Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing
Alternative Rhythms

Alternative Rhythms Qualifications

Specification

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Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing
Alternative Rhythms

ALTERNATIVE RHYTHMS

SYLLABUS OUTLINE

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From 1st October 2026 the dances of this genre will only be permitted as part of IDF (Imperial Dancesport Faculties) examinations at the following levels:

Under 6 – 1, 2, 3 & 4

Under 8 – 1, 2, 3 & 4

Social Dance Test – 1, 2, 3 & 4

Pre Bronze Dance Test – 1, 2, 3 & 4

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General Information

Dancesport examinations cover Modern Ballroom, Latin American, Sequence, Disco Freestyle, and Street Dance, Rock ‘n ’Roll, Country/Western and Alternative Rhythms. These dance genres provide a wide diversity in both teaching and learning in dance education. On one level they form the basis of what may sometimes be referred to as 'social’ dancing, and there are a range of examinations that provide those learning to dance as a recreational activity the scope to develop quality within performance. At other levels students may pursue their training further through the range of examinations in order to develop the higher artistic and technical skills necessary for competition dancing, stage performance and dance teaching. The examinations offered in the Dancesport genres enable teachers in differing situations to provide a safe and structured programme for pupils of all ages and abilities.

This syllabus outline gives information about the examination structure for Alternative Rhythms of the Latin American Faculty examinations only. Syllabi for the other Dancesport genres are available to download from the ISTD website.
The Alternative Rhythms core dances that can be taken as part of an IDF (Imperial Dancesport Faculties) examination are as follows: Argentine Tango, Lindy Hop, Mambo, LA Salsa, Cuban Salsa and New York Salsa, Bachata, Bossa Nova, Charleston, Discofox, Kizomba and Merengue.

Amateur Medal Tests	**Introductory Tests**
Vocational Examinations in Salsa	**Student Teacher**
Professional Examinations in Salsa	**Associate**
Higher Professional Examinations in Salsa	**Licentiate** **Professional Dancing Diplomas**

Examination Entry – Amateur Medal Tests

1. Teachers entering candidates for ISTD examinations in Dancesport should hold the appropriate ISTD teaching qualifications. Further information can be obtained either from the UK Examinations Department or International Liaison Officer as appropriate.
2. Application forms for UK examination sessions are available to download from the ISTD website at www.istd.org/examinations/ukexaminations and once completed should be received at headquarters at least four weeks prior to the date required.
3. For new candidates requiring PINS, the application form is available to download from the Help section on Quest.
4. The completed timetable should be received at headquarters at least two weeks before the examination date.
5. There must be an interval of at least 3 months from the date of the original examination if the candidate wishes to retake it for any reason.

Amateur Medal Tests

Introduction

Medal Tests in Alternative Rhythms are designed to be accessible to any age group and seek to:

- Promote an appreciation and enjoyment of the Alternative Rhythms styles, with a view to developing technical and artistic qualities
- Introduce an understanding of the various styles within the genre and the different rhythmic expressions/characterizations
- Motivate candidates and build self-confidence by providing carefully staged goals
- Provide a structured approach for teachers to measure the progress of individual pupils

Medal Tests for Alternative Rhythms are entered as an IDF (Imperial Dancesport Faculties) examination, which is a mixed genre examination incorporating two dances of different genres from the following:
Modern Ballroom, Latin American, Classical Sequence, Disco/Freestyle, Rock and Roll, Street, Modern Sequence, Latin Sequence and Alternative Rhythms

An outline of the different levels is given below and further detail is given in the Syllabus Content.

Full Medal Test

Introductory Tests

Under 6 Test 1, 2, 3, 4
Under 8 Test 1, 2, 3, 4
Social Dance Test 1, 2, 3, 4
Pre-Bronze dance Test 1, 2, 3, 4

Entry Conditions and General Information

Age Divisions

Tests are conducted in 7 divisions:

1. Under 6 years
2. Under 8 years
3. Juvenile division for candidates under 12 years of age
4. Junior division for candidates of 12 and under 16 years of age
5. Adult division for candidates of 16 and under 50 years of age
6. Senior division for candidates of 50 years of age and over
7. Student division for candidates of 16 years of age *

*Students that are studying to become professional teachers should enter this category. Requirements are as for Adult division, but a slightly higher standard of dancing is expected. A professional qualified in another Dancesport or Theatre genre may take Student division tests. Student Teachers may continue to take Student division tests in the same genre.

Categories

Candidates have the following options when entering for amateur medal tests:

1. Solo Entry 4
2. Couples Tests
3. Dancing Opposite Role (this option can be combined with any of the above options)

Solo Entry

Each candidate is assessed individually.

Couples Tests

The partnership is assessed as a couple but two report forms are issued. Both dancers receive a certificate and award. Candidates need not have taken the appropriate test individually. When entering Couples medal tests on the timetable, teachers should click 'C' for Couple as appropriate.

Dancing Opposite Role

Candidates wishing to take these tests may dance in the opposite role to that which they usually dance, for example a Follower may apply to take the test performing the Leaders steps. The teacher should click 'O' for Opposite Role as appropriate when entering candidates for this exam.

Prior Learning

No prior learning is required for the Introductory Tests.

Partnering

Candidates must provide their own partners who may be amateur or professional.

Time Allowances/Number of Candidates

One Candidate at a time:

2 dances 5 minutes

Two candidates at a time:

2 dances 6 minutes

Dance requirements for examinations

Under 6	2 dances
Under 8	2 dances
Social Dance Test	2 dances
Pre-Bronze Dance Test	2 dances

Musical Accompaniment

Teachers will provide their own musical equipment together with a range of appropriate music.

Recording

The filming, streaming, uploading and use of photographs from any ISTD examinations by any means, is strictly prohibited.

Dress Requirements

Candidates should be well groomed and appropriately dressed for dancing.

Syllabus Content for Amateur Medals and Awards

Introductory Tests

IDF (Imperial Dancesport Faculties) - Full Medal

In the Under 6, Under 8, Social Dance and Pre-Bronze Tests, dances from different genres may be used e.g. a candidate might choose to dance LA Salsa with Jive (Latin American) or Disco/Freestyle, or Waltz (Ballroom). When entering mixed genres, the teacher should enter the tests as 'IDF '(Imperial Dancesport Faculties) on the timetable.

From 1st October 2026 dances from the Alternative Rhythms Genre will still be permitted to be taken as part of the IDF Introductory Tests ONLY

Under 6 and Under 8 Dance Tests 1, 2, 3, 4

These tests are designed to encourage very young pupils and to act as an introduction to the examination system. There is no technical requirement and parts 2, 3 and 4 do not require a higher standard of dancing than part 1. Suitable figures and the beginnings of timing awareness should be encouraged.

Social Dance Tests 1, 2, 3, 4

These are introductory tests at a social level, which may be taken by candidates of any age group. Technical accuracy is not expected and parts 2, 3 and 4 do not require a higher standard of dancing than part 1. Keeping in time with the music is of primary importance.

Pre-Bronze Dance Tests 1, 2, 3, 4

These tests may be taken by candidates of any age group in any dance from the approved list, and the dancing should show the beginnings of technical awareness. Parts 2, 3 and 4 do not require a higher standard of dancing than part 1.

Dances and Tempi

The recommended tempi in **beats per minute** are as follows, but slight deviations are acceptable.

Dance	**Tempo**
Salsa	180-300 bpm
Argentine Tango	64 bpm
Mambo	170 bpm
Lindy Hop Triple Steps	110-200 bpm
Lindy Hop Charleston	160-260 bpm
Bachata	90-200 bpm
Bossa Nova	120-160 bpm
Charleston	120-160 bpm
Discofox	80-144 bpm
Kizomba	90-120 bpm
Merengue	130-200 bpm

Specified Figures for Amateur Medals and Tests

The specified figures are listed in numerical order on pages 30-35. Teachers may choose from the figures listed for the appropriate level.

Method of Assessment/Mark Scheme for Amateur Medals and Tests

All Amateur Medal Tests are assessed by the examiner as below.

Each dance must be passed at 65% in order for the examination to be successful overall. Maximum marks allocated for each dance is 100. The marks for each dance are then aggregated and the overall result is indicated as a percentage as follows:

Honours	85%
Commended	75%
Pass	65%
Unsuccessful	0%-64%

Alternative Rhythms Additional Dances

BACHATA

Originating from the countryside and rural areas of the Dominican Republic
Time Signature - 4 Tempo - 90 – 200 beats per minute
4
Music – Traditionally played on guitar and percussion instruments at 90 bpm with a smooth romantic feel and influenced by Rumba and Son. The vocalist would often sing about the blues. Today it is commonly danced at 130 bpm. Bachata has a variety of different rhythms including Merengue and Bolero. Usually in phrases of 8 beats.
Characteristics – A partner dance in a close or open frame with very few turn patterns. Steps and breaks are influenced by the music and its phrasing. Knees should be slightly flexed. Movements should flow one to the other with ease. Has a very smooth style.
Basic Movements - Three steps and a tap each on the beat of the bar accompanied by a hip motion or pop, on the 4th beat (with the tap) which can be much exaggerated.
Step to the Side (1) close the feet (2) step to the side (3) tap foot close to supporting foot lifting the hip (4)
Footwork – steps 123 are ball flat with the tap on the 4th beat using the ball or inside edge of the toe. Leader commences with the LF, Follower RF
Hold - Open or Closed Holds with use of intricate arm work
Basic Steps include -
Side Basic
Forward & backward Basics
Underarm Turns Right & Left (Leader & Follower)
Solo Turns Left & Right (Leader & Follower)
Armlock
Sweetheart
Rock Turn (Pivot)
Suggested Music
Obsession - Aventura
Stand By Me - Prince Royce
Promise - Romeo Santos
Eres Tu - Prince Royce
Samba Pa Ti - Salsaloco de Cuba
Un Beso - Aventura
Eres Mia - Romeo Santos
Bachata Cha - Salsaloco de Cuba
Voy Pa Alla - Antony Santos
Deja Vu - Shakira
Senorita - Shawn Mendes
Set Fire to the Rain - Adele

More detailed information can be found in the ISTD Salsa Study Book.

BOSSA NOVA

Originating from Brazil in late 1950's and related to the Brazilian Samba. A combination of traditional Brazilian music and Jazz. Bossa Nova (meaning New Trend) has a strong Samba influence, particularly from Baion or Slow Samba.

Time Signature 2 or 4 Tempo - 120 – 160 beats per minute

4 4

Music - This should be smooth and fluid, often with a jazz feel. Usually in 8 beat phrases

Characteristics - There should be a 'softness' to the action to reflect the music. Merengue hip action is not used. Knees are soft allowing for a sideways hip action. Feet are lightly placed on the floor and closing steps without weight can use inside edge of ball of foot with foot pressure. The hip will lift on the first of the 'Q' beats. Movements should be fluid and natural including the body movements. An easy way of dancing a Samba with no bounce. If travelled will move anti-clockwise around the floor. Solo work may be used

Basic Movements – These have a rhythm of S Q Q. Step in any direction (S) mark time closing the feet (Q Q)

Depending on the musical phrase but usually steps are in 8 beat phrases.

Footwork – This is usually ball flat throughout or ball flat, inside edge of toe, ball flat. Leader usually commences with the LF, Follower RF

Hold - Danced primarily in Ballroom Hold although Double Hold is used frequently along with other hand holds

Basic steps include -

Forward and Backward with or without turn L & R
Side to Side
Basic Square (clockwise, anti-clockwise and turning both ways)
Walks (in varying rhythms)
Lock steps (in varying rhythms)
Check steps
Chasses
Turns

Suggested Music -

Blame it on the Bossa Nova – Eddie Gormez
Soul Bossa Nova – Quincy Jones
The Girl from Ipanema – Astrud Gilberto & Stan Getz/Frank Sinatra/Amy Winehouse
Save the last dance – Michael Buble
Sorrento Moon – Tina Arena
I'm Yours – Jason Mraz
Asereje (The Ketchup Song) – Las Ketchup
Maria Maria – Santana
The way you look tonight – Michael Buble
Absolutely me – Caro Emerald
Limbo Rock – Ross Mitchell
Watusi Boogaloo – Willie Rosario & his orchestra

CHARLESTON

Originating from the African American people of Charleston in South Carolina in the 1900's. Made popular in the 1923 movie "Runnin' Wild" to the song "The Charleston" by James P Johnson. Reaching Europe in the 1920's having been influenced by the Black Bottom dance.

Time Signature 2 Tempo - 120 beats per minute

2

Music – Originally danced to 4 Ragtime Jazz music of a very quick pace.

4

This should be lively and upbeat. Charleston music is often structured in 4 bar phrases with a break or middle eight section.

Characteristics –The knees are kept close together and flicks with the lower leg are sideways (i.e. L leg raising to L hip). There is a swiveling action on the supporting foot, the heel moving in on the odd number beat (i.e. 1 3 5 7). Basic steps are danced on each beat of the bar. Other rhythms may be used. Does not travel. Tricks and acrobatics are often used. Has a comedy element. When danced with a partner, a very upright Ballroom Hold is used with the dancers keeping an open position. When danced solo (shines), large loose motions with the arms swinging in the opposite direction to the feet/legs. There are other different styles of Charleston ie Afro Charleston, Drop/Squat Charleston.

Basic Movement - This prepares on the count of 8 by raising the working foot sideways (knees together) and swiveling the supporting heel out.

Leader – Tap LF back, step LF forward, Tap RF forward, step RF back. Follower dances the natural opposite.

Footwork – This is mostly ball although ball heel will be used in certain weight transferring steps. Leader usually commences with the LF, Follower RF. Both partners may use the same foot in solo work. There are no heel leads. Feet are placed lightly on the floor.

Hold - Danced primarily in Ballroom Hold with an upright posture or Double Hold

Basic steps in hold include -

Back and Forward (also turning R & L)
Tuck turns for both man and lady
Pushes/Stomps in contra position
Walks
Kicks
Hops/Flicks/Points in various directions
Pivots
Glide/Drag

Basic steps solo (called shines) - here the arms will swing loosely across the body or forward and backward either from the elbow or from the shoulder.

Back and Forward
Knee lifts (forward alignment)
Crazy legs
Runs (feet raised backwards)
Continuous flick kicks (in any direction, body leaning away from kick)
Cow tail/Windmills
Fall off the Log
Black Bottom

Gaze afar

Suggested music

Sister Kate – The Ditty Bops
Don’t bring Lulu – The Andrew Sisters / The Bobbysocks
Bang Bang - Will.i.am
Hot Honey Rag – from the Chicago soundtrack
The Charleston – James P Johnson - various orchestras
Puttin’ on the Ritz – Irving Berlin - Various Orchestras
We Speak no Americano – Yolanda Be Cool and Dcup
Greg Shapiro - Caro Emerald
Footloose – Kenny Loggins
I Love to Boogie – Marc Bolan & T-Rex
Fat Sam’s Grand Slam – from Bugsy Malone
Dancin’ Fool – from Copacabana
You Don’t Love Me – Caro Emerald

DISCOFOX

Originating from New York in the 1970's, a direct descendant of the Latin Hustle, travelling across Europe to Germany, influenced by Salsa, Cha Cha Cha, Slow Rhythm, Samba, Swing and Hustle
Time Signature 2 or 4 Tempo 80 – 144 beats per minute
4 4
Music - Danced to most popular music. Has empathy with 1970's disco music
Hold - Danced with an upright posture in Closed Hold or Double Hand Hold
Characteristics – Mainly non- progressive. The first step is danced on beat 1 of the bar. There are 2 main styles, the 3 step basic and the 4 step basic. A natural use of the free arm should be seen
Basic Movements & Timing - There are 2 versions both are correct. Beginners may choose to dance the step-step-tap version (3 step basic) whilst advanced dancers may choose the Hustle style split beat basic (4 step basic) still occupying 3 beats of music
Leader commences with LF and Follower with RF.
(3 step basic) 2 walks (forward or back) & tap (123)
(4 step basic) 2 walks (forward or back) and ball change (12&3 or 12a3) or (123& or 123a - when this timing is used the dance is known as "Disco Swing")
Although the music is written in 2 or 4
4 4 timing the basic movement uses 3 beats with no pause on the fourth beat of music therefore the dance will cross phrase during every three bars. It is important to pay particular attention to the phrasing of this dance
Footwork – Heel flat or ball flat maybe used when moving forward and ball flat when moving backward. The ball change action used in the 4 step basic is usually danced back/replace but could be taken in any direction. For example back/forward, forward/forward, close/forward, side/replace, side/close, back/back, back/close etc
Basic steps include -
Basic Movement (without turn or with turn to the left or right)
Push & Pull
Separation
Link
Follower's Under Arm Turn to Right
Follower's Under Arm Turn to Left
Change of Places
Change of Hands Behind the Back
Leader's Under Arm Turn to Left
Hammerlock
Pretzel
There are two different techniques used when turning in Discofox. Forward turns - "stepping before turning" and backward turns - "turning before stepping". Forward turns are normally used when the Leader turns left and the Follower turns right. Backward turns are normally used when the Leader turns right and the Follower turns left
Suggested Music
I Love To Love – Tina Charles
The Hustle – Van McCoy
Get Down On It – Kool & the Gang
Evacuate the Dancefloor - Cascada

Can’t take my eyes off you - Gloria Gaynor
I Wanna Dance With Somebody - Whitney Houston
My First My Last My Everything - Barry White
I Love the Nightlife - Alicia Bridges
I Will Survive - Gloria Gaynor
I Gotta Feeling - The Black Eyed Peas
Closer - Ne-Yo
Moves like Jagger - Maroon 5 ft. Christina Aguilera

KIZOMBA

Originating from Angola and Cape Verde in the 1980's
Time Signature 4 Tempo – 90 - 120 beats per minute 4

Music - The origins of Kizomba can be traced to late 1970's Africa, with influences variably attributed to Angola. Kizomba is characterized by a slower, romantic, more sensuous rhythm in contrast to the traditional Angolan Semba music. Kizomba music emerged as a fusion of traditional Semba music and the Zouk or Compas music from the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe which slowed down the cadence of songs and added a stronger bass line to the composition of instruments. It is a mix of traditional Angolan Semba and Zouk music from the French Caribbean and is sung generally in Portuguese or a dialect from various Portuguese speaking African cultures. Usually in phrases of 8 beats. **Characteristics** - A smooth dance, rhythmical and compact with influences of Tango. Hips move forward, backward or in a circular movement. Can be danced on or off the beat and can use syncopations.

Basic Movement - Leader commences with LF, Follower RF

Basic in Place (Leader)
Step LF in place, on the ball of the foot (1, 2)
Transfer weight to LF, Step RF in place on the ball of the foot (3, 4)
Follower dances the natural opposite
Side Basic (Leader)
Step LF to Side (1)
Close RF to LF without weight (2)
Step RF to Side (3)
Close LF to RF without weight (4)
Follower dances the natural opposite
Footwork - This is ball flat throughout.

Hold - Close Contact Hold, usually referred to as the "Embrace". L-R hand is similar to Cuban Salsa, the Follower holds the Leader's thumb. The hold can also be more open.

Basic Steps include -

a. Basic in Place
b. Side Basic
c. Progressive Basics (Forward & Back) Although the music is written in 4 4 timing the Progressive Basic uses 3 beats with no pause on the fourth beat of music therefore the dance will cross phrase during every three bars. It is important to pay particular attention to the phrasing of this dance

d. Star
e. Reverse Top (circle)
f. Natural Top (circle)
g. Leader's Saida (exit)
h. Follower's Saida (exit)

Suggested Music

Lento by Daniel Santacruz
Criola by Mika Mendes
Magico by Mika Mendes
Mil Pasos - Soha

Deixa o Mundo Falar - Jey V
Question My Heart - Kaysha
Alguen Ki un Gosta - G-Amado ft. Mika Mendes
Rebound Chick - Nelson Freitas
Something Going On - Kaysha
Bo Tem Mel - Nelson Freitas & C4Pedro
Crazy Love - Kaysha
Too Good at Goodbyes - Sam Smith

More detailed information can be found in the ISTD Salsa Study Book.

MERENGUE

Originating from the time of the Haitian occupation of the Dominican Republic 1822-1844. After they broke away the Dominican musicians increased the speed of the music and changed from a minor to a major mode which completely altered the feel of the music and dance. Made popular in the United States in the 1930's and 1950's.

Time Signature 2 Tempo - 130 – 200 beats per minute
4

Music – This has a definitive marching rhythm and is usually fast tempo. Merengue is structured in 2, 4 or 8 bar combinations.

Characteristics - Club Style is danced mainly on the spot. This differs from the Ballroom style which moves along the line of dance. A delayed hip action known as Cuban Motion is essential.

Basic Movement – 2 steps in place with a rhythm of Q Q

Leader commences on the LF, Follower RF

Step LF in Place, on the ball of the foot lowering the heel (1)
Step RF in Place on the ball of the foot lowering the heel (2)
Follower dances the natural opposite

Footwork - Ball Flat throughout.

Hold - Close Contact Hold or Double Hold

Basic Steps include -

a. Basic in Place
b. Basic Side Step
c. Progressive Basics (Forward & Back)
d. Turning Basics Right & Left
e. Underarm Turns Right & Left
f. Separation
g. Rock Basic

Suggested Music -

Suavamente - Elvis Crespo
La Duena Del Swing - Los Hermanos Rosario
La Bilirrubina - Jean Luis Guerra
Mueve la Colita (Follow the Leader) – El Gato DJ
Merengue – Michael J Lloyd
She Bangs – Ricky Martin
Un Dos Tres – Ricky Martin
A Pedir Su Mano – Juan Luis Guerra
Linda Eh – Groupa Mania
Close to me – Caro Emerald
Azul – Gruppo Latino
Various songs by Fulantino
Various songs by DLG

More detailed information can be found in the ISTD Salsa Study Book.

Professional Teaching Examinations

Salsa Professional examinations for Alternative Rhythms have been split into individual styles. Therefore only single dance qualifications are available at Student Teacher and Associate levels and may be taken in LA, New York or Cuban styles. The Licentiate Salsa Examination covers all 3 styles as mentioned above.

LA Salsa Student Teacher Syllabus Content

Student teacher is an optional examination and is the first rung on the professional ladder. It is **not** a teaching qualification

Duration of examination: 60 minutes

Candidates must be 16 years of age or over. Successful candidates are permitted to attend courses on payment of an administration fee, but are not eligible to take part in Amateur Medalist Competitions. Student Teachers may, however, continue to take Student Medal Tests in the Student Division in any Dancesport genre.

Practical Demonstration

Parts 1-4 are to be accompanied with music. Parts 2-4 are to be danced with a partner and in the role of the candidates choice i.e. dancing the Leaders or Followers steps, or demonstrating both roles if desired.

1) Demonstrate an LA style Salsa Warm-Up of the candidates own choreography (3-4 minutes)
2) Demonstrate a repeatable routine using a selection of the specified figures (1-8) in LA style
3) Demonstrate a repeatable routine using a selection of the specified figures (1-4) in Cuban or (1- 8) in New York style of the candidates choice
4) Demonstrate a routine of candidates own ability in LA style. No Dips or Tricks are permitted, however Freestyling and Shines are permitted (maximum 1 minute 30 seconds)

Theory (Oral Examination)

Candidates are required to:

1) Explain with a basic knowledge the theory of Warm-Up and Cool Down incorporating Safe Dance Practice
2) Show a basic understanding of the following subjects. Demonstrate and explain. Music should be used where required:
   a The History of Salsa
   b LA plus one other style of Salsa
   c Leading and Following
   d Arm Positions and Hand Holds
   e Rhythm, Timing and Musicality
3) Technical analysis and solo demonstration of the specified figures (1-8) to include a breakdown of the figures and give two precedes and follows.

Cuban Salsa Student Teacher Syllabus Content

Student teacher is an optional examination and is the first rung on the professional ladder. It is **not** a teaching qualification

Duration of examination: 60 minutes

Candidates must be 16 years of age or over. Successful candidates are permitted to attend courses on payment of an administration fee, but are not eligible to take part in Amateur Medalist Competitions. Student Teachers may, however, continue to take Student Medal Tests in the Student Division in any Dancesport genre.

Practical Demonstration

Parts 1-4 are to be accompanied with music. Parts 2-4 are to be danced with a partner and in the role of the candidates choice i.e. dancing the Leaders or Followers steps, or demonstrating both roles if desired.

1) Demonstrate a Cuban style Salsa Warm-Up of the candidates own choreography (3-4 minutes)
2) Demonstrate a repeatable routine using a selection of the specified figures (1-4) in Cuban style
3) Demonstrate a repeatable routine using a selection of the specified figures (1-8) in LA or (1-8) in New York style of the candidates choice
4) Demonstrate a routine of candidates own ability in Cuban style. No Dips or Tricks are permitted, however Freestyling and Shines are permitted. (maximum 1 minute 30 seconds)

Theory (Oral Examination)

Candidates are required to:

1) Explain with a basic knowledge the theory of Warm-Up and Cool Down incorporating Safe Dance Practice
2) Show a basic understanding of the following subjects. Demonstrate and explain. Music should be used where required:
   a The History of Salsa
   b Cuban plus one other style of Salsa
   c Leading and Following
   d Arm Positions and Hand Holds
   e Rhythm, Timing and Musicality
3) Technical analysis and solo demonstration of the specified figures (1-4) to include a breakdown of the figures and give two precedes and follows.

New York Salsa Student Teacher Syllabus Content

Student teacher is an optional examination and is the first rung on the professional ladder. It is **not** a teaching qualification
Duration of examination: 60 minutes
Candidates must be 16 years of age or over. Successful candidates are permitted to attend courses on payment of an administration fee, but are not eligible to take part in Amateur Medalist Competitions. Student Teachers may, however, continue to take Student Medal Tests in the Student Division in any Dancesport genre.

Practical Demonstration

Parts 1-4 are to be accompanied with music. Parts 2-4 are to be danced with a partner and in the role of the candidates choice i.e. dancing the Leaders or Followers steps, or demonstrating both roles if desired.

1) Demonstrate a New York style Salsa Warm-Up of the candidates own choreography (3-4 minutes)
2) Demonstrate a repeatable routine using a selection of the specified figures (1-8) in New York style
3) Demonstrate a repeatable routine using a selection of the specified figures (1-4) in Cuban or (1- 8) in LA style of the candidates choice
4) Demonstrate a routine of candidates own ability in New York style. No Dips or Tricks are permitted, however Freestyling and Shines are permitted. (maximum 1 minute 30 seconds)

Theory (Oral examination)

Candidates are required to:

1) Explain with a basic knowledge the theory of Warm-Up and Cool Down incorporating Safe Dance Practice
2) Show a basic understanding of the following subjects. Demonstrate and explain. Music should be used where required:
   a The History of Salsa
   b New York plus one other style of Salsa
   c Leading and Following
   d Arm Positions and Hand Holds
   e Rhythm, Timing and Musicality
3) Technical analysis and solo demonstration of the specified figures (1-8) to include a breakdown of the figures and give two precedes and follows.

LA Salsa Associate Syllabus Content

This examination is a professional teaching qualification accredited by the ISTD
Duration of examination: 75 minutes
Candidates must be 17 years of age or over and need not have taken the Student Teacher examination however, work from the Student Teacher syllabus may be included at the discretion of the examiner

Practical Demonstration

Parts 1-6 are to be accompanied with music. Parts 3-6 are to be danced with a partner and in the role of the candidates choice i.e. dancing the Leaders or Followers steps, or demonstrating both roles if desired.

1) Demonstrate an LA style Salsa Warm-Up of the candidates own choreography with either a maximum of 6 dancers or by way of an imaginary class. This is the candidates own choice (3-4 minutes)
2) Teach a figure as requested by the examiner from the specified figures (1-14) either to the dancers or by way of an imaginary class (as part 1)
3) Demonstrate a repeatable routine using a selection of the specified figures (1-14) in LA style
4) Demonstrate a repeatable routine in another style of Salsa using a selection of the specified figures (1-12) in Cuban or (1-14) in New York style of the candidates choice
5) Demonstrate another style of dance currently on the Salsa scene (e.g. Merengue, Bachata, Cha Cha Cha, Kizomba etc) (maximum 1 minute)
6) Demonstrate a routine of candidates own ability in LA style. No Dips or Tricks are permitted, however Freestyling and Shines are permitted (maximum 2 minutes)

Theory (Oral Examination)

Candidates are required to:

1) Explain the theory of Warm-Up and Cool Down incorporating Safe Dance Practice
2) Show an understanding of the following subjects. Demonstrate and explain. Music should be used where required
   a The History of Salsa
   b Other styles of dance as used in Practical Demonstration Part 5
   c LA plus 1 other style of Salsa (as in Practical Demonstration Part 4)
   d Leading and Following
   e Arm Positions and Hand Holds
   f Expression, Freestyle and Shines
   g Rhythm, Timing and Musicality
   h Class Structure
   i Knowledge of the Dance Industry
3) A technical analysis and solo demonstration of the specified figures (1-14) to include a breakdown of figures and give 2 precedes and follows as requested by the examiner
4) Answer questions on Class Teaching methods

Cuban Salsa Associate Syllabus Content

This examination is a professional teaching qualification accredited by the ISTD
Duration of examination: 75 minutes
Candidates must be 17 years of age or over and need not have taken the Student Teacher examination however, work from the Student Teacher syllabus may be included at the discretion of the examiner

Practical Demonstration

Parts 1-6 are to be accompanied with music. Parts 3-6 are to be danced with a partner and in the role of the candidates choice i.e. dancing the Leaders or Followers steps, or demonstrating both roles if desired.

1) Demonstrate a Cuban style Salsa Warm-Up of the candidates own choreography with either a maximum of 6 dancers or by way of an imaginary class, this is the candidates own choice (3-4 minutes)
2) Teach a figure as requested by the examiner from the specified figures (1-12) either to the dancers or by way of an imaginary class (as part 1)
3) Demonstrate a repeatable routine using a selection of the specified figures (1-12) in Cuban style
4) Demonstrate a repeatable routine in another style of Salsa using a selection of the specified figures (1-14) in LA or (1-14) in New York style of the candidates choice
5) Demonstrate another style of dance currently on the Salsa scene (e.g. Merengue, Bachata, Cha Cha Cha Cha, Kizomba etc) (maximum 1 minute)
6) Demonstrate a routine of candidates own ability in Cuban style. No Dips or Tricks are permitted, however Freestyling and Shines are permitted (maximum 2 minutes)

Theory (Oral Examination)

Candidates are required to:

1) Explain the theory of Warm-Up and Cool Down incorporating Safe Dance Practice
2) Show an understanding of the following subjects. Demonstrate and explain. Music should be used where required:
   a The History of Salsa
   b Other styles of dance as used in Practical Demonstration Part 5
   c Cuban plus 1 other style of Salsa (as in Practical Demonstration Part 4)
   d Leading and Following
   e Arm Positions and Hand Holds
   f Expression, Freestyle and Shines
   g Rhythm, Timing and Musicality
   h Class Structure
   i Knowledge of the Dance Industry
3) A technical analysis and solo demonstration of the specified figures (1-12) to include a breakdown of figures and give 2 precedes and follows as requested by the examiner
4) Answer questions on Class Teaching methods

New York Salsa Associate Syllabus Content

This examination is a professional teaching qualification accredited by the ISTD
Duration of examination: 75 minutes
Candidates must be 17 years of age or over and need not have taken the Student Teacher examination however, work from the Student Teacher syllabus may be included at the discretion of the examiner

Practical Demonstration

Parts 1-6 are to be accompanied with music. Parts 3-6 are to be danced with a partner and in the role of the candidates choice i.e. dancing the Leaders or Followers steps, or demonstrating both roles if desired.

1) Demonstrate a New York style Salsa Warm-Up of the candidates own choreography with either a maximum of 6 dancers or by way of an imaginary class. This is the candidates own choice (3-4 minutes)
2) Teach a figure as requested by the examiner from the specified figures (1-14) to the dancers or by way of an imaginary class (as part 1)
3) Demonstrate a repeatable routine using a selection of the specified figures (1-14) in New York style
4) Demonstrate a repeatable routine in another style of Salsa using a selection of the specified figures (1-12) in Cuban or (1-14) in LA style of the candidates choice
5) Demonstrate another style of dance currently on the Salsa scene (e.g. Merengue, Bachata, Cha Cha Cha, Kizomba etc) (maximum 1 minute)
6) Demonstrate a routine of candidates own ability in New York style. No Dips or Tricks are permitted, however Freestyling and Shines are permitted. (maximum 2 minutes)

Theory (Oral Examination)

Candidates are required to:

1) Explain the theory of Warm-Up and Cool Down incorporating Safe Dance Practice

Show an understanding of the following subjects. Demonstrate and explain. Music should be used where required:

a The History of Salsa
b Other styles of dance as used in Practical Demonstration Part 5
c New York plus 1 other style of Salsa (as in Practical Demonstration Part 4)
d Leading and Following
e Arm Positions and Hand Holds
f Expression, Freestyle and Shines
g Rhythm, Timing and Musicality
h Class Structure
i Knowledge of the Dance Industry

2) A technical analysis and solo demonstration of the specified figures (1-14) to include a breakdown of figures and give 2 precedes and follows as requested by the examiner
4) Answer questions on Class Teaching methods

Licentiate Salsa Syllabus Content

This examination incorporates the 3 styles of Salsa, LA, Cuban and New York
Duration of Examination: 90 minutes
Candidates must be 21 years of age or over, with a minimum of 2 years teaching experience and need not have taken the Associate examination(s) however, work from the Student Teacher and Associate syllabi may be included in this examination at the discretion of the examiner

Practical Demonstration

Parts 1- 5 are to be accompanied with music. Parts 2, 4, 5 are to be danced with a partner and in the role of the candidate's choice i.e. Leader or Follower or demonstrating both roles if desired.

1) Demonstrate a Salsa Warm-Up of the candidates own choreography in the style of the examiners choice with either a maximum of 6 demonstrators or by way of an imaginary class. This is the candidates choice (3-4 minutes)
2) Demonstrate 2 repeatable routines in 2 styles of Salsa using a selection of the specified figures only. One or both routines to include a minimum of 2 Shines.
3) Dance solo to music Leaders or Followers steps as requested, an amalgamation of 3- 4 of the specified figures of the examiner's choice in the style not demonstrated in Part 2
4) Demonstrate 2 other styles of dance currently on the Salsa scene (e.g. Merengue, Bachata, Cha Cha, Kizomba etc)
5) Demonstrate a routine of candidates own ability and choice of style of Salsa. Freestyling, Shines, Dips and Tricks are permitted

Theory (Oral Examination)

Candidates are required to:

1) Show an in depth knowledge of the theory of Warm-Up and Cool Down incorporating Safe Dance Practice
2) Show an in depth knowledge of the following subjects. Demonstrate and explain. Music should be used where required:
   a. The history of Salsa and its cultural development
   b. The development to the current day of the dances chosen in Practical Demonstration Part 4
   c. Demonstrate and talk about the differences between the 3 styles of Salsa
   d. Leading and Following
   e. Arm Positions and Hand Holds
   f. Freestyle and Shines
   g. Rhythm, Timing and Musicality relating to the 3 different styles of Salsa
   h. Class Structure
   i. Knowledge of the Dance Industry
3) Full technical analysis and solo demonstration of the specified figures in all 3 styles to include a breakdown of figures, leads, plus 2 precedes and follows as requested by the examiner
4) Answer questions on Class Teaching methods to include Dips and Tricks

Professional Dancing Diplomas

These diplomas are awarded for proficiency in dancing. Candidates must hold a professional qualification in the ISTD Salsa.

Candidates should show a high standard of dance technique and artistic and rhythmical expression, working towards a higher level in each diploma.

Class III

Associates must commence at this level, optional for Licentiates

Class II

For all professional levels. Licentiates are permitted to commence at this level

Class I

For Licentiates who have attained Class II

Requirements:

Class III

A dance routine consisting of steps from the Specified Figures LA 1-25, Cuban 1-22, New York 1-26 (maximum 3 minutes)

Class II

A dance routine consisting of steps from the Specified Figures LA 1-35, Cuban 1-31, New York 1-37 (maximum 3 minutes)

Class I

A dance routine of no restriction (maximum 3 minutes)

Method of Assessment

Method of Assessment for all Professional Examinations

Examinations other than diplomas are divided into sections, and each section must passed at 65% to pass the examination overall. The marks are added and the overall result is awarded as follows:

Highly Commended	85-100%
Commended	75-84%
Pass	65-74%
Fail	0-64%

Specified Figures

L A Salsa – Syllabus Figures

Student Teacher and Pre-Bronze

1. Basic (Forward & Back)
2. Side to Side
3. Basic Right Turn
4. Basic Left Turn
5. Cross Body Lead (CBL) Closed & Open
6. Walkthrough
7. Cross Body Lead & Right Hook Turn (Leader)
8. Cross Body Lead & Left Spin (Leader)

Associate and Bronze

9. Cross Body Turn (CBT)
10. Cross Body Turn & Check
11. Cross Body Outside Turn
12. Open Break
13. Open Break & Walkout
14. Open Break & Cross Body Turn (aka Copa or In & Out)

Licentiate and Silver

15. Cross Body Turn & Wrap
16. Cross Body Turn & Arm Lock
17. Cross Body Turn from waist
18. Cross Body turn from shoulder
19. Cross Body Turn from Arm Lock
20. Cross Body Outside Turn from Arm Lock
21. Double Spin
22. Double Right Turn
23. Reverse Open Break
24. Reverse Open Break & Walkout
25. 360 Right
26. 360 Left

Gold

27. Cross Body Turn & Right Hook Turn
28. Cross Body Turn & Left Spin
29. Basic Left Turn & Left Spin (Leader)
30. Touch & Go
31. Triple Spin
32. Open Break Travelling Forward
33. Reverse Open Break & Cross Body Outside Turn
34. Double Cross Body Turn
35. Double Cross Body Outside Turn
36. Advanced 360 Right
37. Advanced 360 Left

Cuban Salsa – Syllabus
Figures

Student Teacher and Pre Bronze

1. Basics: Back
   Side
   Opening Out
   Forward and Back
2. Arriba
3. Exhibla Turn
4. Cuban Rotation

Associate and Bronze

5. Exhibla Turn & Rotation
6. Enchufla
7. Dile Que No
8. Dile Que Si
9. Guapea
10. Casino
11. Sombrero
12. Setenta Ending 1 (Elbow Lock)

Licentiate and Silver

13. Setenta Ending 2 (Leader's R Turn)
14. Setenta Ending 3 (Overhead Lock)
15. Sacala
16. Enchufla Ending 1 (Lock)
17. Enchufla Ending 2 (2 Hand Sweep)
18. Enchufla & Leaders Turn
19. Sombrero Doble (Sweep Ending)
20. La Caminata
21. Dile Que No & Leaders Dip
22. Dile Que No & Wrap

Gold

23. Advanced Basics
24. Sombrero Triple (Arm Swing)
25. Sombrero Triple Ending 2 (Walk Round)
26. Enchufla Doble
27. Enchufla Mariposa
28. Dile Que No & Leaders Drop
29. El Gancho
30. Setenta Complicado 1
31. Setenta Complicado 2

New York Salsa – Syllabus Figures

Student Teacher and Pre-Bronze

1. Mambo (Back and Forward)
2. Side to Side
3. Basic Right Turn
4. Basic Left Turn
5. Cross Body Lead (CBL) Closed & Open
6. Walkthrough
7. Cross Body Lead & Right Hook Turn (Leader)
8. Cross Body Lead & Left Spin (Leader)

Associate and Bronze

9. Cross Body Turn (CBT)
10. Cross Body Turn & Check ending 1 & 2
11. Cross Body Outside Turn
12. Open Break
13. Open Break & Walkout
14. Open Break & Cross Body Turn (aka Copa or In & Out)

Licentiate and Silver

15. Cross Body Turn & Wrap
16. Cross Body Turn & Arm Lock
17. Cross Body Turn from Waist
18. Cross Body Turn from Shoulder
19. Cross Body Turn from Arm Lock
20. Cross Body Outside Turn from Arm Lock
21. Double Spin
22. Double Right Turn
23. Reverse Open Break
24. Reverse Open Break & Walkout
25. 360 Right
26. 360 Left

Gold

27. Cross Body Turn & Right Hook Turn
28. Cross Body Turn & Left Spin
29. Basic Left Turn & Spin (Leader)
30. Touch & Go
31. Triple Spin
32. Open Break Travelling Forward
33. Reverse Open Break & Cross Body Outside Turn
34. Double Cross Body Turn
35. Double Cross Body Outside Turn
36. Advanced 360 Right
37. 38. Advanced 360 Left

Argentine Tango – Syllabus Figures

Pre-Bronze

1. Reverse (Salida)
2. Side Basic
3. Turning Reverse Basic
4. Forward Ocho

Bronze

5. Same Foot Basic
6. Back Ocho
7. Sandwich with Forward Ocho ending
8. Small Right Turn (Giro)
9. Small Left Turn (Giro)

Silver

10. Giro to Right with Leaders Parallel Feet
11. Giro to Left with Leaders Parallel Feet
12. Giro to Right Same Foot
13. Giro to Left Same Foot
14. Sandwich & Foot Push
15. RF Gancho (Hook)
16. Continuous Giro to Right
17. Continuous Giro to Left
18. Mixing Parallel and Same Foot Giros
19. Turn Right then Left
20. Turn Left then Right
21. Special Notes

Gold

22. Followers embellishments during Ochos
    a) Flick
    b) Hook Twist
    c) Front Flick
23. Leaders Enrosque (Twist) during the Giro
24. Leaders Lapiz (Pencil) during the Giro
25. Leaders Arrastre (Drag) during the Giro
26. Walking Outside Partner Left Side
27. Using Ganchos
28. Followers Elevated Enrosque

Mambo – Syllabus Figures

Bronze

1. Mambo Closed Basic
2. Progressive Basic
3. Turning Basic
4. Back Break
5. Double Back Break
6. 2nd Position Breaks
7. Cross Body Lead
8. Cross Over Breaks
9. Open Breaks with Underarm Turn
10. Spot Turns

Silver

11. Cross Body Lead with Follower's Inside Turn
12. Cross Body Lead Overturned
13. Cross Body Lead with Leader's Underarm Turn
14. Syncopated Cross Over Breaks
15. Cross Over Breaks with Hand Change
16. Fifth Position Break (Type of Hand to Hand)
17. Fifth Position Break with Open Hold
18. Underarm Turns

Gold

19. Cross Over Break with Swivels
20. Cross Over Break with Swivels and Pull Back
21. Fifth Position Break to Slide and Drag
22. Back Spot Turn
23. Back Spot Turn with Underarm Turn
24. Side by Side Breaks
25. Closed Running Box
26. Mambo Crosses to Right
27. Mambo Crosses to Right and Left
28. Closed Turning Break
29. Forward Spot Turn

Gold Star (suggested figures)

30. You Go, I Go
31. Kick and Stick
32. Shadow Breaks
33. Revolving Basic
34. Vacerro
35. Egg-Beater

Lindy Hop – Syllabus Figures

Pre-Bronze

Authentic Jazz Dance Steps (Solo Figures)

1. Twists 34
2. Mess Around
3. Pivot Walk
4. Peckin ’
5. all Off The Log

Partnering Figures

6. Six Beat Basic in Open Hold
7. Six Beat Basic in Closed Hold
8. Basic With Dip
9. Tuck Turn
10. Reverse

Bronze

Authentic Jazz Dance Steps (Solo Figures)

11. Boogie Back
12. Boogie Forward
13. Crazy Legs
14. ck Tock

Partnering Figures

15. Send Out
16. She Goes – He Goes
17. Push Spin
18. Around The World
19. The Jig Walk
20. romenade Authentic Jazz Dance Steps (Solo Figures)
21. Shortie George
22. Suzie Q
23. Fish Tail
24. Apple Jack

Silver

Partnering Figures

25. Side by Side Charleston
26. Kick Through Charleston
27. Swing Out
28. Lindy Turn
29. Lindy Circle

Gold

The Shim Sham Shimmy (Solo Routine)

30. Stomp ‘n ’Slide
31. The Full Break
32. Pushes and Crossovers
33. Tacky Anne
34. alf Breaks

Partnering Figures

35. Texas Tommy
36. Hand to Hand Charleston with Kick Around
37. Back Charleston
38. Back Charleston with Turns
39. Back Charleston Entry 1
40. Back Charleston Entry 2
41. Back Charleston Exit 1
42. Back Charleston Exit 2
43. Groucho
44. Double Turns

Examinations and Quality Assurance

Examination booking information

Examination bookings are only permitted to be made by members with the requisite active membership status of the ISTD who conduct themselves in accordance with the Member Agreement/Professional Code of Conduct. link www.istd.org/documents/rules-and-standing-orders

The examinations take place either at the examination venues hosted by the members such as the teacher's dance studio or at the ISTD Examination Centre sessions. Details of how to book an examination, cancellation fees, guidance, and examination regulations are available at:

UK Examinations

Website: www.istd.org/examinations/uk-examinations

Email: ukdanceteachers@istd.org

International Examinations

Website: www.istd.org/examinations/international-examinations

Email: InternationalTeachers@istd.org

Policies and Quality assurance

The Society has put in place a set of policies and procedures to ensure that our examinations and assessments are inclusive and accessible, and students completing our qualifications are issued a fair grade based on their performance.

Our quality assurance processes are in place to safeguard the integrity of our qualifications by ensuring that high standards are always delivered in our examinations.

The detailed information about the quality assurance of our qualifications and the related policies can be found at www.istd.org/examinations/quality-assurance

For further guidance, please contact the Quality Assurance department at csqa@istd.org

Reasonable adjustment

The Society is committed to promoting an environment where all individuals are encouraged to achieve their full potential and develop their skills in dance and in examinations and we encourage teachers to maintain an open approach towards the different abilities offered by all their students.

Reasonable adjustments are changes or adaptations made to an assessment or to the way an assessment is conducted to reduce or remove a barrier caused by disability or individual learning or medical need.

The teacher acting on behalf of a candidate can request the Society to make reasonable adjustments to the assessment processes and examination requirements, to make the assessment more accessible and alleviate a barrier to allow the candidate to show what they know and can do.

To request reasonable adjustments, the teacher making the application on behalf of the candidate should send their completed application form and supporting documents to ara@istd.org a minimum of 28 days before the date of the examination.

Further guidance for reasonable adjustments can be found in the ISTD Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment Policy which is available on: www.istd.org/examinations/quality-assurance

Teachers can request any adjustments that are appropriate for the needs of their candidates, and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Special consideration

Special consideration is given after an assessment has taken place for learners who have been affected by adverse circumstances. The Society has a process in place for special consideration for candidates who participated in an examination but may have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury, indisposition, or adverse circumstances which arose immediately before or during the examination.

Enquiries and appeals about results

The Society endorses the principle of the right to enquire about a candidates' result. These appeals may relate to an unexpected examination result, assessment decisions being incorrect, or assessment not being conducted fairly. We ensure that enquiries are dealt with swiftly and fairly within the specified timescales.

Through the ISTD Enquiry and Appeal about a Result Policy, it is ensured that enquiries about results are processed correctly, fairly and in a timely manner. A copy of the Enquiry and Appeal About a Result Policy can be downloaded from:
https://www.istd.org/examinations/quality-assurance/policies-and-related-documents

Malpractice

The Society will act in accordance with the published documentation and will take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice, or maladministration, in the development, delivery and award of its qualifications.

Malpractice refers to acts that undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications, and/or actions that may damage the authority of those responsible for delivering the assessment and certification. The Society will take any form of malpractice very seriously.

Registered members and candidates must follow the requirements set out in this specification, examination regulations and all other ISTD policies about the delivery of our examinations.

In cases where registered members or candidates have committed malpractice, a sanction or penalty may be given. For further information, please refer to the ISTD Malpractice Policy on:
https://www.istd.org/examinations/quality-assurance/policies-and-related-documents

Results and certification

All ISTD examinations are single performances at one moment in time, with a detailed marking system awarded according to the mark schemes given for each examination.

The Quality Assurance Department will check the examination results for any errors before issuing the awarded results and certificates direct to the primary organiser, unless requested otherwise.

Examination session results and examination report sheets can be accessed online on the ISTD examination management portal, usually within 21 days of the date of the examination.

All examination result documents are subject to robust quality assurance checks, to ensure that they are correct and complete before dispatch.

The primary organiser will receive their candidates' examination report sheets, containing the overall result. Successful candidates will also be issued with a qualification certificate displaying the qualification title, and the subject that they have been examined in, date of award and the overall result achieved.

This section focuses on the administrative requirements for delivering the examinations and related quality assurance processes. www.istd.org/examinations/quality-assurance

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