

South Asian Dance Faculty

Bharatanātyam Syllabus Outline

Contents

General Graded Examinations

<i>Introduction</i>	2
<i>Entry Conditions and General Information</i>	3
<i>National Qualifications Framework and Level Descriptors</i>	4
<i>Method of Assessment</i>	5
<i>Bharatanātyam Syllabus Content</i>	6
<i>Primary</i>	7
<i>Grade 1</i>	9
<i>Grade 2</i>	12
<i>Grade 3</i>	15
<i>Grade 4</i>	17
<i>Grade 5</i>	19
<i>Grade 6</i>	21
<i>Attainment Descriptors</i>	23

Vocational Graded Examinations

<i>Introduction</i>	24
<i>Entry Conditions and General Information</i>	25
<i>National Qualifications Framework and Level Descriptors</i>	26
<i>Method of Assessment</i>	27
<i>Intermediate Foundation</i>	28
<i>Intermediate</i>	30
<i>Advanced 1</i>	32
<i>Advanced 2</i>	34
<i>Attainment Descriptors</i>	36

Special Adjustments	37
----------------------------	----

Results and Certification	38
----------------------------------	----

Accreditation Numbers	38
------------------------------	----

General Graded Examinations

Introduction

Rationale

Bharatanātyam 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, to develop intellectual sensibilities and to develop an understanding of the shaping of movement into artistic forms of expression.

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

Aims

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 is a Primary examination followed by six further Grade examinations, numbered from 1 to 6, in order to indicate the increasing order of difficulty (6 represents the highest level of attainment).

Objectives

The syllabus objectives for Bharatanātyam Grades are:

- To impart practical skills in Bharatanātyam 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 Bharatanātyam 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 Bharatanātyam in the context of a wider dance world

Learning Outcomes and Progression

Candidates develop the skill and understanding of Bharatanātyam, 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 Bharatanātyam Graded Examination allows candidates to progress to the next higher grade in the Bharatanātyam genre. Also, a range of transfers of skill 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 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 Bharatanātyam 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 Bharatanātyam 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.

Prior Learning

The Graded Examinations in Bharatanātyam 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. Before a candidate enrolls in a class leading to a particular Graded Examination, a teacher is under a duty to assess the aptitude of the candidate, particularly with regard to safe dance practice.

Duration of Examinations

Candidates are normally examined in groups of three. For the Primary examination the teacher teaches the three candidates, demonstrating their experience of the syllabus material, followed by presenting them in a 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 each candidate takes the following time, though there may be a period of waiting between the first part of the examination and its completion.

Primary	10 minutes
Grade 1	12 minutes
Grade 2	15 minutes
Grade 3	20 minutes
Grade 4	25 minutes
Grade 5	30 minutes
Grade 6	40 minutes

Use of CDs, Musical Accompaniment

The teacher is responsible for the provision of accompaniment. This may be on audio tape or CD, in which case an operator will be required. For the Primary examination the teacher may be the operator. On no account may the teacher be present to operate or accompany for the six Graded examinations. A double CD with sample music appropriate for the examination presentation is available from the ISTD shop.

Dress Requirements

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

- Females should wear a dance practice *sārī* or suitably tailored *salwār kamīz*.
- Males should wear a *dhōṭī* or a suitably tailored *kurtā pyjāmā*.
- Females and males should have their waist firmly bound.
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a 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.
- No ankle bells should be worn for the Grade 1, 2 and 3 examinations. In Grades 4, 5 and 6 these are optional

National Qualifications Framework and Level Descriptors

The Graded Examinations in Dance are accredited on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland as shown below.

NQF level	General Qualifications	ISTD Grade
Level 5	Higher level qualification	N/A
Level 4	Higher level qualification	N/A
Level 3 (Advanced)	A/AS level	Grade 6
Level 2 (Intermediate)	GCSE Grades A*-C	Grade 5 Grade 4
Level 1 (Foundation)	GCSE Grades D-G	Grade 3 Grade 2 Grade 1
Entry Level	Certificate of (educational) achievement	N/A

The following QCA-approved descriptors explain what is required of candidates at each level of this framework. All performances should demonstrate compliance with the principles of safe dance practice and candidates should demonstrate an appropriate approach to the examination in relation to their conduct and overall presentation.

Level 1 (Grades 1, 2 and 3)

Candidates demonstrate an increasing vocabulary of movement in the chosen technique. An understanding of the technique is reflected in the ability to co-ordinate 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.

Level 2 (Grades 4 and 5)

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

Level 3 (Grade 6)

Candidates demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of a particular style through a wide range of movements performed with technical precision and assurance. 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.

Method of Assessment

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

The examinations are divided into units and each unit is composed of several components which are separately assessed and aggregated to give the unit total. The titles of these components and the marks attainable for the Bharatanātyam Graded Examinations are given following the syllabus outline for each Grade.

Candidates must gain at least 25% of the marks attainable in each unit in order to pass the examination overall. In cases where 25% of the marks attainable does not come to a round figure, eg 12½, the pass mark for the units is lowered to the nearest round figure, in this example, 12.

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

A	80-100
B	60-79
C	40-59
N	00-39

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

Assessment Criteria

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 co-ordinated movements
 - an assured performance showing the different qualities of movement required by each section of the examination structure
 - musicality and rhythmic awareness
-

Bharatanātyam Syllabus Content

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

Students of South Asian dance, other than those in India, are in an environment that may not necessarily complement their experience of Bharatanātyam 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 Bharatanātyam and in the wider horizons of dance.

The ISTD syllabus provides a structure equally suited to students of any of the different schools of Bharatanātyam, without favouring one school over another.

The syllabus for each grade is presented in three Units.

- **Unit A** technical skills
- **Unit B** performance
- **Unit C** the theory, the ancillary skills required and the record kept by the candidate of the material learned in Units A and B

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

Primary Examination Syllabus Outline

Introduction

This syllabus is in common for Bharatanatyam and Kathak, preparing children for the Grade examinations of either genre. It may equally be taught by teachers of either genre, using the movement vocabulary which is familiar and which will be of use in future learning. While the syllabus content is relevant for students of all ages, the examination is intended for young children of approximately six to eight years, where the emphasis is on movement exploration and enjoyment without the imposition of prescriptive technique.

Extensive notes on the syllabus are to be found in the South Asian Dance Faculty Primary Examination Specifications, which may be purchased from the ISTD Shop, Imperial House, 22/26 Paul Street, London EC2A 4QE, tel: 020 7377 1577, fax: 020 7247 8979.

The Syllabus

1. Body awareness

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

2. Action and stillness

- 2.1 Extending and flexing
- 2.2 Rotating
- 2.3 Rising and sinking
- 2.4 Stillness
- 2.5 Stepping
- 2.6 Travelling
- 2.7 Turning
- 2.8 Balancing

3. Spatial awareness

- 3.1 Direction in the body
- 3.2 Direction in the studio space
- 3.3 Near and far

4. Dynamics, expression, mime

- 4.1 Firm and gentle, weighty and buoyant
- 4.2 Quick and slow
- 4.3 Communication of feelings and emotions

5. Rhythm, timing

- 5.1 Hand clapping, foot beating
- 5.2 Variations in the sound of stamping
- 5.3 Regular pulse
- 5.4 Irregular and cyclical patterns

6. Teacher-led simple dances

7. File

Pupils individually collect a 'scrapbook' of their dance interests

The Examination

The examination takes place in the presence of the teacher. Normally three candidates are examined simultaneously.

The first part of the examination is conducted by the teacher, who has planned the teaching of this in advance. The second part is a prepared dance performance.

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
File: no marks, but completion of the examination is dependent on the production of a file	
PART 1	
Body awareness - mobilization of all major body parts	10
Body awareness - carriage of the body (physique is not awarded marks)	5
Action - decisiveness, particularly in the initiation and completion of each action	10
Stillness - effective use of stillness, ability to hold a stillness	5
Spatial awareness - clarity in use of directions	5
Spatial awareness - clarity of shapes made by the body in action	5
Dynamics - firm/gentle, weighty/buoyant, quick/slow	10
Expression - liveliness, focus	5
Mime - lucidity of mimetic statements	10
Rhythm, timing - accuracy and embodiment of a given rhythmic pattern	10
PART 2	
Movement memory of the composed dance	5
Performance - vitality of character, situation or abstract design	20
Total	100

Grade 1

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

- 1.1 Exercises for warm-up and preparation for posture and alignment
- 1.2 Technique-specific exercises for *aramandi* and *mandalā* positions, arm positions and movements, *hastā mudrās*, and for improving mobility of the feet
- 1.3 Exercises such as centering of the eyes, and exercises for the eyes, neck and head for the purpose of focusing and alignment in presentation
- 1.4 Exercises for cool-down at the end of dancing
- 1.5 Breathing techniques

2. Movement Vocabulary (in first and second speed only)

- 2.1 *Tattu Adavu* - seven to nine varieties of stamping in *sthānakam* and *aramandi*
- 2.2 *Kattu Adavu* - three varieties using crossing and stamping patterns
- 2.3 *Mettu Adavu* - stamping on the ball of the foot
- 2.4 *Nāttu Adavu* - eight varieties of stretching the leg
- 2.5 *Paraval Adavu* - varieties of *tā tai tai ta* in
aramandi with feet and arms in synchrony
standing position for feet, arms move in synchrony then opposition
aramandi position, arms in full circle, T-shaped floor pattern
- 2.6 *di di tai* - in sequences exploring
various arm movements for one step
different foot positions for the same rhythm
a variety of floor patterns
- 2.7 *Nadai* - the basic Bharatanātyam walk incorporating awareness of three *jātis* - *chaturaśram*, *tiśram* and *miśram*

Unit B

3. Nritta Composition

- 3.1 A *korvai* spanning a minimum of four *āvartanams* of *ādi tāla*, in first and second speed only, using the *adavu* vocabulary of this Grade

4. Abhinaya/Nritya

- 4.1 Creating an awareness of the use of face and body in communicating a mood or a narrative
- 4.2 Gestures and expression for the *Guru* and *Śiva ślókams*, as well as any other *ślókam* emphasising word for word text interpretation

5. Creative Exercise

- 5.1 Using *di di tai*, a candidate will be expected to create a variety of different hand gestures and floor patterns on instruction from the examiner

Unit C

6. Rhythm and Tāla

- 6.1 Recitation of *śolkattu* for *adavus* in *trikālam* and appropriate *tāla*
- 6.2 Recitation of *śolkattu* for the *kórvai* with *tāla*
- 6.3 Recitation of *jātis* covered
- 6.4 Knowledge of *adi tāla* and *rūpaka tāla*

7. Music

- 7.1 Twelve to fourteen *Sarali Varisai* and eight *Janta Varisai* in either *Māyamālavagowla* or *Sankharābharanam*. These may be sung by following written notation

8. Supporting Knowledge

- 8.1 An understanding of the principles of movement and the function of the exercises
- 8.2 *Ślókams - Guru Vandanam, Śivastuti, Sahanāvavatu*
- 8.3 *Śira, dristi, grīvā and mandala bhēda ślókams, Asamyuta and Samyuta hastas*
- 8.4 *Nātya Kramaha ślókam*
- 8.5 *Dēva hastas* relating to *ślókams* learnt.
- 8.6 Nomenclature of *adavus*.

9. File

- 9.1 A record of musical notations
- 9.2 A record of the prescribed *kōrvai*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya/nritya* learned
- 9.3 Brief notes on the origin of Bharatanātyam
- 9.4 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material

The Grade 1 examination consists of:

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance sequence of no more than six minutes duration, demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus, three candidates normally being seen simultaneously
- individual response to simple questions on the file and the performance
- further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner

The examination lasts approximately twelve minutes for each candidate, although there are time gaps for some candidates.

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Movement vocabulary - the <i>adavus</i> at first and second speed	20
Stance - clarity of positions as they occur in the <i>adavus</i>	5
Arms and body - neatness in movement	5
Floor patterns and line - clarity of directional moves, clarity of line in the use of the body	5
Rhythmic transitions - tempo changes, adherence to <i>tāla</i> in movement, rhythmic co-ordination of parts of the body	5
Sub-total	40
UNIT B - PERFORMANCE	
<i>Nritta</i> composition - the prescribed four <i>āvartana kōrvai</i>	10
<i>Abhinaya</i> - gestures and expression for a prescribed <i>ślōkam</i>	5
Creative exercise - task set by examiner using <i>di di tai</i>	5
Sub-total	20
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time-keeping of <i>tāla</i>	5
Music - <i>sarali/janta varisai</i> in <i>māyamālavagowla</i> or <i>shankarābharanam rāga</i> , with <i>tāla</i>	10
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	15
File - adequacy and presentation	5
File - response to questions generated from the file	5
Sub-total	40
Total	100

Grade 2

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

- 1.1 Exercises of the previous grade to be improved to a level of greater control and accuracy
- 1.2 Exercises developing control over the body in transit
- 1.3 Exercises for co-ordination of different parts of the body

2. Movement Vocabulary (in three speeds)

- 2.1 *Tattu Adavu* - seven to nine varieties in ascending and descending tempi
- 2.2 *Simir Adavu* - two varieties in *tīśram*
- 2.3 *Paraval Adavu* - varieties of *tā tai tai ta* with:
 - hands and feet working in opposition
 - arms in a circular pattern, incorporating a rotation for the footwork
 - the footwork to incorporate a jump
- 2.4 *Periya/Ranga Kramanā/Ūsi Adavu* - an off-beat step
- 2.5 *Egarmettu/Kudittamettu Adavu* - four to eight varieties of *taihat taihī*
- 2.6 *Chil/Jāru/Sarikkal Adavu* - varieties of *taiyā taihī* in which the *sthānakam* position is used:
 - two varieties using *patāka*
 - two varieties using *alapadma*
 - one variety using *mrigaśirsa*
- 2.7 *Bhramari* - two varieties of *ekapādam*
- 2.8 *Uṭplavana* - three varieties, of which one includes use of *kartarī hasta*
- 2.9 *Tattu Mettu/Jāti Adavu* demonstrating *panchajāti*
- 2.10 *Muktāyam/Tirmānam Adavu* - *tadhin gina tom* series.

Unit B

3. Nritta Compositions

- 3.1 A simple dance based on a *swara korvai*

4. Abhinaya/Nritya

- 4.1 A more complex *ślokam* that need not be bound to rhythm, that is, it can be done as free verse. Examples of *ślokās* that can be used include, *mooshika vāhana*, *śantākāram*, *yākundendu*. The *sāhitya* of a *gītam* can be used also

5. Creative Exercise

- 5.1 On instruction from the examiner, development of a narrative based on a sentence structure using *hasta viniyōgams*

Unit C

6. Rhythm and Tāla

- 6.1 Recitation of *śolkattu* for *adavus* in *trikālam* and appropriate *tāla*
- 6.2 Recitation of *śolkattu* for the *kōrvai* with *tāla*
- 6.3 Knowledge of *panchajāti*
- 6.4 Knowledge of *sapta tālas* and their *angas*

7. Music

- 7.1 *Alankārams* in *sapta tāla* - students will be allowed to follow written notation and will be expected to sing these in three speeds
- 7.2 At least two *gītams*, each in a different *tāla*. These may be sung by following written notation

8. Supporting Knowledge

- 8.1 Nomenclature of *adavus*
- 8.2 *Śira, dristi* and *grīvā bheda viniyógams*
- 8.3 *Patāka hastā viniyógam*
- 8.4 *Sthānaka, utplavana, bhramari* and *chāri bhedas*

9. File

- 9.1 A record of musical notations
- 9.2 A record of the movement vocabulary, the prescribed *kórvai*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya/nritya* covered
- 9.3 Notes on the mythological background of Bharatanātyam with the story of the creation of the *Nātya Vēda*
- 9.4 Notes on *nrīta, nritya* and *nātya*
- 9.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material

The Grade 2 examination consists of

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance sequence of no more than eight minutes duration, demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus, three candidates normally being seen simultaneously
- individual response to simple questions on the file and the performance
- individual performance of some further demonstration if requested by the examiner

The examination lasts approximately fifteen minutes for each candidate, although there are time gaps for some candidates.

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Movement vocabulary - the <i>adavus</i> in three speeds	20
Stance - clarity of positions as they occur in the <i>adavus</i>	5
Arms and body - neatness in movement, accuracy of still positions, co-ordination and bends	5
Floor patterns and line - clarity of directional moves, clarity of line in the use of the body, positioning and travelling movements	5
Rhythmic transitions - sense of <i>kālapramānam</i> and tempo changes, rhythmic co-ordination and control of body parts	5
Sub-total	40
UNIT B - PERFORMANCE	
<i>Nritta</i> composition - the prescribed <i>swara kōrvai</i>	10
<i>Abhinaya</i> - the prescribed <i>ślōkam/gītam</i>	5
Creative exercise - task set by examiner using <i>hasta viniyōgams</i>	5
Sub-total	20
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time-keeping of <i>tāla</i>	5
Music - <i>alankārams</i> and <i>gītams</i> , with <i>tāla</i>	10
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	15
File - adequacy and presentation	5
File - response to questions generated from the file	5
Sub-total	40
Total	100

Grade 3

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

- 1.1 A clear articulation of *aramandi* and other essential positions, demonstrating body alignment
- 1.2 The ability to articulate simple 'warm-up' and 'cool-down' procedures

2. Movement Vocabulary

- 2.1 *Etta Adavu* - five varieties of *tat tai tām/tat tai tā hā*
- 2.2 *Pakka Adavu* - varieties of *tat tai tā hā*
three varieties done on the spot
two varieties of travelling movements
- 2.3 *tā hata jham tari tā*
- 2.4 *Mandi Adavu* - two combinations in which the *muzhumandi* position is used
- 2.5 *Sarikkal Adavu* - in which the starting position is *muzhumandi*
- 2.6 *Mei Adavu* - two varieties
- 2.7 *Muktāyam/Tīrmānam Adavu* - *kita taka dhari kita tom* series

Unit B

3. Nritta and Nritya Compositions

- 3.1 *tā hata jham tari tā kórvai* of *tiśram alāriṣṣu*
- 3.2 *Kuraippu* set to a suitable time cycle
- 3.3 An invocatory item with both *nritta* and *abhinaya*, for example, *Kavvituvam, Stuti, Vandana*

4. Abhinaya/Nritya

- 4.1 Learning expression and gestures to a verse that is set to rhythm

5. Creative Exercise

- 5.1 The candidate will be expected to apply any *jāti* to any *adavu* as requested by the examiner

Unit C

6. Rhythm and Tāla

- 6.1 Recitation with *tāla* of *śolkattu* of *kórvai* and *kuraippu* and knowledge of its time structures
- 6.2 Understanding of *tāla* structure of invocation and recitation of any *kórvais*

7. Music

- 7.1 Ability to sing the invocation to *tāla*

8. Supporting Knowledge

- 8.1 Nomenclature of *adavus*
- 8.2 Knowledge of *sāhitya* of the compositions studied
- 8.3 *Viniyógams* of *asamyuta hastas* up to *śukatunda*

9. File

- 9.1 A record, with notations, of the *kórvai*, the *kuraippu*, and the rhythmic structures within the invocation
- 9.2 A record of rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya/nritya* covered
- 9.3 Information on different schools of Bharatanāṭyam and on other Indian classical dance genres
- 9.4 History of Bharatanāṭyam through the ages, and to the present
- 9.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material

The Grade 3 examination consists of :

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance sequence of no more than ten minutes duration, demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus, three candidates normally being seen simultaneously
- individual response to questions on the file and the performance
- individual performance of some further dance item requested by the examiner

The examination lasts approximately twenty minutes for each candidate, although there are time gaps for some candidates.

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Style specific skill training - demonstration, on request, of warm-up/cool-down exercises	5
Movement vocabulary - accuracy and assurance of the <i>adavus</i>	10
Movement quality - alignment, neatness of line, dynamics, spatial awareness, rhythmic control, co-ordination	10
<i>Abhinaya</i>	5
Sub-total	30
UNIT B – PERFORMANCE	
<i>Alārippu kōrvai</i>	5
<i>Kuraippu</i>	5
Invocation - accuracy and quality of presentation, including communication through <i>abhinaya</i>	15
Creative exercise - task set by examiner to determine understanding of <i>jāti</i>	5
Sub-total	30
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time-keeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing of invocation with <i>tāla</i>	15
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	15
File - adequacy and presentation	5
File - response to questions generated from the file	5
Sub-total	40
Total	100

Grade 4

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

1.1 Exercises for developing stamina, and for improving posture and action

2. Movement Vocabulary

2.1 Additional *Adavus* - a selection of four should be made, each demonstrating a different movement quality

Unit B

3. Nritta and Nritya Compositions

These should cover a variety of *tālas*:

3.1 *Alārippu* in a *tāla* of any choice

3.2 *Jatiswaram*

3.3 *Sabdam*

4. Creative Exercise

4.1 The examiner will prescribe a simple narrative of the complexity of a *Śabdam* and the candidate will be expected to interpret this using *the hastā viniyógams* of this grade

Unit C

5. Rhythm and *Tālā*

5.1 Recitation, with *tāla*, of the whole *Alārippu* and of the *Jatiswaram kórvais*

6. Music

6.1 Ability to sing the dance items learned with *tāla*

7. Supporting Knowledge

7.1 Nomenclature of *adavus*

7.2 Knowledge of *sahitya* for items learned

7.3 Awareness of the *Nātya Sastra*

7.4 Knowledge of what is contained in the *Abhinaya Darpanam*

7.5 Knowledge of the 4 types of *abhinaya*

7.6 Knowledge of *Patraprāna*

7.7 *Asamyuta hasta viniyógams* up to *alapadma*

7.8 *Astadikpālaka hastas* and *Daśāvatāra hastas*

7.9 An understanding of *padārtha*, *vākyārtha* and *sanchāri*

8. File

8.1 A record, with notations, of the *Alārippu* and *Jatiswaram kórvais*

8.2 A record of the theory and *abhinaya/nritya* covered

8.3 Candidates should also be encouraged to continue to collect a rich variety of supporting material

The Grade 4 examination consists of :

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance sequence of no more than twelve minutes duration, demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus, three candidates normally being seen simultaneously
- individual response to simple questions on the file, the performance, and the complementary skills
- individual performance of some further dance item requested by the examiner

The examination lasts approximately twenty-five minutes for each candidate, although there are time gaps for some candidates.

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Style specific skill training - demonstration, on request, of exercises for stamina and posture	10
Movement vocabulary - accuracy and assurance of the <i>adavus</i>	5
<i>Abhinaya</i>	5
Sub-total	20
UNIT B - PERFORMANCE	
<i>Alārippu</i>	10
<i>Jatiswaram</i>	10
<i>Śabdam</i>	15
Creative exercise - task set by examiner to devise a simple narrative	5
Sub-total	40
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time-keeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing of invocation with <i>tāla</i>	15
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	15
File - adequacy and presentation, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire	5
File - response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of repertoire, and independent research	5
Sub-total	40
Total	100

Grade 5

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

- 1.1 Strengthening techniques for body positions and movement dynamics

Unit B

2. Nritta and Nritya Compositions

- 2.1 *Kīrtanam*
2.2 *Tillānā*
2.3 *Padam*

3. Creative Exercise

- 3.1 Two *rendu kālai āvartanam*s of *śolkattu* will be given by the examiner and the candidate will be expected to set *adavus* to the sequence

Unit C

4. Rhythm and Tāla

- 4.1 Recitation, with *tāla*, of the *Tillānā kōrvais* and any other rhythmic structures learned within items

5. Music

- 5.1 Ability to sing the dance items learned with *tālam* and with particular attention to *sāhityam*

6. Supporting Knowledge

- 6.1 Knowledge of *sāhityam* for items learned
6.2 Introduction to *nāyika bhedas*
6.3 Introduction to *bhāva* and *rasa*
6.4 *Asamyuta hastā viniyōgams* up to *triśūla*

7. File

- 7.1 A record of the *Tillānā kōrvais* and any other *kōrvais* in the items learned, including their notation
7.2 A record of the theory and *abhinaya/nritya* covered
7.3 Candidates should be encouraged to continue to collect a rich variety of supporting material

The Grade 5 examination consists of :

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance sequence of no more than fifteen minutes duration, demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus, three candidates normally being seen simultaneously
- individual response to simple questions on the file, the performance and the complementary skills
- individual performance of some further dance item requested by the examiner

The examination lasts approximately thirty minutes for each candidate, although there are time gaps for some candidates.

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Style specific skill training - demonstration, on request, of exercises for strengthening techniques	5
Movement quality	5
<i>Abhinaya</i> quality	5
Sub-total	15
UNIT B – PERFORMANCE	
<i>Kīrtanam</i>	15
<i>Tillānā</i>	15
<i>Padam</i>	10
Creative exercise - task set by examiner to arrange an <i>adavu</i> sequence for given <i>śolkattu</i>	5
Sub-total	45
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time-keeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt, with <i>tāla</i>	15
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	15
File - adequacy and presentation, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire	5
File - response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of repertoire, and independent research	5
Sub-total	40
Total	100

Grade 6

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

- 1.1 An understanding and application of *angaśuddha*

Unit B

2. Nritta and Nritya Compositions

- 2.1 *Varnam*
2.2 A minimum of one item from the following selection - *Jāvali/Astapadi/Bhajan/Devarnāmā*

3. Creative Exercise

- 3.1 The examiner will give the candidate a line of a song along with its meaning. The candidate will be asked to create movement and expression to this

Unit C

4. Rhythm and *Tāla*

- 4.1 Recitation, with *tāla*, of all rhythmic structures of the *Varnam*

5. Music

- 5.1 Ability to sing the dance items learned with *tāla*

6. Supporting Knowledge

- 6.1 Knowledge of *sāhitya* for items learned
6.2 *Samyuta hastā viniyógams*
6.3 Understanding of a *mārgam*

7. File

- 7.1 A record, with notation, of the rhythmic structures in the *Varnam*
7.2 A record of the theory and *abhinaya/nritya* covered
7.3 A record of at least two Bharatanātyam or other South Asian dance performances seen, with notes on artists, repertoire and comment on performance
7.4 Candidates should be encouraged to continue to collect a rich variety of supporting material

The Grade 6 examination consists of :

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance sequence of no more than twenty minutes duration, demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nritya*, three candidates normally being seen simultaneously
- individual response to questions on the file and the performance
- individual performance of some further dance item requested by the examiner

The examination lasts approximately forty minutes for each candidate, although there are time gaps for some candidates.

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Style specific skill training - application of <i>angaśuddha</i>	5
Movement quality	5
<i>Abhinaya</i> quality	5
Sub-total	15
UNIT B - PERFORMANCE	
<i>Varnam</i>	25
<i>Jāvali/Astapadi/Bhajan/Devarnāmā</i>	10
Creative exercise - task set by examiner to create movement and expression to given <i>sāhitya</i>	10
Sub-total	45
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time-keeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt, with <i>tālā</i>	15
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	15
File - adequacy and presentation, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire	5
File - response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of repertoire, and independent research	5
Sub-total	40
Total	100

Attainment Descriptors

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 an **'A'** 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 **'B'** 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 **'C'** 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 **'N'** classification (00-39 marks) is one who has not yet demonstrated the attributes required to gain at least a **'C'** classification.

Vocational Graded Examinations

Introduction

Rationale

The Vocational Graded Examinations in Bharatanātyam, 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 Bharatanātyam genre, including an understanding of reference and context. Candidates undertaking a study of the Bharatanātyam 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 offered as vocationally-related qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework. Intermediate Foundation and Intermediate are located at Level 2; Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 are located at Level 3.

Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance promote the ethos of key skills, especially the improvement of one's own learning and performance, problem solving and working with others, which are intrinsic to each dance genre at every level of study and performance. Candidates, however, are unlikely to gain specific evidence towards key skills qualifications through Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance.

Aim

The aim of the ISTD Vocational Graded Examinations in Bharatanātyam 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 to become an accredited dance teacher. There are four practical examinations graded to measure appropriate stages of development from a general standard of Bharatanātyam education to that of professional competence and readiness.

Objectives

The objectives of the Bharatanātyam Vocational Graded Examinations are set out below:

- To impart the practical skills in Bharatanātyam 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 Bharatanātyam 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 Outcomes and Progression

All Bharatanātyam graded examinations are concerned with progressive mastery in defined stages. They also develop and demonstrate competence and artistry in, and communication through, the Bharatanātyam 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

Intermediate Foundation	minimum age 14
Intermediate	minimum age 15
Advanced 1	minimum age 16
Advanced 2	minimum age 17

Prior Learning

Intermediate Foundation is an optional examination but Intermediate, Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 must be taken in order.

Gender Distinctions

The examination does not limit the dancer to a gender specific presentation. However, dancers choosing to present gender specific material may be assessed accordingly.

Duration of Examinations

Candidates are normally examined in groups of three. The three candidates show a prepared dance performance simultaneously, following which they each in turn answer questions about the prepared performance they have shown, about other aspects of the syllabus, and are asked to dance additional items to demonstrate their understanding and skill. The examination of each candidate takes the following time, though there may be a period of waiting between the first part of the examination and its completion.

Intermediate Foundation	50 minutes
Intermediate	60 minutes
Advanced 1	75 minutes
Advanced 2	90 minutes

Use of CDs, Musical accompaniment

Teachers entering candidates must make their own arrangements for provision of music which can be recorded or live.

Dress Requirements

Though no marks are awarded for grooming, it is considered an essential aspect of training, giving poise and confidence. The following are expected:

- *Ghunghrūs* or dance bell should be worn
- Females should wear a dance practice *sāri* or suitably tailored practice clothes
- Males should wear a *dhoti* or suitably tailored practice clothes
- Basic jewellery (such as earrings, belt etc) is permitted but is not essential
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a plait or bun. A long plait should be secured at the back

National Qualifications Framework and Level Descriptors

The Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance are accredited in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland as shown below:

NQF Level	General qualifications	ISTD Vocational Grade
Level 3	Advanced GNVQ and Vocational 'A' level	Advanced 2 Advanced 1
Level 2	Intermediate GNVQ	Intermediate Intermediate Foundation

The following QCA-approved descriptors explain what is required of candidates at each level of this framework. This should be read positively with regard to safe dance practice, with an increasing personal responsibility on the candidate. Candidates' ability to respond in an examination situation will also be noted.

Level 2 (Intermediate Foundation and Intermediate)

Candidates will demonstrate consolidated technical skills and the acquisition of an increased range of movements in sequences of increased length and complexity. They should show a clear understanding of the mechanics and purposes of the required vocabulary and an ability to perform these.

Candidates will show an ability to sustain an appropriate sense of style throughout more complex sequences and an increased sensitivity to varying musical qualities with technical facility. Improved spatial awareness leads to an increased assurance of presentation.

Candidates will be able to demonstrate some additional elements of movement vocabulary, allied to a willingness to communicate directly with an audience. They will understand the professional context for dance. Interpretation is underpinned with reference to key aspects of the genre and candidates will use appropriate technical and artistic language in discussion.

Level 3 (Advanced 1 and Advanced 2)

Candidates will demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of a particular genre through a wide range of movements performed with well-developed and safely developed technical strength. Along with confidence, candidates will convey self-awareness, which will result in a sensitive personal interpretation of musical mood.

Candidates should 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.

Candidates will be able to demonstrate those additional elements of vocabulary and/or technique required by progression to professional work. Engaging the audience, they communicate their interpretation effectively (both solo and ensemble) with evidence of personal style and technical mastery. A well-grounded awareness of candidates' own abilities and aptitudes is related to their professional aspirations, including insight into the demands and opportunities of professional production and employment. Candidates can also apply a broad knowledge and understanding of their genre to their own work, commenting critically on others' work with reference to the broader context of dance provision.

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 units and each unit 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:

A (Distinction)	80-100
B (Merit)	65-79
C (Pass)	50-64
N (Standard Not Yet Attained)	00-49

Full attainment descriptors are given on Page 36.

Bharatanātyam Vocational Syllabus Outline

This syllabus outline must be applied in conjunction with the Bharatanātyam Vocational Examination Specifications

Intermediate Foundation

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

- 1.1 Strengthening techniques for body positions and movement dynamics
- 1.2 Controlled accuracy of limbs both in stillness and movement

Unit B

2. Nritta and Nritya Compositions

- 2.1 *Trikāla jati/tīrmānam* in *ādi tāla*
- 2.2 *Mīśra Alārīppu*
- 2.3 *Jatiswaram*
- 2.4 *Sabdam*
- 2.5 *Kīrtanam*

3. Creative Exercise

- 3.1 Understanding composition of a kórvai through tasks such as, completing the missing part of a kórvai, or creating the end of a kórvai set to *ādi* or *rūpaka tāla*

Unit C

4. Rhythm and Tāla

- 4.1 Introduction to the use of *tattukazhi* to conduct *adavus* and practice in *panchajāti*
- 4.2 Recitation, with *tāla*, of the *trikāla jati/tīrmānam*, *Jatiswaram kórvais* and *Alārīppu*

5. Music

- 5.1 Ability to vocalise the *Jatiswaram*, *Śabdam* and *Kirtanam* to *tāla*. This may be demonstrated by following written *swaras/sāhityam*
- 5.2 Knowledge of compositional structure ie: *pallavi*, *anu pallavi* and of *rāgas* and *tālas* pertaining to the set dance pieces in this grade

6. Supporting knowledge

- 6.1 *Asamyuta hasta viniyōga ślōkams*
- 6.2 Knowledge of *Navarasas*
- 6.3 Literal meaning of the *sāhityam* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the dance items
- 6.4 Candidates must have a background knowledge of syllabi of Grades 1-4

7. File

- 7.1 A record, with notation of the prescribed *jati/tīrmānam* and items learnt
- 7.2 Record of theory and *abhinaya/nritya* covered
- 7.3 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. This should include their own notes and reviews on performance attended and on independent research of dance topics and articles

The Intermediate Foundation examination consists of

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance material demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritya* and *nritya*. This section should be no longer than 25 minutes duration and is normally performed by three candidates simultaneously
- individual response to questions on the file, the performance, and the ancillary skills
- some further individual performance of dance may be requested by the examiner

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Style specific training - demonstration, on request, of exercises for strengthening and improving flexibility	5
Movement quality	5
<i>Abhinaya</i> quality	5
Sub-total	15
UNIT B – PERFORMANCE	
<i>Trikāla jati/tīrmānam</i>	10
<i>Mīśra Alāriṣṣu, Jatiswaram</i>	15
<i>Śabdham, Kīrtanam</i>	15
Creative exercise - completing the missing part of a kōrvai set by the examiner	5
Sub-total	45
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
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>tattukazhi</i> for <i>Adavus</i> in <i>trikālam</i>	15
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	15
File - content, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire	5
File - response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of the repertoire and independent research	5
Sub-total	40
Total	100

Intermediate

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

- 1.1 Detailed understanding of the movements and use of different body parts
- 1.2 Application of *angaśuddha*

Unit B

2. Nritta and Nritya Composition

- 2.1 A *kórvai* spanning between 60-90 seconds in a less commonly used *tāla*, such as *ata* and *jhampa*
- 2.2 *Tillānā*
- 2.3 One item from the following selection – *Padam/Jāvali/Astapadi*
- 2.4 One item from the following selection – *Bhajan/Devamāmā/Tevāram*

3. Creative Exercise

- 3.1 Be able to demonstrate a varied interpretation, of a part from the expressional material learnt in this grade

Unit C

4. Rhythm and Tāla

- 4.1 Recitation of *Tillānā kórvais* with *tattukazhi*
- 4.2 Recitation of the prescribed *kórvai* and *Tillānā kórvais* to *tāla*

5. Music

- 5.1 Ability to vocalise the items learnt to *tāla*. This may be demonstrated by following written *swaras/sāhityam*

6. Supporting Knowledge

- 6.1 *Samyuta hastā viniyóga ślókams*
- 6.2 Understanding of *bhāva* and *rasa*
- 6.3 *Nāyikā* and *Nāyaka bhédas* in relation to the items learnt
- 6.4 Knowledge of the literal meaning of the *sāhityam* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the dance items
- 6.5 Candidates must have a background knowledge of syllabi of Grades 1-4 and Intermediate Foundation

7. File

- 7.1 A record, with notation, of the prescribed *kórvai* and *Tillānā kórvais*
- 7.2 Record of theory and *abhinaya/nritya* covered
- 7.3 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. This should include their own notes and reviews on performances attended and on independent research of dance topics and articles

The Intermediate examination consists of

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance sequence demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nritya*. This sequence should be no longer than 30 minutes duration and is normally performed by three candidates simultaneously
- individual response to questions on the file, the performance, and the ancillary skills
- some further individual performance of dance may be requested by the examiner

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Style specific training - application of <i>angaśuddha</i>	5
Movement quality	5
<i>Abhinaya</i> quality	5
Sub-total	15
UNIT B - PERFORMANCE	
<i>Kórvai/Tillānā</i>	20
<i>Padam/Jāvali/Astapadi</i>	10
<i>Bhajan/Devamāmā/Tevāram</i>	10
Creative exercise - demonstrate a part of the expressional pieces learnt from a different perspective as set by the examiner	10
Sub-total	50
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
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>tattukazhi</i> for <i>Tillānā kórvais</i>	15
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	10
File - content, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire	5
File - response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of the repertoire and independent research	5
Sub-total	35
Total	100

Advanced 1

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

- 1.1 Ability to demonstrate a conceptual and analytical understanding of the principles of posture and alignment for all *adavu* categories

Unit B

2. *Nritta* and *Nritya* Composition

- 2.1 A minimum of one item from the following selection – *Mallāri/Pushpānjali/Kavittuvam/Todayam*
2.2 *Slókam*
2.3 *Varnam* (Each line of the song should fit into one *avartanams* of *ādi tāla* or four *āvartanams* of *rūpaka tāla*).

3. Creative Exercise

- 3.1 Creating and performing a *nritta* sequence incorporating given *adavus* in suggested rhythmic structures set to two *āvartanams* of *adi tāla*

Unit C

4. Rhythm and Tāla

- 4.1 Recitation of *Varnam jatis/tīrmānams* with *tattukazhi*

5. Music

- 5.1 Ability to vocalise the items learnt to *tāla*. This may be demonstrated by following written *swaras/sāhityam*

6. Supporting Knowledge

- 6.1 *Gati bhédas and bandhava hastas*
6.2 Knowledge of the literal meanings of the *sāhityam* and mythological background of the narrative contents covered in the dance items
6.3 Understanding of a *mārgam*
6.4 In depth understanding of 4 types of *abhinaya*
6.5 Candidates must have a background knowledge of syllabi of Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate and Grades 1-4

7. File

- 7.1 A record, with notation, of *Varnam jatis/tīrmānams*
7.2 Record of theory and *abhinaya/nritya* covered
7.3 Researched material on requirements for dance costumes and make-up for traditional Bharatanātyam performance
7.4 Own notes on mythology and literal background of prescribed pieces
7.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. This should include their own notes and reviews on performances attended and on independent research of dance topics and articles

The Advanced 1 Examination consists of:

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance sequence demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nriya*. This sequence should be no longer than 35 minutes duration and is normally performed by three candidates simultaneously
- individual response to questions on the file, the performance, and the ancillary skills
- some further individual performance of dance may be requested by the examiner

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Style specific training - be able to analyse posture and alignment of a given <i>adavu</i> category	5
Movement quality	5
<i>Abhinaya</i> quality	5
Sub-total	15
UNIT B - PERFORMANCE	
<i>Mallāri/ Pushpānjali/ Kavittuvam/ Todayam</i>	15
<i>Varnam</i>	20
<i>Ślókam</i>	5
Creative exercise - creating and performing a <i>kórvai</i> set by the examiner	10
Sub-total	50
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and timekeeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , recitation of <i>Varnam jatis/ tīrmānams</i> with <i>tattukazhi</i>	15
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	10
File - content, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire	5
File - response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of the repertoire and independent research	5
Sub-total	35
Total	100

Advanced 2

Unit A

1. Style Specific Skill Training

- 1.1 Awareness of common faults for *adavu* categories, analytical understanding of such movements and developing methods of correcting movement and posture

Unit B

2. Nritta and Nritya Composition

- 2.1 One expressional item in *tāla malika* or a less commonly used *tāla*, such as *atatāla*
2.2 *Varnam* - a more complex one than previously done in Advanced 1, i.e. slower paced, displaying maturity in *sanchāri/s*

3. Creative exercise

- 3.1 Creating a narrative based on a given theme (applying *padārtha*, *vākyārtha* and *sanchāri*)

Unit C

4. Rhythm and Tāla

- 4.1 Recitation of *Varnam jatis/tīrmānams* with *tattukazhi*

5. Music

- 5.1 Ability to vocalise the *Varnam* to *tāla*. This may be demonstrated by following written *swaras/sāhityam*

6. Supporting Knowledge

- 6.1 *Navagraha hastas*
6.2 A literal knowledge of the *sāhityam* and an in depth understanding of narrative content covered in the *Varnam*
6.3 Candidates must have a background knowledge of syllabi of Advanced 1, Intermediate, Intermediate Foundation and Grades 1-4

7. File

- 7.1 A record, with notation, of *Varnam jatis/tīrmānams*
7.2 Record of theory and *abhinaya/nritya* covered
7.3 A study of the requirements for lighting, sound and set for traditional Bharatanāṭyam presentation.
7.4 Own notes on mythology and literal background of prescribed pieces
7.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. This should include their own notes and reviews on performances attended and on independent research of dance topics and articles

The Advanced 2 Examination consists of

- presentation of the file
- performance of a prepared dance sequence demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nriya*. This sequence should comprise of items or parts of items from:
 - Advanced 2 lasting about 30 minutes
 - their *margam* lasting about 15 minutes.
 The total time of this performance should not exceed 45 minutes
 This is normally performed by three candidates simultaneously
- individual response to questions on the file, the performance, and the ancillary skills
- some further individual performance of dance may be requested by the examiner

Marks are awarded for the following	Max. marks available
UNIT A – TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Style specific training - able to highlight common faults and methods of correction for given <i>adavu</i> category	5
Movement quality	5
<i>Abhinaya</i> quality	5
Sub-total	15
UNIT B - PERFORMANCE	
<i>Varnam</i> - from Advanced 2	20
Expressional item - from Advanced 2	10
Other items from the <i>Mārgam</i>	10
Creative exercise - creating a narrative based on a theme set by the examiner	10
Sub-total	50
UNIT C – THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS, FILE	
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and timekeeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , recitation of <i>Varnam jātis/tīrmānams</i> with <i>tattukazhi</i>	15
Supporting knowledge - response to questions on theory	10
File - content, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire	5
File - response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of the repertoire and independent research	5
Sub-total	35
Total	100

Attainment Descriptors

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 an **'A'** 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 **'B'** 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 **'C'** 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 an **'N'** classification (00-49 marks) is one who has not yet demonstrated the attributes required to gain at least a **'C'** classification.

Candidates Who May Require Special Adjustments to the Assessment

The ISTD is committed to promoting an environment where all individuals are encouraged to achieve their full potential and develop their skills, encouraging its teachers to maintain an open approach towards the different talents and abilities offered by all their students. It is, therefore, required of all ISTD teaching members that they do not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, mental or physical disability, marital status or sexuality, and pupils with disabilities should not be treated less or more favourably than able-bodied pupils simply because of their disability.

Disability takes the form of mental or physical impairments or both, and may be long or short term. The ISTD recognises that some students with a mental or physical impairment may need special adjustments to assessment conditions to allow them to demonstrate their knowledge in dance. The procedure should be used in all cases, every time the candidate enters for an examination, as the conditions, and necessary adjustments, may change.

If a teacher wishes to enter such a pupil for an examination, the ISTD would like to make it clear that although pupils with mental or physical impairments may require extra time in an examination, or special aids (e.g. special headphones if the child is deaf) in order to perform to the best of their ability,

the quality of the performance in an examination is to be equal to that of an able-bodied candidate. The candidate cannot be marked on different criteria because of the restriction the impairment may cause them. This is mandatory in order to achieve a true and fair dance award.

If such a candidate is to be submitted for an examination, the teacher must apply to the Customer Services and Quality Assurance department for an 'Application for Special Arrangements' form, or download it from the Customer Service section of the ISTD website, www.istd.org. This should be completed and returned, with a doctor's letter if relevant, to the Customer Services and Quality Assurance department, a minimum of two weeks prior to the examination entries being sent in to the Examinations Department. This form will be submitted to the Faculty, who will make a final decision on the requirements within 7 days, giving a reasoned written response for any rejection, and the teacher will be informed of the decision.

This procedure applies to all ISTD examinations, in the UK and internationally, and should be used in all cases where the candidate has a short or long term impairment, even if alterations to assessment conditions are not requested by the teacher. The ISTD will consider if, in their opinion, any changes should nevertheless be made, in the interests of the health and safety of the candidate, and also will inform the examiner of the candidate's situation in all cases.

Results and Certification

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

Examiners return the results and report sheets as soon as possible after the examination. The report sheets for each candidate are individually checked within the Quality Assurance department for administrative accuracy. Under normal circumstances the report sheets will be issued to the teacher within 21 working days of the examination. Any errors found are corrected by the examiner prior to further processing of the whole examination session, and may therefore extend these timings, although the department will make every effort to process these as rapidly as possible.

All results are entered by unit, and checked for achieving the minimum pass levels, per unit 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 Examinations 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.

Accreditation Numbers

Grades 1, 2 and 3	100/1347/7
Grades 4 and 5	100/1348/9
Grade 6	100/1349/0
Intermediate Foundation and Intermediate	100/1354/4
Advanced 1 and Advanced 2	100/1355/6

The ISTD is an approved awarding body and, as such, adheres to the criteria laid down for the accreditation of its qualifications by the Regulatory Authorities (the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for England, the Qualifications and Curriculum Assessment Authority for Wales and, for Northern Ireland, the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment). Teachers in other countries should note that while the ISTD and all ISTD accredited examinations must meet these criteria, the Regulatory Authorities themselves have no remit outside England, Wales and Northern Ireland.