



IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF TEACHERS OF DANCING
Classical Indian Dance Faculty

CLASSICAL INDIAN KATHAK EXAMINATIONS
SYLLABUS OUTLINE

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FOREWORD

Kathak is one of the eight forms of Indian classical dances, originating from northern India. It is an art of storytelling, formed through music, text, and vocals. Kathak is distinctive because it is richly developed by rhythm interplay, improvisation and imagination.

This north Indian dance form has the stylistic qualities of the Moghul courts where it gained influence from both Hindu and Muslim cultural sensibilities. Kathak explores the natural alignment of the body with the dynamics of geometry, non-verbal communication, subtleties of expression and playful rhythm between footwork and percussion. The ISTD syllabus is designed to reflect holistic classical dance training while considering the needs and experiences of present-day students worldwide.

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

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

The syllabus for each examination is presented in three sections:

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

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

PRIMARY CLASS EXAMINATION

INTRODUCTION

RATIONALE

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

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

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

AGE LIMITS

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

GENDER DISTINCTIONS

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

TIME ALLOWANCES / NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

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

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

MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

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

DRESS REQUIREMENTS

The following are expected:

- Candidates should be suitably dressed in clothes that enable the examiner to see the dance and allow the candidate to perform without distraction

- Females should wear a suitably tailored kamīz- salwār/churidār. Males should wear a suitably tailored kurtā -pyjāmā
- All candidates should have their waist firmly bound. Wearing of Dupatta is optional
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a single plait or bun. A long plait should be secured at the back to prevent its movement distracting from the dance
- No dance costume or jewellery should be worn
- Ghungrūs are optional

SYLLABUS CONTENT

This syllabus outline must be applied in conjunction with the Kathak Primary Class Examination Specifications and Level Descriptors, available on the ISTD [website](#).

1. Body Awareness

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

2. Rhythm and Timing

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

3. Dynamics

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

4. Expression

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

5. Spatial Awareness

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

ASSESSMENT – PRIMARY CLASS EXAMINATION

The examination takes place in the presence of the teacher.

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

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

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

MARK SCHEME

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

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

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

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

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

CLASSIFICATION OF RESULTS

Candidates are assessed on their ability to show:

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

GRADED EXAMINATIONS: GRADE 1 - 6

INTRODUCTION

RATIONALE

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

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

AIM

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

OBJECTIVES

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

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

LEARNING AND PROGRESSION

Candidates develop the skill and understanding of Kathak, 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 Kathak Graded Examination allows candidates to progress to the next higher grade in the Kathak genre. Also, a range of transfers to other dance genres becomes possible as the candidate develops physically and learns common skills such as running, gesture, posture, timing and rhythmic awareness. In this way, with additional teaching input, the candidate is able to develop a broad base of dancing skills.

Following on from the Graded Examinations, candidates may wish to progress to the Vocational Graded Examinations as preparation for employment as a professional dancer or as preparation for dance teaching qualifications.

The Graded Examinations in Kathak 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 Kathak Graded Examinations. It is recommended, however, that teachers ensure that candidates are at an appropriate level of maturity to meet and enjoy the demands of the syllabus. It is recommended that children and adults are not entered at the same time.

PRIOR LEARNING

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

GENDER DISTINCTIONS

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

TIME ALLOWANCES / NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

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

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

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

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

MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

The teacher is responsible for the provision of accompaniment. This may be a CD or other audio equipment, in which case an operator will be required, or it may be live as in the case for Grades 5 and 6.

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

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

DRESS REQUIREMENTS

The following are expected:

Candidates should be suitably dressed in clothes that enable the examiner to see the dance and allow the candidate to perform without distractions.

- Females should wear a suitably tailored kamīz- salwār/churidār. Males should wear a suitably tailored kurtā -pyjāmā
- All candidates should have their waist firmly bound. Wearing of Dupatta is optional
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a single plait or bun. A long plait should be secured at the back to prevent its movement distracting from the dance
- No dance costume or jewellery should be worn
- All candidates from grade one onward are required to wear ghungrūs

SYLLABUS CONTENT

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

GRADES 1, 2 & 3 (LEVEL 1)

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

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

GRADE 1

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

Technical Skills

1. Laya and tāla

- 1.1. Paṛhant of teentāl ṭhékā in barābar and dugun laya showing tāli and khāli
- 1.2. Ability to do the paṛhant of the nritta compositions against the background of a steady pulse

2. Movement Vocabulary

- 2.1. The basic stance
- 2.2. Nritta movements /Arm and hand movements
- 2.3. Nritta hasta: naman, utpatti, sūchitā, samtāl, puṣpak - ref: Ang Kavya (AK) by Pandit Birju Maharaj
- 2.4. Wrist movement - rotational mobility
- 2.5. Hand and arm movements combined with tā theī theī tat footwork
- 2.6. Travelling patterns in different directions, including diagonal walks
- 2.7. Ability to hold the sam through the sūchitā position
- 2.8. Chakkar based on three and five steps turns maintaining central axis
- 2.9. Tatkār - ability to use the heel as well as the entire sole of foot

3. Abhinaya

- 3.1. Use of the face and body to communicate narrative
- 3.2. Naming five asamyukta hastas - ref: Abhinaya Darpana (AD)

Performance

4. Nritta

- 4.1. Tatkār in teentāl demonstrating the progression of tempo from barābar to dugun
- 4.2. Six ṭukṛās, four tihāis and a simple laṛi or tatkār ka palṭā in teentāl

5. Nritya

- 5.1. One kavitt and one śloka or vandana or a simple devotional song incorporating abhinaya, with a basic understanding of the characters.

6. Creative Exercise

- 6.1. With given instructions from the examiner, the candidate is expected to create simple floor patterns using tatkār with any hastak

Safe Dance Practice, Theory and File:

7. Safe Dance Practice

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

8. Theory

- 8.1. Understanding of the terms: sam, tāla, ṭhékā, tāli, khāli, hasta, paṛhant, toṛa / ṭukṛā, tihāi, barābar, dugun and kavitt
- 8.2. Ability to recite the kavitt and śloka / vandanā/ devotional song and communicate the meaning
- 8.3. Understanding of the function of the ghungrū

9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in the following order:

- 9.1. The sequence of the presentation
- 9.2. The basic notation of teentāl ṭhékā
- 9.3. A record of all nritta compositions
- 9.4. A record of all nritya pieces with meaning
- 9.5. A written record, covering the above mentioned section on theory and notes of other sections
- 9.6. Dance related supporting materials to demonstrate an overall involvement

The Grade 1 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submission of the full exam sequence to be presented
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of no more than six minutes' duration, covering both nritta and nritya aspects of Kathak using the following as a guideline - a short invocation, tatkār, three toṛās / ṭukṛās, two tihāis, kavitt and laṛi
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory and the performance
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

GRADE 2

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

Technical Skills

1. Laya and Tāla

- 1.1. Demonstration of teentāl ṭhékā in barābar, dugun and chaugun laya through paṛhant and tatkār
- 1.2. Paṛhant of all nritta and nritya compositions while maintaining the flow of tāla, showing tāli and khāli

2. Movement Vocabulary

- 2.1. Nritta hasta: sthir, palaṭ, hasta chakra (Ūrdhva, Madhya and Tala) - (Ref: AK)

- 2.2. Still poses: A variety of sam positions and an ability to hold them through standing and sitting positions
- 2.3. Chakkar based on two, four and eight step turns
- 2.4. Introduction to the basic technique of gat chāl/gat nikās
- 2.5. Sundarī grīva / ḍorā
- 2.6. Tatkar - clarity of sound in all three speeds developing the heels as well as the entire sole of foot

3. Abhinaya

- 3.1. Introduction to āngika abhinaya communicated through a narrative and identifying the hastas used
- 3.2. Naming five samyuta hastas and their meaning through usage

Performance

4. Nritta: Teentāl

- 4.1. Salāmi / rangmanch pūjā
- 4.2. One āmad, eight tukrās/toṛās (including four chakkardār) and four tihāis (including one chakkardār) addition to the ones covered in Grade 1
- 4.3. Footwork pattern / laṛi, incorporating a minimum of three variations, emphasising the usage of heels and concluding with a tihāi

5. Nritya

- 5.1. Simple gat nikās
- 5.2. One kavitt
- 5.3. A kavitt/compositions to introduce the tāṇḍav and lāsya concepts
- 5.4. A short devotional song or Śiva Stuti – Āngikam Bhuvanam Yasya (ref: AD)

6. Creative Exercise

- 6.1. With given instructions from the examiner, candidates are expected to create simple floor and movement patterns using tā theī theī tat and tig dhā dig dig theī

Safe Dance Practice, Theory and File

7. Safe Dance Practice

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

8. Theory

- 8.1. Understanding of the terms: ṭhékā, tāli, khāli, chakkardār toṛā, gat chāl/gat nikās, nritta and nritya, tāṇḍav and lāsya
- 8.2. Brief history of the origin and evolution of Kathak

9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in the following order:

- 9.1. The sequence of the presentation
- 9.2. A record of all nritta compositions
- 9.3. A record of all nritya compositions with meaning

- 9.4. A written record, covering the above mentioned section on theory and notes of other sections
- 9.5. Dance related supporting materials to demonstrate an overall involvement

The Grade 2 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submitting the full exam sequence which is to be presented
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of no more than eight minutes' duration, covering both nritta and nritya aspects of Kathak using the following as a guideline- a short devotional song or Siva stuti, āmad, two toṛās, two chakkardār toṛās / ṭukṛās, two tihāi-s, laṛi and gat nikās
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory and the performance
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

GRADE 3

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

Technical skills

1. Laya and Tāla

- 1.1. Demonstration of nritta/nritya compositions confidently in teentāl through paṛhant showing tāli and khāli, appropriate to this level.
- 1.2. Demonstration of tīśra jāti through paṛhant

2. Movement Vocabulary

2.1. Hasta (ref: AK):

- 2.1.1. Lavaśikhā (e.g. tā theī tatta theī, dhāṭiṭa dhāṭiṭa dhā dhā ṭiṭa)
- 2.1.2. Jal bhramari
- 2.1.3. Anjuri, ālingan and ardhālingan
- 2.1.4. Introduction to meend

2.2. Still poses - basic ability to hold thāṭ position:

- 2.2.1. Right wrist placed below waist on right side with palm out, held lightly by the finger tips of the left hand, and vice versa
- 2.3. Chakkar - single heel turns, ardha pherī – half turns (ref: AK)
- 2.4. Paṭṭā- turn and reverse turn, typically used in gat nikās or gat bhāv
- 2.5. Tatkār - development of heel tatkār from grade 2 and ability to use different parts of the feet

3. Abhinaya

- 3.1. Ability to use appropriate movement and hand gestures with knowledge of all hand gestures used in the performance
- 3.2. Beginnings of sātvika abhinaya

Performance

4. Nritta (teentāl)

- 4.1. Thāṭ and āmad in teentāl vilambit laya using meend
- 4.2. Tatkār ke ṭukṛé and naṭwari ṭukṛé
- 4.3. Two bedam and two damdār tihāis
- 4.4. Six toṛās- including a minimum of 2 chakkardār
- 4.5. Two parans including at least one chakkardār
- 4.6. One simple toṛā and one tihāi in tiśra jāti
- 4.7. One simple tarānā or sargam in teentāl

5. Nritya

- 5.1. Two gat nikās using different chāls
- 5.2. One short gat bhāv
- 5.3. A kavitt/ śloka /bhajan, in addition to the ones covered in previous grades

6. Creative Exercise

- 6.1. With given words from the examiner, candidates will be expected to create simple nritya phrases

Safe Dance Practice, Theory and File

7. Safe Dance Practice

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

8. Theory

- 8.1. The meaning of the terms: nagmā/leherā, bhajan, śloka, gat bhāv, sargam, tarānā, bedam and damdār tihāi
- 8.2. Nāṭya Kramaha śloka (yato hasta tatho driṣṭi)
- 8.3. Brief knowledge of the Kathak gharānās

9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in the following order:

- 9.1. The sequence of presentation
- 9.2. A record of all nritta compositions
- 9.3. A record of all nritya compositions with meaning
- 9.4. A written record, covering the above mentioned sections on theory, including śloka, kavitt and gat bhāva story and notes of all the other sections
- 9.5. Dance related supporting materials to demonstrate an overall involvement

The Grade 3 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submission on paper, of the complete dance sequence to be presented at the examination
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of no more than ten minutes' duration, covering both nritta and nritya aspects of Kathak (app 3-4 min of nritya) using the following as a guideline - One thāt, one āmad, two tihāis, chakkardār toṛā, one tiśra jāti composition, laṛi, paran, one gat nikās, a kavitt, śloka /bhajan / short gat bhāv
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously

GRADES 4 AND 5 (Level 2)

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

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

GRADE 4

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

Technical Skills

1. Laya and Tāla

- 1.1. Demonstration of teentāl ṭhékā in barābar, dugun, tigun and chaugun laya through paṛhant and tatkār
- 1.2. Knowledge and demonstration of panchajāti and various rhythmic phrases used to highlight them
- 1.3. Demonstration of jhaptāl ṭhékā in barābar, dugun and chaugun laya through paṛhant and tatkār

2. Movement Vocabulary

2.1. Still poses:

- 2.1.1. Right finger tips lightly touching left shoulder with the left hand placed below right elbow and vice versa
- 2.1.2. Right hand crossing over to the left side of the face to form a semi-circular frame

2.2. Tatkār:

- 2.2.1. Khari Tatkār (footwork emphasising nā dhin dhin nā) while travelling with one foot crossed behind the other
- 2.2.2. Tatkār with the use of heel and outer edges of the feet (dhin/ghin)
- 2.2.3. Zarab / vazan (emphasising various syllables of the tatkār)

2.3. Nritta hasta: execution and naming of any four wrist movements (ref: AK)

3. Abhinaya

3.1. Understanding of bhakti bhāva

Performance

4. Nritta

4.1. Two compositions in tīśra jāti- in addition to the ones learnt in Grade 3

4.2. Two tihai-s and a laṛi using jati bols

4.3. A nritta composition of rhythmic progression from vilambit to drut laya (barhat ki composition)

4.4. Teentāl: In addition to the ones covered in Grade 3; two thāṭ, one āmad, 4 toṛā/ ṭukṛā (including two chakkardār), four tihāis including 2 ginti ki tihais and two chakkardār parans

5. Nritya

5.1. One bhajan or devotional song

5.2. One ṭhumrī

5.3. A more elaborate gat nikās in addition to the one covered in Grade 3

6. Creative Exercise

6.1. With given instructions from the examiner, candidates are expected to create simple nritta and nritya phrases

Safe Dance Practice, Theory and File

7. Safe Dance Practice

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

8. Theory

8.1. Knowledge of the following terms in relation to their application in Kathak: anga, pratyanga, upānga, sangat, ṭhumrī, ṣringāra rasa and bhakti bhāva

8.2. Knowledge of the role of musical accompaniment for Kathak presentation: percussive and melodic counterparts

8.3. Knowledge of abhinaya and its four limbs

9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in the following order:

9.1. The sequence of presentation

9.2. The notation of jhaptāl

9.3. A written record of all nritta compositions in Bhātkhaṇḍe system tāla lipi (system of notation for rhythmic phrases / compositions)

9.4. A record of all nritya compositions with meaning

9.5. A written record, covering the above mentioned section on theory and notes from all other sections

9.6. Dance related supporting materials to demonstrate an overall involvement

The Grade 4 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submission on paper, of the complete dance sequence to be presented at the examination
- Presentation of a prepared dance sequence of no more than twelve minutes' duration covering both nritta and nritya (approximately 7/8 and 5/4 minutes respectively) aspects of Kathak using the following as a guideline - one/two thāṭs, one āmad, jāti composition, two toṛās, laṛi, one paran and one chakkardār paran, one gat nikās in teentāl; a ṭhumrī/bhajan
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory and the performance
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

GRADE 5

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

Technical Skills

1. Laya and Tāla

- 1.1. Ability to perform teentāl nritta compositions in madhya/drut laya on ṭhékā (ref: Kathak specification) as per ISTD guidelines
- 1.2. Ability to demonstrate teentāl ṭhékā in barābar, dugun, tigon and chaugun laya through paṛhant and tatkār with confidence
- 1.3. Ability to demonstrate laya jāti compositions and bol jāti tihāis through paṛhant
- 1.4. Ability to do paṛhant of jhaptāl compositions with rhythmic accuracy and correct pronunciation of bols
- 1.5. Introduction to dhamār tāla: ṭhékā in barābar, dugun and chaugun laya through paṛhant and tatkār

2. Movement Vocabulary

- 2.1. Double chakkar
- 2.2. Knowledge and execution of 'ornamental hand movements' and 'finishing positions' (ref: AK)

3. Abhinaya

- 3.1. Ability to demonstrate śabdārth, vākyārth, sanchāri and sthāyi bhāva
- 3.2. Exploration of two rasas appropriate to the age group

Performance

4. Nritta

- 4.1. Jhaptāl: one/two thāṭ, one āmad, four toṛās (including two chakkardār), four tihāis, a laṛi, two parans (including one chakkardār)
- 4.2. One tarānā or sargam in jhaptāl
- 4.3. Teentāl : Thāt, vilambit āmad, sangeet kā tukṛā, 2 additional tihais, one farmaishī toṛā / tukṛā /paran, two chakkardār parans, parmeltu, 2 additional tishrajati (laya jāti) compositions, 3 tihais in boljati and sawāl jawāb

5. Nritya

- 5.1. A ṭhumri or ghazal
- 5.2. An elaborate gat bhāva based on a mythological story/concept
- 5.3. An elaborate kavitt

6. Creative Exercise

- 6.1. Ability to change movement dynamics of rhythmic compositions as requested by the examiner
- 6.2. Ability to express narrative using śabdārth and vākyārth as requested by the examiner

Safe Dance Practice, Theory , Ancillary skills and File

7. Safe Dance Practice

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

8. Theory

- 8.1. Knowledge of musical terms in Kathak: ṭhumri, tarānā, bhajan, ghazal and hori
- 8.2. Knowledge of other Indian classical dance genres; their origins and names of eminent dance personalities
- 8.3. Knowledge of the creation of the Natya Sastra and an outline of its contents

9. Ancillary Skills

Basic ability to sing musical compositions with tāla such as a bhajan, sargam or tarānā.

10. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in following order:

- 10.1. The sequence of the presentation
- 10.2. A record of all nritta and nritya compositions learnt for this grade
Full notation of nritta compositions in Bhātkhandé tāla lipi
- 10.3. A written record (personally) of all theory, including principles of warm-up, cool-down and concept of core stability and notes from the all the sections
- 10.4. A critical review (100 words) of a Kathak performance attended by the candidate and dance related supporting material to show overall involvement

The Grade 5 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submission on paper, of the complete dance sequence to be presented at the examination
- Prepared dance sequence, with recorded music of no more than fifteen minutes' duration with a balance of nritta and nritya aspects of Kathak (approximately 5-7 minutes to be devoted to nritya) using the following as a guideline -Jhaptāl: one/two thāt, one āmad, two tihāis, one toṛā, one chakkardār toṛā, one paran and one laṛi. Teentāl: a chakkardār paran, parmelu, farmaishī, Kavitt and ṭhumri/ ghazal
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory, and questions generated from the performance

- Further individual demonstration of dance if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously

GRADE 6

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

Technical Skills

1. Laya and Tāla

- 1.1. Ability to demonstrate dhamār ṭhékā in barābar, dugun and chaugun laya through paṛhant and tatkār
- 1.2. Demonstration of teentāl and jhaptāl ṭhékā in barābar, dugun, tigun and chaugun laya through paṛhant and tatkār
- 1.3. Paṛhant of all compositions against the steady flow of tāla, showing tāli and khāli
- 1.4. Demonstration through tatkār of panchgun laya (5 layas) in teentāl

2. Movement Vocabulary

- 2.1. Full knowledge of all AK movements 'stances' or thāṭ (ref: AK)

3. Abhinaya

- 3.1. Full understanding of characters in the learnt pieces

Performance

4. Nritta

- 4.1. Dhamār tāla: tatkār, two thāṭ, one āmad, six toṛās / tukṛās, four tihāis (bedam and damdār), laṛi, two parans, a parmeltu and one chakkardār paran
- 4.2. Further development of teentāl compositions; thāṭ, āmad, tiśra jāti laṛi, two chakkardār parans, 2 bol jāti tihais using various jāti syllables (other than grade 5), one Khanda or Mishra laya jati composition and further developed sawāl jawāb
- 4.3. Jhaptāl: thāṭ, āmad, laṛi, tatkār, tiśra jāti compositions, parmeltu, two chakkardār parans, four tihāis - including 2 bol jāti and sawāl jawāb
- 4.4. One tarānā in any choice tāla

5. Nritya

- 5.1. One ṭhumri or a similar semi-classical composition (kajri, Chaitī, dadra, hori and so on) based on one of the aṣṭanāyikā
- 5.2. One ghazal
- 5.3. Any two gat chāls / nikās from the selection of: rukhsār, ghunghaṭ, bānsuri or ālingan

6. Creative Exercise

- 6.1. Ability to create movements of nritta compositions as instructed by the examiner
- 6.2. Ability to create a variety of movements for the same narrative – sanchāri bhāva

Safe Dance Practice, Theory, Ancillary skills and File

7. Safe Dance Practice

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

8. Theory

- 8.1. Full knowledge of navarasa with reference to the learnt pieces
- 8.2. Knowledge of aṣṭanāyika
- 8.3. Understanding of the background and meaning of all nritya compositions studied including the names of composers
- 8.4. Knowledge of the folk dances of India that relate to Kathak
- 8.5. Knowledge of pioneering or prominent classical Indian dance practitioners and organisations

9. Ancillary skills

Ability to sing the learnt compositions, demonstrating tāli and khāli

10. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in following order:

- 10.1. The sequence of presentation
- 10.2. Notations of all nritta compositions learnt in this grade, in Bhātkhaṇḍe tāla lipi
- 10.3. All nritya compositions written with meaning
- 10.4. Detailed notes on aṣṭanāyika
- 10.5. Detailed notes on navarasa
- 10.6. A critical review (200 words) of a Kathak performance attended by the candidate
- 10.7. Programme details of Kathak and other performances seen and participated

The Grade 6 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submission on paper, of the complete dance sequence to be presented at the examination
- Prepared dance sequence, with recorded music of no more than twenty minutes' duration with a balance of nritta and nritya aspects of Kathak (approximately 7- 9 minutes to be devoted to nritya) using the following as a guideline: Dhamār -That, āmad, torā, bedam and damdār tihāi, one paran, one chakkardār paran and laṛi. Teentāl or jhaptāl: tihāi, torā/paran/parmelu/laya jāti-bol jāti tihai, laṛi, One nayika composition, one ghazal
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory and questions generated from the performance
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance
- Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

ASSESSMENT – GRADED EXAMINATIONS: GRADE 1 - 6

MARK SCHEME - KATHAK GRADE 1 – 2

TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Laya and tāla – correct pronunciation of rhythmic syllables and accuracy	10
Tatkār – clarity of sound and timing	10
Chakkar	5
Movement - clarity and neatness (AK)	5
Section Total	30
PERFORMANCE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Nritta – content, coverage and timing	20
Nritya compositions - facial expression and use of appropriate movements	10
Performance quality	10
Creative Exercise	5
Section Total	45
SAFE DANCE PRACTICE, THEORY, FILE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Safe Dance Practice for Kathak	5
Theory – response to questions	10
File – adequacy, presentation and response to questions generated from the file	10
Section Total	25
TOTAL	100

MARK SCHEME - KATHAK GRADE 3 - 4

TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Laya and tāla - rhythmic accuracy and clarity of paḍhant	15
Tatkār – rhythmic precision, strength, clarity and accuracy of sound	10
Movement - clarity and neatness (AK)	5
Section Total	30
PERFORMANCE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Nritta – content, coverage and timing	20
Nritya – content, facial expression and appropriate character portrayal	15
Performance quality	5
Creative Exercise	5
Section Total	45
SAFE DANCE PRACTICE, THEORY AND FILE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Safe Dance Practice for Kathak	5
Theory – response to questions	10
File – adequacy, presentation and response to questions generated from the file	10
Section Total	25
TOTAL	100

MARK SCHEME - KATHAK GRADE 5 - 6

TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Laya and tāla - rhythmic accuracy and clarity of paḍhant	15
Movement - clarity and neatness (AK)	5
Section Total	20
PERFORMANCE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Nritta – content, coverage and timing	20
Nritya – content, facial expression and appropriate character portrayal	15
Performance Quality	5
Creative Exercise	10
Section Total	50
SAFE DANCE PRACTICE, THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS AND FILE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Safe Dance Practice for Kathak	5
Theory – response to questions	10
Ancillary skills - singing with tāla	5
File – adequacy, presentation and response to questions generated from the file	10
Section Total	30
TOTAL	100

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

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

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

Candidates must gain at least 25% of the marks attainable in each Section in order to pass the examination overall. In cases where 25% of the marks attainable does not come to a round figure, e.g. 12 1/2, the pass mark for the Section is lowered to the nearest round figure, in this example, 12.1/2, the pass mark for the Section is lowered to the nearest round figure, in this example, 12.

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

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

ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CLASSIFICATION OF RESULTS

Candidates are assessed on their ability to show:

- Technical accuracy with correct placement to the best of their physical facility
- Appropriate use of limbs showing an understanding of the purpose or significance of each movement or sequence of movements
- A sense of line and well-coordinated movements

- An assured performance showing the different qualities of movement required by each section of the examination structure
- Musicality and rhythmic awareness

VOCATIONAL GRADED EXAMINATIONS

INTRODUCTION

RATIONALE

The Vocational Graded Examinations in Kathak, 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 Kathak genre, including an understanding of reference and context. Candidates undertaking a study of the Kathak 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 practicing and in studying independently.

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

AIM

The aim of the ISTD Vocational Graded Examinations in Kathak is to provide an assessment scheme, which gives the basis for the measurement of the individual candidate's progress and development, in preparing to be a professional dance performer or teacher. There are four practical examinations graded to measure appropriate stages of development from a general standard of Kathak education to that of professional competence and readiness.

OBJECTIVES

The syllabus objectives of the Kathak Vocational Graded Examinations are:

- To impart the practical skills in Kathak 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 Kathak in the context of the world of dance
- To lay a foundation of personal resources to survive and succeed in the professional dance world

LEARNING AND PROGRESSION

All Kathak Graded Examinations are concerned with progressive mastery in defined stages. They also develop and demonstrate competence and artistry in, and communication through, the Kathak 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

Recommended lower age limits are set in the interests of the health and safety of the candidate within the demands of the syllabus. There is no lower or upper age limit for Advanced 1 and Advanced 2.

Intermediate Foundation	Recommended minimum age 11
Intermediate	Recommended minimum age 12

PRIOR LEARNING

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

GENDER DISTINCTIONS

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

TIME ALLOWANCES / NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

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

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

MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

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

DRESS REQUIREMENTS

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

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

SYLLABUS CONTENT

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

INTERMEDIATE FOUNDATION

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

PREREQUISITES

A candidate is expected to be familiar with the material of the Grade being assessed as well as all previous Grades and to be able to draw upon this information for any part of any examination. A candidate must have knowledge of up to at least ISTD's Grade 4 in Kathak to start the Vocational Graded Examinations.

Technical Skills

1. Laya and Tāla

- 1.1. Ability to dance on ṭhékā in teentāl and jhaptāl
- 1.2. Introduction to dhamār: demonstration of barābar, dugun and chaugun laya through paṛhant and tatkār
- 1.3. Ability to select the correct laya (jagah) for each composition
- 1.4. Demonstration of dādrā and kerhvā tāla ṭhékā through paṛhant
- 1.5. Understanding the difference between laya jāti and bol jāti compositions
- 1.6. Demonstration of panchajāti and its various rhythmic phrases through paṛhant and practice

2. Movement Vocabulary

- 2.1. Balanced use of double chakkar in nritta sequence
- 2.2. Thorough knowledge and execution of 'basic' and 'ornamental' hand movements (ref: AK)

Performance

3. Nritta and Nritya

- 3.1. Ability to perform in teentāl and jhaptāl in vilambit, madhya and drut laya with an appropriate range of compositions
- 3.2. Jhaptāl tarana or sargam
- 3.3. Dhamaar: tatkār, Four torās / tukrās, two tihais and two parans
- 3.4. Jugalbandi in teentāl
- 3.5. Any one composition from the selection of bhajan / dādrā / kajri / Chaitī/ sufi
- 3.6. A ṭhumri or ghazal
- 3.7. An elaborate kavitt or gat bhāva based on a mythological story/concept

4. Creative Exercise

- 4.1. Ability to create simple nritta movements with instructions given by the examiner
- 4.2. Ability to express and create a variety of movements for the same text using śabdārth, vākyārth and a combination, as instructed by the examiner

Safe Dance Practice, Theory, Ancillary Skills and File

5. Safe Dance Practice

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

6. Theory

- 6.1. Knowledge of rasa theory
- 6.2. Study of aṣṭanāyika
- 6.3. Knowledge of the musical concepts and text used in nritya compositions
- 6.4. Knowledge of the Kathak gharānās and of their pioneers
- 6.5. Notes on general and style-specific warm-up and cool-down
- 6.6. Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Kathak Grades 1-4

7. Ancillary skills

Vocal rendering of musical compositions in tāli and khāli.

8. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in the following order:

- 8.1. The sequence of the presentation
- 8.2. Notations of all learnt nritta compositions in Bhātkhaṇḍe tāla lipi
- 8.3. Notations of dādrā and kerhvā ṭhékā
- 8.4. Notes explaining the text used in the nritya compositions and their connection with the rasa evoked
- 8.5. A written record, covering the above mentioned sections on theory
- 8.6. A critical review (100 words) of a Kathak performance attended by the candidate

- 8.7. Collected relevant materials supporting the experience of additional dance training / courses and of observing dance performances

The Intermediate Foundation examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submission on paper, of the complete dance sequence to be presented at the examination
- A performance of a prepared dance sequence, with live music accompaniment, of no more than 25 minutes demonstrating ability to perform the syllabus through an appropriate proportion of nritta and nritya compositions (approximately 9-12 min of nritya)
- Response to questions testing theory and questions generated from the performance
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually.

INTERMEDIATE

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

Technical Skills

1. Laya and Tāla

- 1.1. Demonstration of panchgun laya (5 layas) in teentāl
- 1.2. Demonstration of ṭhékā of all learnt tālas through tatkār and paṛhant with clarity and emphasis on its correct pronunciation
- 1.3. Ability to demonstrate barābar, dugun and chaugun ṭhékā of ektāl through paṛhant and tatkār
- 1.4. Confidence and clarity in executing bol jāti and laya jāti compositions

2. Movement Vocabulary

Knowledge and execution of all 'stances' or thāṭ (ref: AK).

Performance

3. Nritta and Nritya

- 3.1. Ability to sustain a performance with appropriately complex compositions in teentāl, jhaptāl, including a jugalbandi
- 3.2. Dhamār tāla: two thāṭ, one āmad, four toṛās / tukṛās, four tihāis (bedam and damdār), laṛi, two parans, a parmeli and one chakkardār paran
- 3.3. Ektāl: tatkār, three toṛās / tukṛās and three tihāis
- 3.4. One tarānā or sargam in ektāl / dhamār
- 3.5. One ghazal
- 3.6. One ṭhumri / kajri/ chaiti / hori based on one of the ashtnayikas
- 3.7. One bhajan/ devotional song

4. Creative Exercise

- 4.1. Ability to create movements with the syllables given by the examiner
- 4.2. Demonstration of abhinaya with the given text

Safe Dance Practice, Theory, Ancillary skills and File

5. Safe Dance Practice

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

6. Theory

- 6.1. Comprehensive knowledge of navarasa
- 6.2. Knowledge of the languages and the dialects used in the nritya compositions
- 6.3. Knowledge of traditional and contemporary Kathak costumes, make-up and Jewellery
- 6.4. Knowledge of the Kathak exponents and their specific styles
- 6.5. Study of ashtanayika
- 6.6. Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Kathak Grades 1-4 and Intermediate Foundation although taking the Intermediate Foundation examination is not a pre-requisite

7. Ancillary Skills

Ability to sing the learnt nritya compositions, demonstrating tali and khali

8. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in the following order:

- 8.1. Sequence of Presentation
- 8.2. Notations of all learnt nritta compositions in Bhātkhaṇḍe tāla lipi
- 8.3. Notes explaining the text used in the nritya compositions and its connection with the rasa evoked
- 8.4. A written record, covering the above mentioned sections on theory
- 8.5. A critical review (200 words) of a Kathak performance attended by the candidate
- 8.6. Collected relevant materials supporting the experience of additional dance training / courses and of observing dance performances

The Intermediate examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submission on paper, of the complete dance sequence to be presented at the examination
- A performance of a prepared dance sequence, with live music accompaniment, of no more than 30 minutes, demonstrating at least two different tālas and ability to perform the syllabus through an appropriate proportion of nritta and nritya compositions (approximately 10-13 minutes to be devoted to nritya)
- Response to questions testing theory and questions generated from the performance
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually.

ADVANCED 1

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

Technical Skills

1. Laya and Tāla

- 1.1. Ability to demonstrate aṣṭamangal tāla in barābar, dugun and chaugun laya through paṛhant and tatkār
- 1.2. Ability to demonstrate kramalaya in teentāl (8 layas)
- 1.3. Ability to improvise and create simple rhythmic patterns in teentāl, jhaptāl and dhamār
- 1.4. Ability to dance teentāl, jhaptāl, dhamār and ektāl compositions on ṭhékā

2. Movement Vocabulary

Knowledge and execution of all 'ornamental' hand movements and 'finishing positions' (ref: AK).

Performance

3. Nritta and Nritya

- 3.1. Ability to hold performance in teentāl, jhaptāl, dhamār and ektāl with rhythmically complex compositions
- 3.2. Lead jugalbandi in all learnt tālas and in different tempi
- 3.3. One expressional item portraying a nāyakheda
- 3.4. Any two compositions from the selection of bhajan / vandanā / śloka/ ṭhumri / hori / kajri / chaiti / sufi

4. Creative Exercise

A short dance piece choreographed solely by the candidate using Kathak movement vocabulary.

Safe Dance, Theory, Ancillary Skills and File

5. Safe Dance Practice

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

6. Theory

- 6.1. Knowledge of the Natya Sastra and Abhinaya Darpana
- 6.2. Thorough understanding of the bhāva and rasa theory
- 6.3. Understanding of sthāyi and sanchāri bhāva
- 6.4. Comprehensive study of Kathak dance artists and their unique roles in the development of Kathak
- 6.5. Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Kathak Grades 1-4

7. Ancillary Skills

Ability to play leherā in teentāl, jhaptāl, dhamār appropriate instrument should be made available for assessment.

8. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in following order

- 8.1. Sequence of presentation
- 8.2. Notations of all learnt nritta compositions in Bhātkhaṇḍe tāla lipi
- 8.3. Notes explaining the text used in the nritya compositions and its full understanding
- 8.4. Description of the created dance piece including the process and the used technique
- 8.5. A written record, covering the above mentioned sections on theory
- 8.6. Relevant materials supporting the experience of additional dance training / courses and of observing dance performances

The Advanced 1 Examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submission on paper, of the complete dance sequence to be presented at the examination
- A performance of a prepared dance sequence, with live music accompaniment, of no more than 35 minutes, demonstrating at least two different tālas and ability to perform the syllabus through an appropriate proportion of nritta and nritya compositions (approximately 12-14 minutes for nritya)
- Response to questions testing theory and questions generated from the performance
- Further individual demonstration as requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance.
Demonstration of the creative task

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually.

ADVANCED 2

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

Technical skills

1. Laya and tāla

- 1.1. Ability to demonstrate barābar, dugun, tigon and chaugun ṭhékā of all learnt tālas
- 1.2. Ability to use jāti in different tālas other than teentāl
- 1.3. Use of ati vilambit laya

2. Movement Vocabulary

Knowledge and execution of 'chakkar', 'stances' and 'feet positions' (ref: AK).

Performance

3. Nritta and Nritya

- 3.1. Confident performance of complete nritta sequence with appropriately complex compositions in teentāl, jhaptāl, dhamār and ektāl
- 3.2. Aṣṭamangal tāla: laṛi, āmad, three toṛās / tukṛās, three tihāis and two parans
- 3.3. Understanding and ability to create upaj
- 3.4. One chaturang, clearly marking all four segments
- 3.5. Ability to perform a dādrā or ṭhumri and one ghazal with explanation prior to dancing
- 3.6. A gat bhav or baithak ka bhav showing the various rasas and characters

4. Creative exercise

- 4.1. Ability to improvise and create upaj with the syllables given by the examiner
- 4.2. Ability to create a simple tihāi in any of the covered tālas, as requested by the examiner
- 4.3. On request, ability to create appropriate movement and depict correct bhāva in character portrayal of any nāyak and nāyika

Safe Dance Practice, Theory, Ancillary Skills and File:

5. Safe Dance Practice

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

6. Theory

- 6.1. Knowledge of the narrative and historical / mythological context of all learnt dance items
- 6.2. Comprehensive study of nāyak and nāyika bheda
- 6.3. Detailed study of the different social and cultural influences in the evolution of Kathak, in terms of its movement vocabulary and music
- 6.4. Knowledge of use of stagecraft and lighting design
- 6.5. Study of appropriate nutrition for professional dancers

7. Ancillary Skills:

Ability to play teentāl ṭhékā on tabla, ability to play leherā in teentāl, jhaptāl, dhamār, ektāl (appropriate instrument should be made available for assessment), ability to sing all learnt musical compositions on ṭhékā with tali and Khāli

8. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder) in following order:

- 8.1. Sequence of presentation
- 8.2. Notations of all learnt nritta compositions in Bhātkhaṇḍe tāla lipi
- 8.3. Notes explaining the text used in the nritya and its connection with the rasa evoked
- 8.4. A written record covering the above mentioned sections on theory
- 8.5. Collected relevant materials supporting the experience of additional dance training / courses and of observing dance performances

The Advanced 2 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file
- Submission on paper, of the complete dance sequence to be presented at the examination
- A performance of a prepared dance sequence, with live music accompaniment, of no more than 45 minutes, demonstrating compositions from three tālas and ability to perform the syllabus through an appropriate proportion of nritta and nritya items (approximately 15 to 17 minutes of nritya)
- Response to questions testing theory and the performance
- The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance
- Further individual demonstration will be requested by the examiner from Vocational syllabi as a compulsory part of this examination

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually.

ASSESSMENT – VOCATIONAL GRADED EXAMINATIONS

INTERMEDIATE FOUNDATION

TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Laya and tāla – rhythmic control, accuracy and dynamics of parhant	15
Movement vocabulary – neatness and coverage and other skills	5
Section Total	20
PERFORMANCE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Nritta – content and coverage	20
Nritya – content, appropriate characterisation, depth and involvement	15
Creative exercise – ideas and imagination	10
Performance quality - presentation, enjoyment and rapport with musicians	5
Section Total	50
SAFE DANCE PRACTICE, THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS AND FILE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Safe Dance Practice for Kathak	5
Theory – response to questions	10
Ancillary skills	5
File – adequacy, presentation and response to questions generated from the file	10
Section Total	30
TOTAL	100

INTERMEDIATE

TECHNICAL SKILLS	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Laya and tāla – rhythmic control, accuracy and dynamics of parhant	15
Section Total	15
PERFORMANCE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Nritta – content and coverage	25
Nritya – content, appropriate characterisation, depth and involvement	20
Creative exercise – ideas and imagination	10
Performance quality - presentation, enjoyment and rapport with musicians	5
Section Total	60
SAFE DANCE PRACTICE, THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS AND FILE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Safe Dance Practice for Kathak	5
Theory – response to questions	10
Ancillary Skills	5
File – adequacy, presentation and response to questions generated from the file	5
Section Total	25
TOTAL	100

ADVANCED 1 AND ADVANCED 2

TECHNCIAL SKILLS	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Laya and tāla – rhythmic control, accuracy and dynamics of parhant	15
Section Total	15
PERFORMANCE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Nritta – content and coverage	25
Nritya – content, appropriate characterisation, depth and involvement	20
Creative exercise – ideas and imagination	10
Performance quality - presentation, enjoyment and rapport with musicians	5
Section Total	60
SAFE DANCE PRACTICE, THEORY, ANCILLARY SKILLS AND FILE	
Title of component	Marks attainable
Safe Dance Practice for Kathak	5
Theory- response to questions	10
Ancillary skills	5
File – adequacy and presentation	5
Section Total	25
TOTAL	100

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

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

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

Candidates will, however, be unsuccessful if

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

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

Results are indicated using the following attainment bands:

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

Full attainment descriptors are given further below.

CLASSIFICATION OF RESULTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

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

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

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

RESULTS AND CERTIFICATION

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

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

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

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

EXAMINATION RE-TAKES

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

QUALIFICATION REGULATION

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

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