



# Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing Contemporary

## **IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF TEACHERS OF DANCING**

### **Contemporary Dance**

SYLLABUS OUTLINE OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE INTERMEDIATE FOUNDATION AND INTERMEDIATE  
EXAMINATION

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# 1. VOCATIONAL GRADED EXAMINATIONS IN DANCE

## INTRODUCTION

The *Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing* Vocational Graded Examinations in Contemporary Dance, Intermediate Foundation and Intermediate, develop the candidate's expertise in such a way as to provide the basis for either further professional dance training or teacher training. Through the study of the syllabus, candidates are following a vocational path, requiring a high level of commitment and understanding of safe dance practice.

Successful candidates at this level should show a high standard of technique, a sound knowledge and understanding of the Contemporary Dance genre and secure performing skills. Candidates studying the Contemporary Dance Vocational Graded syllabus should also typically display a sense of self-awareness and be self-motivated in terms of their personal development.

A degree of personal interpretation is encouraged, and the candidate is expected to show their artistic application. Candidates will need to show the qualities of professionalism, commitment and focus. This would typically result in a successful candidate spending significant additional time each week in lessons, practising and studying independently.

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. The Vocational Graded Examinations are regulated qualifications on the Regulated Qualifications Framework. Intermediate Foundation is located at Level 2 and Intermediate at Level 3.

## AIMS

*Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing* Vocational Graded Examinations in Contemporary Dance provide an assessment scheme, which give the basis for the measurement of an individual candidate's progress and development, in preparing for professional dance performing or teaching careers. The practical, vocational examinations are graded to measure appropriate stages of development from a general standard of Contemporary Dance education to that of professional competence and readiness.

## OBJECTIVES

The syllabus objectives of the Contemporary Dance Vocational Graded Examinations are to:

- acquire correct posture, stance and distribution of weight;
- develop core strength to support correct use of stance and control of the body;
- acquire ability to isolate and coordinate different body parts to perform movement phrases with efficient use of the body;
- learn how to use breath to initiate and enhance movement;
- develop ability to drop and suspend the weight of the body;
- develop use of the body to achieve expected alignment and shape of the body;
- develop ability to vary quality and flow of movement;
- develop ability to move in space, using appropriate directions, pathways and levels;
- gain a comprehensive technique in Contemporary Dance;

- develop a sophisticated sense of performance;
- understand the process of creating movement phrases through structured improvisation;
- perform accurately and interpret a choreographer's work;
- develop a self-confident performer personae.

## 2. ENTRY CONDITIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

### MINIMUM AGE

There is a recommended minimum age of 13 years for Intermediate Foundation and for Intermediate. This is to ensure that candidates are sufficiently physically and intellectually developed to safely undertake the demands of the syllabus.

### PRIOR LEARNING

There are no prior examination requirements for Intermediate Foundation. Candidates will be required to achieve the Intermediate Foundation qualification prior to entry into Intermediate and Intermediate qualification will be required prior to entry of Advanced 1.

### GENDER DISTINCTIONS

This syllabus has no gender distinctions.

### TIME ALLOWANCES/NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

	1 candidate	2 candidates	3 candidates
<b>Intermediate Foundation</b>	60 minutes	60 minutes	75 minutes
<b>Intermediate</b>	60 minutes	60 minutes	75 minutes

### MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

The *Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing* Contemporary Dance Syllabus official set music should be used for these examinations. The examiner will provide the accompaniment for the Structured Improvisation task. A sound system capable of playing CDs or other digital audio equipment at a volume suitable for the venue should be provided. Music system operators must not be teachers or assistant teachers, or another candidate in the session, should be seated at a discreet distance from the examiner and where possible should aim to have their back to the examiner. No notes should be taken throughout.

### DRESS REQUIREMENTS

Unitard, lycra/cotton lycra shorts, dance tights with a tight-fitting leotard or t-shirt. Candidates should work in bare feet or foot thongs if required. Hair should be neat and securely held in place. Long hair should be tied back to allow a clear neck and head-line. Jewellery or body piercing should not be worn.

### USE OF A FOAM BLOCK

Students may use a foam block if necessary during floor work.

### STUDIO LAYOUT FOR THE EXAMINATION

Examinations should be conducted with the largest dimension being the width of the performance space and the smallest dimension being front to back. Mirrors in the studio should be completely covered or made opaque.

## **APPLICATION FOR REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT**

Reasonable adjustments can be applied for via the *Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing* website with the *Application for Reasonable Adjustments* form on <https://www.istd.org/examinations/quality-assurance/>

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

The *Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing* approach to Equality and Diversity in all examinations is clearly set out in the *Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing, Equality and Diversity Policy* on the website on <https://www.istd.org/teach/quality-assurance/>

### **3. SYLLABUS CONTENT**

#### **Intermediate Foundation**

##### **1. Warm up**

Standing breathings  
Going to the floor  
Meditative body limbering  
Alexander Technique position  
Limbering and the plough

##### **2. Floor work**

Curved back bounces  
Sitting breathings  
Spirals  
Percussive contractions  
Limbering stretch in second  
Feet coming forward with contraction  
Exercise in fourth with leg to second  
Fish asana going to fourth  
Roll up

##### **3. Standing work**

Hip openings  
Parallel brushes with fold and extend  
Pliés in first and second

##### **4. Standing work integrating fall theme**

Turned out brushes with hip fall  
Hip fall on the spot  
Tilt on the spot  
Hip fall and tilt on the spot

##### **5. Travelling**

Lunge lean across the floor  
Tilt across the floor  
Tilt and lunge lean across the floor  
Tilt with turn around the back  
Lunge run  
Lunge run and touch the floor  
Lunge run and touch the floor with turn

##### **6. Standing work: Jumps**

Jump preparation one and two  
Jump preparation three

##### **7. Travelling work: Jumps**

Travelling hop and lunge lean  
Travelling hop and lunge lean with waltz  
Travelling hop and lunge lean with turning waltz  
Travelling hop and lunge lean with turning waltz, bell jumps and leap

## **8. Solo work**

Structured improvisation – unset task to be given by examiner  
Solo – set solo

## **9. Centre practice**

Bows

# **Intermediate**

## **1. Warm up**

Standing breathings  
Going to the floor  
Meditative body limbering  
Alexander Technique position  
Limbering and the plough

## **2. Floor work**

Curved and straight back bounces  
Scoop breathings  
Scoop and sitting breathings with extending legs  
Spiral going to fourth  
Snake contractions  
Limbering stretch in second and deep contractions in second  
Rocking foot exercise  
Exercise in fourth with leg to second and contraction  
Fish asana contraction with crawl  
Roll up

## **3. Standing work**

Hip openings with high release  
Parallel brushes with high release  
Plies in first and second, adding fifth and fourth crouches

## **4. Standing work integrating fall theme**

Tuned out brushes with stride  
Turned out high brushes with stride and contraction  
Stride on the spot  
High walks with quarter turn on straight legs  
High walks with quarter turn on bent legs

## **5. Travelling**

Skidder  
Skidder with diagonal chop  
Skidder with diagonal chop and turn  
Forward walks on straight legs  
Forward walks on bent legs  
Sideways walks on straight legs  
Sideways walks on bent legs

## **6. Standing work: Jumps**

Prances on the spot

## **7. Travelling Jumps**

Prances moving sideways

Prances moving sideways with stride leap

Prances moving sideways with stride leap and turn

Stride leap preparation

Stride leap

Stride leap sequence

Side prances with stride leaps and attitude hops

## **8. Solo work**

Structured improvisation – unset task to be given by examiner

Solo – set solo

## **9. Centre practice**

Bows



## 4. ASSESSMENT

### LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

<b>Learning outcomes</b> The learner will be able to:	<b>Assessment criteria</b> The learner can:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of <b>musicality</b> in Contemporary Dance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Perform exercises and dances to music</li><li>Improvise to music</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure <b>technical skills</b> in Contemporary Dance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Demonstrate physical and technical competence</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the <b>vocabulary and technique</b> of Contemporary Dance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme</li><li>Create short, coherent sequences of movement</li><li>Recall exercises, sequences and dances</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Apply and demonstrate a range of <b>performance skills</b> in Contemporary Dance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills</li></ul>

### ATTAINMENT

Vocational Graded Examinations are assessed externally by visiting examiners recruited and trained by the *Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing*.

In the examination the examiner awards a mark of between 0 and 10 for each component (shown on the accompanying grid). A mark of 0 indicates that nothing of value was presented for assessment.

### LEVELS OF RESPONSE MARKING CRITERIA

Each component of the assessment is shown on the grid as a column and broken down into mark bands, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor indicates the quality that will be expected in the candidate's evidence for that mark band.

### IDENTIFYING THE CORRECT MARK BAND

Start at the lowest mark band and see whether the evidence meets the descriptor for that mark band. If it meets the lowest mark band then go to the next one and decide if it meets this mark band, and so on, until you have a match between the mark band descriptor and the students' evidence. Once you have identified the correct mark band (as above), you need to decide which mark to allocate within the band. The lower mark indicates that the student has just met the requirement described in the band, the upper mark indicates that the evidence is clear but that the student has not quite met the requirements set out in the next mark band.

**DETERMINE AN OVERALL MARK**

The candidate is assessed against all components of assessment. The marks for each component of assessment should be added up to determine the final overall mark out of 100.

## LEVELS OF RESPONSE MARKING CRITERIA AND INDICATIVE CONTENT

		Physical and Technical Skills /40				Performance, Presentation and Response /40				Artistic Application / 20	
		Floor Work	Standing Work	Travelling Work	Jumps & Elevation	Style and Theme	Use of space	Presentation Skills	Recall of Syllabus Content	Structured Improvisation	Set solo
9-10	Clear Just	Excellent									
7-8	Clear Just	Good									
5-6	Clear Just	Fair									
3-4	Clear Just	Limited									
1-2	Clear Just	Weak									
0		Nothing worthy of credit									
Indicative Content		eg. initiation, coordination, control, flexibility, mobility, strength, stamina, posture, isolation, extension, alignment, shape, personal range of movement, balance, transference of weight, propulsion, elevation				e.g. embodiment of movement content, weight, energy, style, theme	eg. general spatial awareness, awareness of others, use of peripheral vision, directions, pathways, levels, embodiment of space	e.g. commitment, concentration, confidence, projection, focus, expression, emphasis, timing, musicality	Accuracy of demonstration; response to instructions	e.g. response to instructions, innovative manipulation of movement material, response to music, choreographic coherence of finished improvisation, artistry	Content: accuracy of demonstration, use of physical and technical skills
		Safe practice								Safe Practice	

## 5. AWARDING AND REPORTING

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

Candidates will, however, be unsuccessful if:

- 20% of the marks attainable or below are given for any one component
- 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.

Title of component	Available marks
<b>Section A – Physical and Technical Skills</b>	
Floor Work	10
Standing Work	10
Travelling Work	10
Jumps and Elevation	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Section B – Performance, Presentation &amp; Response</b>	
Style and Theme	10
Use of Space	10
Presentation Skills	10
Recall of Syllabus Content	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Section C – Artistic Application</b>	
Structured Improvisation	10
Set Solo	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>100</b>

The marks are aggregated and the overall mark given out of 100. If all sections are passed then the overall result is indicated as follows:

Grade	Total Marks
Distinction	80-100 marks
Merit	65-79 marks
Pass	50-64 marks
Grade Not Attained	0-49 marks

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

## CLASSIFICATION OF RESULTS

Candidates receive both a final mark expressed as a percentage and an Attainment Grade. It is not expected that a candidate in a particular Attainment Grade will necessarily demonstrate all of the characteristics listed in that band, but will demonstrate most.

ATTAINMENT GRADE DESCRIPTORS
<b>DISTINCTION – 80-100</b>
<p>A candidate who achieves a '<b>Distinction</b>' classification is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• extremely strong technique;</li><li>• high clarity of intention in execution of the movement;</li><li>• excellent precision in the technique of the genre;</li><li>• excellent use of dynamics and spatial elements;</li><li>• very confident and accurate responses to instructions, questions asked and/or tasks set;</li><li>• very strong performance skills.</li></ul>
<b>MERIT – 65-79 marks</b>
<p>A candidate who achieves a '<b>Merit</b>' classification is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• well established technique;</li><li>• good clarity of intention in execution of the movement;</li><li>• good precision in the technique of the genre;</li><li>• sophisticated use of dynamics and spatial elements;</li><li>• confident and accurate responses to instructions, questions asked and/or tasks set;</li><li>• good performance skills.</li></ul>
<b>PASS – 50-64 marks</b>
<p>A candidate who achieves a '<b>Pass</b>' classification is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• generally established technique;</li><li>• some clarity of intention in execution of the movement;</li><li>• some precision in the technique of the genre;</li><li>• fair understanding of the use of dynamics and spatial elements;</li><li>• broadly relevant and appropriate response to questions asked and/or tasks set, but encouragement may be required to illicit answers;</li><li>• competent performing skills.</li></ul>

## NOT ATTAINED – 00-49 marks

A candidate who achieves a 'Not Attained' classification is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- poor or limited technical accomplishment;
- limited clarity of intention in execution of the movement;
- poor or limited grasp of the technique of the genre;
- limited understanding of the use of dynamics and spatial elements;
- weak or limited response to questions asked and/or tasks set;
- weak or limited performing skills.

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.

## ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS

The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing approach to Enquiries about Results in all examinations is clearly set out in the *Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing Enquiries & Appeals Policy* on the website.  
[www.istd.org](http://www.istd.org)

## 6. REGULATION

Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations, Diploma in Dance Education (DDE) and Diploma in Dance Pedagogy (DDP) 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). All qualifications on the Regulated Qualifications Framework RQF have a 'size' which is expressed in terms of Total Qualification Time (TQT). One credit corresponds to 10 hours of learning for the typical learner, which is divided into Guided Learning hours (GLH), which is broadly contact time with the teacher, and personal study time, which together make Total Qualification Time (TQT).

Qualification Title	Ofqual Qualification Number	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Total Qualification Time (TQT)	Qualification Credits
ISTD Level 2 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate Foundation	501/0764/1	150	275	28
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate	501/0728/8	150	275	28
Unit Title	Unit Reference Number	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)		Qualification Credits
Vocational Graded Examination in Contemporary Dance: Intermediate Foundation	F/617/5975	150		28
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate	K/618/7067	150		28

### SUITABILITY FOR PURPOSE

The *Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing* is confident that this qualification meets the requirements of validity

- reliability
- comparability
- manageability
- minimising bias

through

- the appointment of suitably qualified qualification developers/subject experts by virtue of subject knowledge, qualifications or experience
- suitably qualified and experienced independent examiners
- regular examiner training and standardisation
- effective compliance monitoring and reviews of outcomes to maintain the standards for this qualification
- regular reviews of syllabus content and methods of assessment
- quality assurance checks on complaints, Enquiries and Appeals
- working with CDMT (Industry Lead) to standardise against the work of other validated dance awarding organisations
- scrutiny of results and statistical analysis of outcomes
- commitment to Equality and Diversity of opportunity