least two *gītas*, each in a different *tāla* but not in *rūpaka tāla*. These must be in addition to the one learnt in Grade 1.

Although assessment of the singing is based on the candidate's adherence to *tāla* as opposed to pitch or melody, it will be required for the candidate to sing, not simply recite the notes / words to rhythm.

### **Technical Skills and Performance**

#### **3. Aḍavus** (in three speeds - below are some examples of aḍavus for each category.)

- 3.1 *Taṭṭu aḍavu* – a minimum of seven varieties in ascending and descending tempi.
- 3.2 *Śimir aḍavu* - two varieties in *tiśra jāti*.
- 3.3 *Paraval aḍavu* – four varieties of *tā tai tai ta*
- 3.4 *Periya / rangakramaṇa / uśī aḍavu* – Series of off-beat steps covering space in a variety of floor patterns.
- 3.5 *Egar-meṭṭu / kudittameṭṭu aḍavu* – a minimum of four varieties of *tai hat tai hi*.
- 3.6 *Cil / jāru / sarikkal aḍavu* – five varieties of *taiya taihi* in which the *sthānaka* position is used.
- 3.7 *Bhramari* - two varieties of *ekapāda*.
- 3.8 *Uṭplavana* - three varieties, of which one includes use of *kartari hasta*.
- 3.9 *Taṭṭu meṭṭu / jāti aḍavu* demonstrating *pancajāti*.
- 3.10 *Muktāya / tīrmāna aḍavu* – *ta dhin gi ṇa tom* series.

#### **4. Nritta**

- 4.1 A selection of *aḍavus* from the above section, in three speeds.
- 4.2 A *nritta* composition based on a *swara korvai* displaying two speeds and a variation of at least three *jātis*.

#### **5. Abhinaya / Nritya**

- 5.1 A *śloka* more complex than those prescribed for Grade 1. This should be performed as free verse only. Examples of *ślokas* that can be used include, *mūshika vāhana*, *śantākāram*, *yākundendu*. The *sāhitya* of a simple *gīta* can also be used as free verse.

## 6. Creative Exercise

- 6.1 On instruction from the examiner, development of a narrative based on a sentence structure using mainly material from the *patāka hasta viniyoga śloka*.

## Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File

## 7. Safe Dance Practice

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD to learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

## 8. Theory

- 8.1 Nomenclature of *aḍavus*.  
8.2 *Patāka hasta viniyoga - śloka* or Sanskrit names.  
8.3 *Sthānaka, utplavana, bhramari* and *cāri bheda ślokas* or Sanskrit names.  
8.4 Knowing the words and meaning of the *śloka* from the *abhinaya / nritya* section.

## 9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student's own work and in their own handwriting)

- 9.1 A record of musical notations.  
9.2 A record of the *aḍavus*, prescribed *korvai*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *śloka* covered.  
9.3 Notes on the mythological background of Bharatanatyam with the story of the creation of the Natya Veda. (Around 150-200 words)  
9.4 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

## The Grade 2 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of eight minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the *aḍavus* of this Grade in three speeds, a *swara korvai* and a more complex *śloka* compared to Grade 1. This should include as many different varieties of *aḍavus* for the Grade, with the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance to be as follows:

*aḍavus* – 4 minutes

*swara korvai* – 2 minutes

*abhinaya* – 2 minutes..

All candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for compulsory material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.
- Individual response to:
  - the creative exercise task
  - demonstration of safe dance practice exercises
  - theory questions
  - questions generated from the file contents
  - tāla* tasks
  - singing tasks

## GRADE 3

**THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS**

### **Ancillary Skills**

#### **1. Rhythm and Tāla**

- 1.1 Recitation of *śolkāṭṭu* for *aḍavus* in *trikāla* and appropriate *tāla* in ascending and descending speeds.
- 1.2 Recitation with *tāla* of *śolkāṭṭu* of the *tiśra Alārīppu korvai* and a *kuraippu* and knowledge of their rhythmic structures.
- 1.3 Understanding of *tāla* structure of the invocation and recitation of any *nritta* sections included in the invocation.

#### **2. Music**

These may be sung by following written notation.

- 2.1 Ability to sing *alankāras* in *sapta tāla* and in two speeds, demonstrating knowledge of the structure of the *sapta tāla*.
- 2.2 Ability to sing the invocation to *tāla*.

Although assessment of the singing is based on the candidate's adherence to *tāla* as opposed to pitch or melody, it will be required for the candidate to sing, not simply recite the notes / words to rhythm.

### **Technical Skills and Performance**

#### **3. Aḍavus** (in three speeds - below are some examples of *aḍavus* for each category.)

- 3.1 *Eṭṭa aḍavu* - five varieties of *tat tai tām / tat tai tā ha*.
- 3.2 *Pakka aḍavu* – five varieties of *tat tai tā ha* including three varieties done on the spot and two varieties of travelling movement.
- 3.3 *Tā hata jham tari tā*.
- 3.4 *Maṇḍi aḍavu* - two combinations in which the *muzhumaṇḍi* position is used.
- 3.5 *Sarikkal aḍavu* - in which the starting position is *muzhumaṇḍi*.
- 3.6 *Mei aḍavu* - two varieties.
- 3.7 *Muktāya / tīrmāna aḍavu* – *ki ṭa ta ka dha ri ki ṭa tom* series.

#### **4. Nritta**

- 4.1 A selection of *aḍavus* from the above section.
- 4.2 *Tā hata jham tari tā korvai* of *tiśra Alārīppu*.
- 4.3 *Kuraippu* set to a suitable time cycle.

#### **5. Abhinaya / Nriya**

- 5.1 An invocatory item with both *nritta* and *abhinaya*, for example, *Kavittuvam*, *Stuti*, *Vandana*. It is mandatory that the *abhinaya* performed in this Grade is set to a time cycle as opposed to free verse.

#### **6. Creative Exercise**

- 6.1 The candidate will be expected to apply any *jāti* to any *aḍavu* as requested by the examiner. This task will be set as a sequence of consecutive *aḍavus* in varying *jātis* and / or speeds as opposed to just one *jāti* applied to one *aḍavu* in one speed.

## Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File

### 7. Safe Dance Practice

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD to learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

### 8. Theory

- 8.1 Nomenclature of *aḍavus*.
- 8.2 Knowledge of *sāhitya* for the items learnt – words and meaning.
- 8.3 Knowledge of the four types of *abhinaya*.
- 8.4 Knowledge of *Pātraprāṇa* with *śloka* as well as meaning.
- 8.5 *Viniyogas* of *asamyuta hastas* from *tripatāka* to *śukatuṇḍa - śloka* or Sanskrit names.
- 8.6 Notes on *nritta*, *nritya* and *nāṭya*.

### 9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student's own work and in their own handwriting wherever possible.)

- 9.1 A record of musical notations.
- 9.2 A record, with notations, of the prescribed *korvai*, the *kuraippu*, and the rhythmic structures within the invocation.
- 9.3 A record of the *aḍavus / nritta*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered.
- 9.4 Knowledge of and basic information on the nine classical Indian dance genres.
- 9.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

### The Grade 3 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of ten minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the *aḍavus* the prescribed *korvai* and *kuraippu* as well as the invocation. This should include as many different varieties of *aḍavus* for the Grade, with the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance to be as follows:

*aḍavus* – 3.5 minutes

*korvai*, *kuraippu* and *nritta* sections of the invocation – 4.0 minutes

*abhinaya* – 2.5 minutes..

All candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for compulsory material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.
- Individual response to:
  - the creative exercise task
  - demonstration of safe dance practice exercises
  - theory questions
  - questions generated from the file contents
  - tāla* tasks
  - singing tasks



## GRADES 4 AND 5 (Level 2)

Candidates demonstrate consolidated technical skills and an increased range of movements in sequences of increased length and complexity. They show a clear understanding of mechanics and purpose of the required vocabulary.

Candidates show the ability to sustain an appropriate sense of style throughout more complex sequences and an increased sensitivity to varying musical qualities. Technical facility and improved spatial awareness lead to an increased assurance of presentation.

## GRADE 4

### THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS

#### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and *Tāla*

- 1.1 Recitation of *śolkattu* for *aḍavus* in *trikāla* and appropriate *tāla* in ascending and descending speeds.
- 1.2 Recitation, with *tāla*, of the *tiśra Alāriṣṣu* and of the *Jatiswaram korvais*.

#### 2. Music

- 2.1 Ability to sing the dance items learnt with *tāla*. These may be sung by following written notation.

Although assessment of the singing is based on the candidate's adherence to *tāla* as opposed to pitch or melody, it will be required for the candidate to sing, not simply recite the notes / words to rhythm.

#### Technical Skills and Performance

#### 3. *Aḍavus* (in three speeds)

- 3.1 Miscellaneous *aḍavus* - a selection of four should be made, each demonstrating a different movement quality. Suggested *aḍavus* - *ḍola* or *vīsu*, *katti*, *eṭṭa* and complex *maṇḍi aḍavus*. These are only suggested *aḍavus*; teachers can use any other complex *aḍavus* not taught in previous Grades.

#### 4. *Nritta* and *Nriṭya*

- 4.1 A selection of *aḍavus* from the above section.
- 4.2 *Tiśra Alāriṣṣu*.
- 4.3 *Jatiswaram*.
- 4.4 *Śabdham*.

#### 5. Creative Exercise

- 5.1 The examiner will prescribe, in English, a simple narrative of the complexity of a *Śabdham* and the candidate will be expected to demonstrate this through movement and applying their knowledge of *hasta viniyogas* upto *alapadma*. The words for the narrative will be a description / translation in English and not *sāhitya* from a song.

#### Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File

#### 6. Safe Dance Practice

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

## 7. Theory

- 7.1 Nomenclature of *aḍavus*.
- 7.2 Knowledge of *sāhitya* for items learnt – words and meaning.
- 7.3 *Asamyuta hasta viniyogas* from *muṣṭi* to *alapadma* - *śloka* or Sanskrit names.
- 7.4 *Daśāvatāra hastas*.
- 7.5 An understanding of *padārtha*, *vākyārtha* and *sancāri*.

## 8. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student's own work and in their own handwriting wherever possible.)

- 8.1 Repertoire list.
- 8.2 A record of musical notations.
- 8.3 A record, with notations, of the *Alāriṣṭu śolkaṭṭu* and *Jatiswaram korvais*.
- 8.4 A record of the *aḍavus / nritta*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt and including details on any *sancāri*.
- 8.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

### The Grade 4 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of twelve minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the *aḍavus*, *Alāriṣṭu*, *Jatiswaram* and *Śabdham*. This should be put together showing first the *aḍavus* of this Grade, and then the three items fully or in parts with the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance to be as follows:

*aḍavus* – 1 minute  
*Alāriṣṭu* – 3 minutes  
*Jatiswaram* – 4 minutes  
*Śabdham* - 4 minutes.

All candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of three candidates are normally examined simultaneously. All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of the whole item of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.
- Individual response to:
  - the creative exercise task
  - demonstration of safe dance practice exercises
  - theory questions
  - questions generated from the file contents
  - tāla* tasks
  - singing tasks

Candidates are encouraged to bring a small supply of still drinking water if needed following the prepared performance as well as a paper and pen to make brief notes for their creative exercise.

## GRADE 5

**THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS**

### **Ancillary Skills**

#### **1. Rhythm and *Tāla***

1.1 Recitation, with *tāla*, of the *Tillāna korvais* and any other rhythmic structures learnt within the items.

#### **2. Music**

2.1 Ability to sing the dance items learnt with *tāla*. These may be sung by following written notation.

Although assessment of the singing is based on the candidate's adherence to *tāla* as opposed to pitch or melody, it will be required for the candidate to sing, not simply recite the notes / words to rhythm.

### **Technical Skills and Performance**

#### **3. *Nritta* and *Nritya***

3.1 *Kīrtanam*.

3.2 *Tillāna*.

3.3 *Padam* (involving a *sancāri* over a minimum of 4 repeats of the song line).

#### **4. Creative Exercise**

4.1 Two *renḍu kalai āvartanas* of *śolkaṭṭu* will be given by the examiner and the candidate will be expected to set *aḍavus* to the sequence. The *śolkaṭṭu* will be a recitation of simple beats as opposed to words typically used in a *jati / tīrmāna*.

### **Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File**

#### **5. Safe Dance Practice**

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD to learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

#### **6. Theory**

6.1 Knowledge of *sāhitya* for items learnt – words and meaning.

6.2 Introduction to *nāyika bhedas*, including *aṣṭanāyika* and a description of each one.

6.3 Introduction to *bhāva* and *rasa*.

6.4 *Asamyuta hasta viniyogas catura to triśūla - śloka* or Sanskrit names.

#### **7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student's own work and can be in their own handwriting or typed.)**

7.1 Repertoire list.

7.2 A record of musical notations.

7.3 A record, with notations, of the *Tillāna korvais* and any other *korvais* in the items learnt.

7.4 Information on different *bāṅis* of Bharatanatyam.

7.5 A record of the *nritta*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt and including details on any *sancāri*.

7.6 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

**The Grade 5 examination consists of:**

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of fifteen minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform a *Kīrtanam*, a *Tillāna* and a *Padam* (involving a *sancāri* as described above). This can be put together using the three items fully or in parts with the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance to be as follows:

*Kīrtanam* – 5 minutes

*Tillāna* – 5 minutes

*Padam* – 5 minutes.

All candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of three candidates are normally examined simultaneously. All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of the whole item of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.
- Individual response to:  
the creative exercise task  
demonstration of safe dance practice exercises  
theory questions  
questions generated from the file contents  
*tāla* tasks  
singing tasks

Candidates are encouraged to bring a small supply of still drinking water if needed following the prepared performance as well as a paper and pen to make brief notes for their creative exercise.

**GRADE 6 (LEVEL 3)**

Candidates demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of a particular style through a wide range of movements performed with technical strength. Along with confidence, candidates convey self-awareness, resulting in a sensitive personal interpretation of musical mood.

Candidates demonstrate a mature awareness of audience as well as subtleties of performance combined with expression and fluidity of movement involving dynamics and use of space.

**GRADE 6**

**THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS**

**Ancillary Skills**

**1. Rhythm and *Tāla***

1.1 Recitation, with *tāla*, of all rhythmic structures of the *Varnam*.

## 2. Music

2.1 Ability to sing the dance items learnt with *tāla*. These may be sung by following written notation.

Although assessment of the singing is based on the candidate's adherence to *tāla* as opposed to pitch or melody, it will be required for the candidate to sing, not simply recite the notes / words to rhythm.

### Technical Skills and Performance

## 3. *Nritta* and *Nritya*

3.1 *Varnam*.

3.2 A minimum of one item from the following selection – *Jāvali* / *Aṣṭapadi* / *Bhajan* / *Devarnāma*.

The candidate is required to present at least one item out of 3.1 and 3.2 in the *nāyaka* / *nāyika* mode.

## 4. Creative Exercise

4.1 The examiner will give the candidate a line of a familiar song along with its meaning. This will be taken from repertoire of either this or previous Grades. The candidate will be asked to create movement and expression to this applying *padārtha*, *vākyārtha* and elements of *sancāri*. The actual *sāhitya* will be used.

### Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File

## 5. Safe Dance Practice

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD to learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

## 6. Theory

6.1 Knowledge of *sāhitya* for items learnt – words and meaning.

6.2 *Samyuta hasta viniyogas* - *śloka* or Sanskrit names.

6.3 *Aṣṭadikpālaka hastas*.

6.4 Understanding of a *mārgam*.

## 7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student's own work and can be in their own handwriting or typed.)

7.1 Repertoire list.

7.2 A record of musical notations.

7.3 A record, with notations, of the rhythmic structures in the *Varnam*.

7.4 A record of the *aḍavus* / *nritta*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya* / *nritya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt and including details on any *sancāri*.

7.5 A record of at least two Bharatanatyam or other classical Indian dance performances seen, with notes on artists, repertoire and comment on performance discussing *angaśuddha* and characteristics of the *mārgam*.

7.6 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

### The Grade 6 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of twenty minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Grade 6 syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nritya*, with a compulsory

inclusion of at least part of the first half and part of the second half of the *varnam*. It is recommended that the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance is as follows:  
Varnam – 13.5 minutes  
one out of *Jāvali* / *Aṣṭapadi* / *Bhajan* / *Devarnāma* – 6.5 minutes.

All candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of three candidates are normally examined simultaneously. All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of the whole item of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.
- Individual response to:  
the creative exercise task  
demonstration of safe dance practice exercises  
theory questions  
questions generated from the file contents  
*tāla* tasks  
singing tasks

Candidates are encouraged to bring a small supply of still drinking water if needed following the prepared performance as well as a paper and pen to make brief notes for their creative exercise.

## ASSESSMENT - BHARATANATYAM GRADES 1 – 6

### MARK SCHEME

#### GRADES 1, 2 AND 3

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time keeping of <i>tāla</i> .	10
Music - singing while keeping <i>tāla</i> .	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Aḍavus</i> - assessing the separate performance of <i>aḍavu</i> in the prepared performance: stance, integrity of movement, rhythm, tempo, coordination and neatness of execution.	20
<i>Korvai / Nritta</i> composition	15
<i>Abhinaya</i> - Expression throughout the presentation.	10
Creative Exercise	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>SAFE DANCE PRACTICE FOR BHARATANATYAM, THEORY, AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam	5
Theory – response to questions.	15
File – adequacy and presentation and response to questions generated from the file.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**GRADE 4**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time keeping of <i>tāla</i> -	10
Singing of the dance repertoire learnt with <i>tāla</i> .	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Aḍavus</i> - assessing the separate performance of <i>aḍavu</i> in the prepared performance: stance, integrity of movement, rhythm, tempo, coordination and neatness of execution	5
<i>Alāriḍḍu</i>	10
<i>Jatiswaram</i>	15
<i>Śabdham</i>	15
Creative Exercise	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>SAFE DANCE PRACTICE FOR BHARATANATYAM, THEORY, AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam	5
Theory – response to questions	15
File - adequacy and presentation and response to questions generated from the file	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>



**GRADE 5**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time keeping of <i>tāla</i> for all rhythmic components learnt	20
Singing of the dance repertoire with <i>tāla</i>	
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Kīrtanam</i>	15
<i>Tillāna</i>	15
<i>Padam</i> (involving a substantial <i>sancāri</i> )	15
Creative Exercise	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>SAFE DANCE PRACTICE FOR BHARATANATYAM, THEORY, AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam	5
Theory – response to questions	15
File - adequacy and presentation and response to questions generated from the file.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**GRADE 6**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time keeping of <i>tāla</i> for all rhythmic components learnt	20
Singing of the dance repertoire with <i>tāla</i>	
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Varnam</i>	30
<i>Jāvali/Aṣṭapadi/Bhajan/Devarnāma</i>	15
Creative Exercise	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>SAFE DANCE PRACTICE FOR BHARATANATYAM, THEORY, AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam	5
Theory – response to questions	15
File - adequacy and presentation and response to questions generated from the file.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Graded Examinations are assessed externally by visiting examiners recruited and trained by the ISTD.

The examinations are divided into Sections and each Section is composed of several components which are separately assessed and aggregated to give the Section total. The titles of these components and the marks attainable for the Bharatanatyam Graded Examinations are detailed further below.

Candidates must gain at least 25% of the marks attainable in each Section in order to pass the examination overall. In cases where 25% of the marks attainable does not come to a round figure, eg 12 1/2, the pass mark for the Section is lowered to the nearest round figure, in this example, 12.

The Section totals are aggregated and the overall mark is given out of 100. If all Sections are passed, then the overall result is indicated as follows:

GRADE	MARKS
Distinction	80-100 marks
Merit	60-79 marks
Pass	40-59 marks
Not Attained	0-39 marks

However, if the candidate is unsuccessful in one or more Sections, as explained above, the total mark given out of 100 will not correspond to the result indicators in the chart. In this circumstance, whatever the overall numerical mark may be, the result given will be '**Not Attained**'.

## CLASSIFICATION OF RESULTS

The principle of best fit is applied in deciding the appropriate classification for each candidate. It is not to be expected that a candidate in a particular category will necessarily demonstrate all of the characteristics listed in that category.

A candidate who achieves a '**Distinction**' classification (80-100 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- flair, vitality and skill
- fully appropriate style
- incisively-focussed dancing
- precision in the technique of the genre
- consistent, highly developed musicality
- confident and accurate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set

A candidate who achieves a '**Merit**' classification (60-79 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- skill and proficiency
- largely appropriate style
- focussed dancing
- competence in the technique of the genre
- evidence of developing musicality
- relevant and appropriate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set

A candidate who achieves a '**Pass**' classification (40-59 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- competence
- basic ability to carry out the required movements
- periodic moments of convincing focus
- basic competence in most aspects of the technique of the genre
- basic musicality
- broadly relevant and appropriate response to questions asked and/or tasks set, but some prompting may be required

A candidate who achieves an insufficient level of achievement '**Not Attained**' classification (00-39 marks) is one who has not yet demonstrated attributes required to gain at least a 'Pass' classification.

## **ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE**

Candidates are assessed on their ability to show:

- Technical accuracy with correct placement to the best of their physical facility
- Appropriate use of limbs showing an understanding of the purpose or significance of each movement or sequence of movements
- A sense of line and well-coordinated movements
- An assured performance showing the different qualities of movement required by each section of the examination structure
- Musicality and rhythmic awareness

# VOCATIONAL GRADED EXAMINATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

### RATIONALE

The Vocational Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam, from Intermediate Foundation through to Advanced 2, develop the candidate's expertise in such a way as to provide the basis for either professional employment as a dancer or further training as a dance teacher.

Throughout the study of the syllabus, candidates are following a vocational path, requiring a high level of commitment and with an increasing emphasis on safe dance practice. Successful candidates at this level should show virtuosity in performance, a high standard of technique and a sound knowledge and understanding of the Bharatanatyam genre, including an understanding of reference and context. Candidates undertaking a study of the Bharatanatyam Vocational Graded syllabus should also typically display a sense of self-awareness and be self-motivated in terms of their personal development. As distinct from the general Graded examinations, a greater degree of personal interpretation is encouraged and the candidate is expected to show the potential to communicate effectively with an audience.

Candidates will need to show the qualities of professionalism, commitment and focus, with the ability to manage a greater workload than that required for the general Graded examinations. This would typically result in a successful candidate spending significant additional time each week in lessons, in practising and in studying independently.

The Vocational Graded Examinations are regulated qualifications on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). Intermediate Foundation is located at Level 2, Intermediate is located at Level 3, and Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 are located at Level 4.

### AIM

The aim of the ISTD Vocational Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam 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 Bharatanatyam education to that of professional competence and readiness.

### OBJECTIVES

The syllabus objectives of the Bharatanatyam Vocational Graded Examinations are :

- To impart the practical skills in Bharatanatyam creation and performance, as they are manifest today, complemented by appropriate contextual knowledge and understanding, through a programme of education and assessment.
- To inculcate a holistic perception of Bharatanatyam in the context of the world of dance.
- To lay a foundation of personal resources to survive and succeed in the professional dance world.

### LEARNING AND PROGRESSION

All Bharatanatyam Graded Examinations are concerned with progressive mastery in defined stages. They also develop and demonstrate competence and artistry in, and communication through, the Bharatanatyam technique. The Vocational Graded Examinations are concerned specifically with the mastery of technique and

underpinning understanding, to a level sufficient to prepare candidates for further vocational training and match current expectations in the employment sector.

## ENTRY CONDITIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

### AGE LIMITS

Lower age limits are set in the interests of the health and safety of the candidate within the demands of the syllabus.

Intermediate Foundation	minimum age 11
Intermediate	minimum age 12
Advanced 1	minimum age 14
Advanced 2	minimum age 15

### PRIOR LEARNING

Intermediate Foundation is an optional examination, otherwise these examinations must be taken in the correct order. Exemption from the Intermediate and Advanced 1 examinations may be obtained if the candidate is a student who already holds an equivalent genre Intermediate or Advanced 1 certificate of an Ofqual approved dance awarding body. Application for exemption must be made in writing to the UK Examinations department.

### GENDER DISTINCTIONS

The examination does not require the dancer to make a gender specific presentation. Males and females can be presented together.

### TIME ALLOWANCES / NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually. The candidate shows a prepared dance performance, following which she/he answers questions about the prepared performance, about other aspects of the syllabus, and may be asked to dance additional items to demonstrate understanding and skill. The examination of candidates takes the following time:

EXAMINATION	1 CANDIDATE	2 CANDIDATES	3 CANDIDATES
Intermediate Foundation	45 minutes	65 minutes	N/A
Intermediate	55 minutes	80 minutes	N/A
Advanced 1	65 minutes	95 minutes	N/A
Advanced 2	80 minutes	115 minutes	N/A

## MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

Teachers entering candidates must make their own arrangements for provision of music.

## DRESS REQUIREMENTS

There are no marks for grooming for the Vocational Graded Examinations; it is considered an essential aspect of training, giving poise and confidence. The following are expected:

- Candidates should be suitably dressed in clothes that enable the examiner to see the dance and allow the candidate to perform without distraction.
- Females should wear a dance practice *sāri* or suitably tailored *salwār kamīz*.
- Males should wear a *dhoti* or a suitably tailored *kurtā pyjāma*.
- All candidates should have their waist firmly bound.
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a single plait or bun. A long plait should be secured at the back to prevent its movement distracting from the dance.
- No dance costume or jewellery should be worn.
- Ankle bells should be worn.

## SYLLABUS CONTENT

This syllabus outline must be applied in conjunction with the Bharatanatyam Vocational Examination Specifications and the General Statement on Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and Level Descriptors, available on the ISTD [website](#).

### INTERMEDIATE FOUNDATION

#### THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS

Candidates must perform all the vocational examinations with ankle bells; marks will be deducted if not worn. Vocational candidates must all bring a *taṭṭukazhi* to the examination for the tasks of these grades and marks will be lost if not done so.

#### Ancillary Skills

##### 1. Rhythm and *Tāla*

- 1.1 Introduction to the use of *taṭṭukazhi* to conduct *aḍavus* and practise in *pancajāti*.
- 1.2 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *taṭṭukazhi*, of the *Jatiswaram korvais* and *Alārippu aḍavus*.
- 1.3 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *taṭṭukazhi*, of any rhythmic patterns pertaining to the *Śabdham* and *Kīrtanam*.

##### 2. Music

- 2.1 Ability to sing the items learnt to *tāla* and demonstrating musicality. This may be demonstrated by following written *swaras / sāhitya*.
- 2.2 Knowledge of compositional structure ie: *pallavi*, *anupallavi* and of *rāgas* and *tālas* pertaining to the set dance pieces in this Grade.

## Technical Skills and Performance

### 3. **Nritta and Nritya**

- 3.1 *Miśra Alāriṣṣu.*
- 3.2 *Jatiswaram.*
- 3.3 *Śabdam.*
- 3.4 *Kīrtanam.*

### 4. **Creative Exercise**

- 4.1 Understanding composition of a *korvai* through tasks such as completing the missing part of a *korvai*, or creating the end of a *korvai* set to *renḍu kalai ādi* or *rūpaka tāla*, and then dancing it. The *śolkaṭṭu* will be a recitation of simple beats with apparent rhythms as opposed to words typically used in a *jati / tīrmāna*.

## Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File

### 5. **Safe Dance Practice**

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD to learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

### 6. **Theory**

- 6.1 *Asamyuta hasta viniyoga ślokas - śloka* or Sanskrit names.
- 6.2 Literal meaning of the *sāhitya* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the dance items.
- 6.3 Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Bharatanatyam Grades 1-4.

### 7. **File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student’s own work and can be in their own handwriting or typed.)**

- 7.1 Repertoire list.
- 7.2 A record of musical notations.
- 7.3 A record, with notation, of the rhythmic structures in the items learnt.
- 7.4 A record of the *aḍavus / nritta*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt and including details on any *sancāri*.
- 7.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

## The Intermediate Foundation examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of twenty-five minutes’ duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Intermediate Foundation syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nritya*. The prepared performance can be put together using the items of this syllabus fully or in parts and it is recommended that the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance is as follows:

*Miśra Alāriṣṣu* – 3 minutes

*Jatiswaram* – 7 minutes

*Śabdam* – 8 minutes

*Kīrtanam* – 7 minutes.

Both candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of two candidates are normally examined simultaneously although a solo candidate can be presented where necessary. All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece. The examiner can



request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of the whole item of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.
- Individual response to:  
the creative exercise task  
demonstration of safe dance practice exercises  
theory questions  
questions generated from the file contents  
*tāla* and *taṭṭukazhi* tasks  
singing tasks

Candidates are encouraged to bring a small supply of still drinking water if needed following the prepared performance as well as a paper and pen to make brief notes for their creative exercise.

## INTERMEDIATE

### **THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS**

Candidates must perform all the vocational examinations with ankle bells; marks will be deducted if not worn. Vocational candidates must all bring a *taṭṭukazhi* to the examination for the tasks of these grades and marks will be lost if not done so.

#### **Ancillary Skills**

##### **1. Rhythm and *Tāla***

1.1 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *taṭṭukazhi* of the prescribed *korvai* and *Tillāna korvais*.

##### **2. Music**

2.1 Ability to sing the items learnt to *tāla* and demonstrating musicality. This may be demonstrated by following written *swaras / sāhitya*.

2.2 Knowledge of compositional structure ie: *pallavi*, *anupallavi* and of *rāgas* and *tālas* pertaining to the set dance pieces in this Grade.

#### **Technical Skills and Performance**

##### **3. *Nritta* and *Nritya***

3.1 A *korvai* in a less commonly used *tāla*, such as *aṭa* and *jhampa*.

3.2 *Tillāna*.

3.3 *Padam*.

3.4 One item from the following selection – *Bhajan / Devarnāma / Tevāram* or any other devotional piece.

#### 4. Creative Exercise

- 4.1 Be able to demonstrate a varied interpretation of a part from the expressional material learnt in this Grade.

#### Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File

#### 5. Safe Dance Practice

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD to learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

#### 6. Theory

- 6.1 *Samyuta hasta viniyoga ślokas - śloka* or Sanskrit names.  
6.2 Understanding of *bhāva* and *rasa*, including *navarasas*.  
6.3 *Nāyika* and *nāyaka bhedas*, also in relation to the items learnt, along with *aṣṭanāyika* and a description of each one.  
6.4 Knowledge of the literal meaning of the *sāhitya* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the dance items.  
6.5 Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Bharatanatyam Grades 1-4 and Intermediate Foundation although taking the Intermediate Foundation examination is not a pre-requisite.

#### 7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student’s own work and can be in their own handwriting or typed.)

- 7.1 Repertoire list.  
7.2 A record of musical notations.  
7.3 A record, with notation, of the prescribed *korvai* and *Tillāna korvais*.  
7.4 A record of the *aḍavus / nritta*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt and including details on any *sancāri*.  
7.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

#### The Intermediate examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of 30 minutes’ duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Intermediate syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nritya*. The prepared performance can be put together using the items of this syllabus fully or in parts and it is recommended that the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance is as follows:  
*korvai* – 2 minutes  
*Tillāna* – 10 minutes  
two *abhinaya* pieces – 18 minutes

Both candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of two candidates are normally examined simultaneously although a solo candidate can be presented where necessary. All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of the whole item of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.
- Individual response to:

the creative exercise task  
demonstration of safe dance practice exercises  
theory questions  
questions generated from the file contents  
*tāla* and *taṭṭukazhi* tasks  
singing tasks

Candidates are encouraged to bring a small supply of still drinking water if needed following the prepared performance as well as a paper and pen to make brief notes for their creative exercise.

## **ADVANCED 1**

### **THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS**

Candidates wishing to enter Advanced 1 must have passed Intermediate.

Candidates must perform all the vocational examinations with ankle bells; marks will be deducted if not worn.

Vocational candidates must all bring a *taṭṭukazhi* to the examination for the tasks of these grades and marks will be lost if not done so.

#### **Ancillary Skills**

##### **1. Rhythm and Tāla**

1.1 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *taṭṭukazhi* of rhythmic structures in all items learnt as well as the *Varnam jatis / tīrmānas* and *korvais* in *Varnam swaras*.

##### **2. Music**

2.1 Ability to sing the items learnt to *tāla* and demonstrating musicality. This may be demonstrated by following written *swaras / sāhitya*. It is not expected for the candidate to sing the *śloka*, but knowledge of the *sāhitya* and meaning may be tested under the theory section

2.2 Knowledge of compositional structure ie: *pallavi*, *anupallavi* and of *rāgas* and *tālas* pertaining to the set dance pieces in this Grade.

#### **Technical Skills and Performance**

##### **3. Nritta and Nritya**

3.1 A minimum of one item from the following selection – *Mallāri / Puṣpānjali / Kavittuvam / Toḍayam* or similar invocation piece.

3.2 *Śloka*.

3.3 *Varnam* (Each line of the song should fit into one *āvartana* of *ādi tāla* or four *āvartanas* of *rūpaka tāla*).

##### **4. Creative Exercise**

4.1 Creating and performing a *nritta* sequence incorporating given *aḍavus* in suggested rhythmic structures set to two *reṇḍu kalai āvartanas* of *ādi tāla*. For this, *śolkattu* from a *jati / tīrmāna* will be given by the examiner and the *aḍavus* to be used will be indicated.

4.2 Creating *sancāri bhāva* as stipulated by the examiner. This will be to a song that is unknown to the candidate. The examiner will prescribe the content of the *sancāri bhāva*.

#### **Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File**

##### **5. Safe Dance Practice**

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD to learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

## 6. Theory

- 6.1 *Gati Bhedas* and *Bāndhava Hastas*.
- 6.2 Literal meaning and knowledge of the *sāhitya* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the items learnt.
- 6.3 Understanding of a *mārgam*.
- 6.4 In-depth understanding of the four types of *abhinaya*.
- 6.5 Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Bharatanatyam Grades 1-4, Intermediate Foundation and Intermediate.

## 7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student’s own work and can be in their own handwriting or typed.)

- 7.1 Repertoire list.
- 7.2 A record of musical notations.
- 7.3 A record, with notation, of *Varnam jatis / tirmānas* and *korvais* in *Varnam swaras*.
- 7.4 A record of the *aḍavus / nritta*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nriya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt and including details on any *sancāri*.
- 7.5 Information on different *bāṇis* of Bharatanatyam.
- 7.6 Researched material on requirements for dance costumes and make-up for traditional Bharatanatyam performance.
- 7.7 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

### The Advanced 1 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of of 35 minutes’ duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Advanced 1 syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nriya* with a compulsory inclusion of at least part of the first half and part of the second half of the *varnam*. The prepared performance can be put together using the items of this syllabus fully or in parts and it is recommended that the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance is as follows:  
One out of *Mallāri / Puṣpānjali / Kavittuvam / Toḍayam* – 9 minutes  
*Śloka* – 4 minutes  
Varnam – 22 minutes.

Both candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of two candidates are normally examined simultaneously although a solo candidate can be presented where necessary. All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of the whole item of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.
- Individual response to:  
the creative exercise task  
demonstration of safe dance practice exercises  
theory questions  
questions generated from the file contents  
*tāla* and *taṭṭukazhi* tasks  
singing tasks

Candidates are encouraged to bring a small supply of still drinking water if needed following the prepared performance as well as a paper and pen to make brief notes for their creative exercise.

## ADVANCED 2

### THIS OUTLINE SYLLABUS IS TO BE TAUGHT FOLLOWING A STUDY OF THE SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS

Candidates wishing to enter Advanced 2 must have passed Advanced 1.

Candidates must perform all the vocational examinations with ankle bells; marks will be deducted if not worn. Vocational candidates must all bring a *tattukazhi* to the examination for the tasks of these grades and marks will be lost if not done so.

#### Ancillary Skills

##### 1. Rhythm and *Tāla*

1.1 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *tattukazhi* of rhythmic structures in all items learnt as well as the *Varnam jatis / tirmānas* and korvais in *Varnam swaras*.

##### 2. Music

2.1 Ability to sing the items learnt to *tāla* and demonstrating musicality. This may be demonstrated by following written *swaras / sāhitya*.

2.2 Knowledge of compositional structure ie: *pallavi, anupallavi* and of *rāgas* and *tālas* pertaining to the set dance pieces in this Grade.

#### Technical Skills and Performance

##### 3. *Nritta* and *Nritya*

3.1 *Jāvali / Aṣṭapadi*

3.2 *Varnam* - a more complex one than previously done in Advanced 1, ie slower paced such as a Tanjore Quartet one, displaying maturity in *sancāri*. Instead of a *Varnam*, a similarly structured slow-paced item incorporating *jatis / tirmānas* and *swaras* as well as equally elaborate *abhinaya* sections can be chosen. (Candidates may choose to perform a *Swarajati, Pancaratna, Nrityopahāra, an aṭa tāla tānavarnam*, or even a *Kīrtanam* such as *Bhāvayāmi Raghurāmam*, but these must display the required complexity and maturity and must be slow paced).

##### 4. Creative Exercise

At this level, the examiner will expect to see evidence of *manodharma* which is the skill of improvisation.

4.1 Creating a narrative based on a given theme (applying *padārtha, vākyārtha* and *sancāri*) where the examiner will choose a song unfamiliar to the candidate.

4.2 Creating and performing a *jati / tirmāna* facilitated by the examiner. In this, the examiner will recite the *jati / tirmāna* and the candidate will be required to set movement to it and perform it. The examiner will not make suggestion to what *aḍavus* should be used.

## Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam, Theory and File

### 5. Safe Dance Practice

Please purchase from the ISTD Shop the Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam DVD to learn the exercises that will be examined in this section of the syllabus.

### 6. Theory

6.1 *Navagraha Hastas*.

6.2 Knowledge of the literal meaning of the *sāhitya* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the items learnt.

6.3 Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Bharatanatyam Grades 1-4, Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced 1. Candidates wishing to enter Advanced 2 must have passed Advanced 1.

### 7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder – all contents of the file must be the student's own work and can be in their own handwriting or typed.)

7.1 Repertoire list.

7.2 A record of musical notations.

7.3 A record, with notation, of the *Varnam's* or the alternative item's *jatis / tirmānas* and *korvais* of the *Varnam swaras*.

7.4 A record of the *aḍavus / nritta*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt and including details on any *sancāri*.

7.5 History of Bharatanatyam through the ages, and to the present day.

7.6 A study of the requirements for lighting, sound and set for traditional Bharatanatyam presentation.

7.7 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. Please refer to the Specifications for details of the requirements.

### The Advanced 2 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of 45 minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Advanced 2 syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nritya* with a compulsory inclusion of at least part of the first half and part of the second half of the *varnam*. The prepared performance can be put together using the items of this syllabus fully or in parts and it is recommended that the approximate length of the different components of the prepared performance is as follows:  
*abhinaya* item – 13 minutes  
*Varnam* – 32 minutes.

In addition to these 45 minutes and separately the examiner will request to see a dance piece from previous Grades, choosing this from the repertoire list to be provided by the candidate.

Both candidates in the group perform same pieces simultaneously. A maximum of two candidates are normally examined simultaneously although a solo candidate can be presented where necessary. All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of the whole item of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner, but this cannot be instead of the material required for inclusion in the prepared performance. Marks will be lost for material that is not included in the prepared performance and will not be requested separately.

- Individual response to:
  - the creative exercise task
  - demonstration of safe dance practice exercises
  - theory questions
  - questions generated from the file contents
  - tāla* and *taṭṭukazhi* tasks
  - singing tasks

Candidates are encouraged to bring a small supply of still drinking water if needed following the prepared performance as well as a paper and pen to make brief notes for their creative exercise.

## ASSESSMENT – BHARATANATYAM VOCATIONAL GRADE EXAMINATIONS

### MARK SCHEME

#### INTERMEDIATE FOUNDATION

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time-keeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , demonstrating use of <i>taṭṭukazhi</i>	20
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Miśra Alārippu &amp; Jatiswaram</i>	18
<i>Śabdam.</i>	15
<i>Kīrtanam</i>	12
Creative exercise.	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>SAFE DANCE PRACTICE FOR BHARATANATYAM, THEORY AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam	5
Theory – response to questions	15
File – adequacy and presentation and response to questions generated from the file.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>



## INTERMEDIATE

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and timekeeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , demonstrating use of <i>tatṭukazhi</i>	20
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Korvai</i> in a less common <i>tāla</i>	5
<i>Tillāna</i>	15
<i>Abhinaya</i> <i>Padam</i> <i>Bhajan/Devarnāma/Tevāram</i> or any other devotional piece	25
Creative exercise	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>SAFE DANCE PRACTICE FOR BHARATANATYAM, THEORY AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam	5
Theory – response to questions	15
File – adequacy and presentation and response to questions generated from the file.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**ADVANCED 1**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and timekeeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , demonstrating use of <i>taṭṭukazhi</i>	20
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Mallāri/Puṣpānjali/Kavittuvam/Toḍayam</i>	10
<i>Varnam</i>	25
<i>Śloka</i>	5
Creative exercise	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>SAFE DANCE PRACTICE FOR BHARATANATYAM, THEORY AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam	5
Theory – response to questions	15
File – adequacy and presentation and response to questions generated from the file.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**ADVANCED 2**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and timekeeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , demonstrating use of <i>taṭṭukazhi</i>	20
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Varnam</i>	25
Expressional item such as <i>Jāvali/Aṣṭapadi</i>	10
Other items from the <i>mārgam</i>	5
Creative exercise	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>SAFE DANCE PRACTICE FOR BHARATANATYAM, THEORY AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Safe Dance Practice for Bharatanatyam	5
Theory – response to questions	15
File - adequacy and presentation and response to questions generated from the file.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Vocational Graded Examinations are assessed externally by visiting examiners recruited and trained by the ISTD. Assessment is carried out by means of a practical demonstration of the knowledge, understanding and skills required.

The examination is divided into Sections and each Section is composed of several components, which are separately assessed and aggregated to give the total out of 100.

Candidates will, however, be unsuccessful if

1. 20% of the marks attainable or below are given for any one component
2. 40% of the marks attainable or below are given for any three components

This reflects the need to ensure competence across a wide range of components.

Results are indicated using the following attainment bands:

GRADE	MARKS
Distinction	80-100 marks
Merit	65-79 marks
Pass	50-64 marks
Not Attained	0-49 marks

Full attainment descriptors are given further below.

## CLASSIFICATION OF RESULTS

The principle of best fit is applied in deciding the appropriate classification for each candidate. It is not to be expected that a candidate in a particular category will necessarily demonstrate all of the characteristics listed in that category.

A candidate who achieves a '**Distinction**' classification (80-100 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- Flair, vitality and skill
- Fully appropriate style
- Incisively-focussed dancing
- Precision in the technique of the genre
- Consistent, highly developed musicality
- Confident and accurate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set

A candidate who achieves a '**Merit**' classification (65-79 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- Skill and proficiency
- Largely appropriate style
- Focussed dancing
- Competence in the technique of the genre
- Evidence of developing musicality
- Relevant and appropriate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set

A candidate who achieves a 'Pass' classification (50-64 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- Competence
- Basic ability to carry out the required movements
- Periodic moments of convincing focus
- Basic competence in most aspects of the technique of the genre
- Basic musicality
- Broadly relevant and appropriate response to questions asked and/or tasks set, but some prompting may be required

A candidate who achieves a 'Not attained' classification (00-49 marks) is one who has not yet demonstrated the attributes required to gain at least a 'Pass' classification

## REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Please see the [ISTD Equality and Diversity Policy](#) on the ISTD website for full information.

## PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The **Diploma in Dance Education (DDE)** qualification (revised 2018) is offered by Approved Dance Centres (ADCs) and is currently available throughout the European Union, but will be available progressively worldwide in a rolling programme. More information can be found in the [DDE Syllabus Outline](#).

## RESULTS AND CERTIFICATION

All ISTD examinations are single performance at one moment in time, with a detailed marking system awarded according to the assessment criteria and attainment descriptors given for each examination.

Under normal circumstances the report sheets for UK examinations will be issued to the teacher within 21 working days of the examination. Any errors found may therefore extend these timings, although the department will make every effort to process these as rapidly as possible.

All results are entered by Sections, and checked for achieving the minimum pass levels, per Section and in total, and correct levels of attainment against the total mark achieved.

Results are then cleared for certificate issue, which is undertaken by the Customer Services and Quality Assurance department, and should be within 6 to 8 weeks of the examination. Copies of all report sheets and results are held on archive for reference as necessary.

## EXAMINATION RE-TAKES

Candidates who are not successful may not re-take the examination until 3 months after the original examination.

## QUALIFICATION REGULATION

ISTD Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations, the Diploma in Dance Instruction, Diploma in Dance Education and Diploma in Dance Pedagogy are regulated by Ofqual in England; Qualifications Wales in Wales; and the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) in Northern Ireland. The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) provides a single, simple system for cataloguing all regulated qualifications, indicating qualifications by their level (degree of difficulty) and size (amount or breadth of learning). Size is indicated by a credit value, corresponding to a term used in the title. An Award is worth 1-12 credits, a Certificate is worth 13-36 credits, and a Diploma is worth 37 or more credits. One credit corresponds to 10 hours of learning for the typical learner, which is divided into Guided Learning hours (GLH), which is 46 broadly contact time with the teacher, and personal study time, which together make Total Qualification Time (TQT). The ISTD's qualifications on the Regulated Qualifications Framework are as follows:

Qualification Title	Qualification Number	Guided Learning Hours	Total Qualification Time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 1 (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0755/0	60	70	7
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 2 (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0753/7	60	70	7
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 3 (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0754/9	60	70	7
ISTD Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 4 (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0756/2	75	95	10
ISTD Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 5 (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0757/4	75	95	10
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 6 (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0758/6	90	130	13
ISTD Level 2 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate Foundation (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0764/1	150	275	28
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0728/8	150	275	28
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1 (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0760/4	150	325	33
ISTD Level 4 Diploma in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 2 (Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam)	501/0761/6	150	375	37
ISTD Level 4 Diploma in Dance Education (Classical Indian Dance)	603/3094/6	560	1195	120
ISTD Level 6 Diploma in Dance Pedagogy (Classical Indian Dance)	603/0996/9	360	1200	120