



**Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing  
Contemporary**

# **Vocational Graded Examinations**

## **Specification**



**For teaching from  
September 2022**

**For exams in  
2022 onwards**

Ref/S1502 version 1.0

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Page 2 image: Dancer performing a contraction ►



# 1 About the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD)

Established in 1904, with a mission to educate the public in the art of dancing in all its forms; today the Society strives to advance excellence in dance teaching and education. We promote knowledge in each specialty and provide up-to-date techniques in the ever-changing world of dance. We work hard to maintain and improve teaching standards in schools, academies and performing arts settings across the world.

We are known for our quality of teaching, our diversity of dance forms, and a passion for raising standards.

We put our worldwide members – teachers of dance – at the heart of everything we do. Supporting their career development and progression by providing a range of resources, events, training, and continuous professional development, all designed to support their journey through dance.

The Society is a registered educational charity (250397), regulated examinations board and membership association.

## 2 ISTD Contemporary Dance

### Introduction

The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing Vocational Graded Examinations in Contemporary Dance, Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced 1, 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.

### About the syllabus

Created by Dr Ross McKim, the well-known dancer, choreographer, philosopher, and Artistic Director of the Rambert School (from 1985–2015), our Contemporary dance syllabus is informed by Eastern concepts of subtle energy and draws influence from choreographers Martha Graham, Erick Hawkins and Robert Cohan. The three levels of Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced 1, provide a progressive training method which introduces students to the fundamentals of contemporary dance technique and performance through the study of different movement themes at each level, specially created solos, and the inclusion of structured improvisation to enable students to explore, develop and create their own movement vocabulary. The themes are:

**Fall:** Intermediate Foundation

**Walk:** Intermediate

**Contraction:** Advanced 1

# 3 Qualification purpose

In this section, you will find information on the purposes of the following qualifications in this specification:

**Level 2:** Intermediate Foundation in Contemporary Dance

**Level 3:** Intermediate in Contemporary Dance

**Level 4:** Advanced 1 in Contemporary Dance

These qualifications have been developed to provide learners with knowledge, fundamental skills and understanding of contemporary dance.

The breadth of content in each qualification provides learners with opportunities to develop their technique, artistry, and creativity. The progressive approach to the learning of content enables learners to deeply experience the theme at each level, and to develop their understanding and ability to apply the theme to movement. Through the inspired influences of Ross' work, learners gain a sense of inner calm and wellbeing and the possibility of exploring mindfulness techniques as part of the training.

Syllabus exercises are complemented by the study of Spirals at all levels and the inclusion of Structured Improvisation, reflecting industry practice whereby dancers are tasked with generating their own movement in response to instructions. In addition, a Solo has been created by a different choreographer at each level, allowing learners to expand their contemporary dance vocabulary and apply holistic learning to each movement theme.

## 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 objectives of the Contemporary Dance Vocational Graded Examinations are to:

- gain a comprehensive understanding of technique in contemporary dance
- acquire correct posture, stance, and distribution of weight
- develop core strength to support stance and control of the body
- develop the ability to isolate and coordinate different body parts to perform movement phrases with efficiency
- develop the use of the body to achieve alignment and shape
- develop the use of breath to initiate and enhance movement
- develop the ability to drop and suspend the weight of the body
- develop the ability to vary the quality and flow of movement
- develop the ability to move in and through space, using appropriate directions, pathways, and levels
- develop a sense of performance and the ability to confidently present work an audience
- perform choreography with accuracy and sensitivity
- develop an understanding of the process of creating movement phrases through structured improvisation.

## 4 Transferable skills

### Performing skills

- Artistry
- Communication
- Dynamic and rhythmic awareness
- Expression
- Fluency
- Phrasing
- Focus
- Musicality
- Projection
- Sensitivity to others
- Spatial awareness

### Technical skills

- Accuracy
- Application of feedback
- Application of technique
- Coordination
- Creative engagement with movement material
- Fitness
- Flexibility
- Kinaesthetic awareness
- Mastery
- Memory and recall
- Movement intensity appropriate to the style
- Placement
- Rhythm
- Sensitivity to the cultural framework and/or stylistic influences of the technique
- Stamina
- Strength
- Timing
- Understanding of anatomy and physiology

### Personal skills

- Ability to analyse
- Application of knowledge
- Commitment
- Confidence
- Concentration
- Conviction
- Cooperation and teamwork
- Creativity
- Critical self-reflection
- Discipline
- Individuality
- Mental and physical wellbeing
- Perseverance
- Problem solving
- Respect
- Response to feedback
- Self-challenge
- Self-management
- Self-motivation
- Setting and achieving goals
- Understanding and appreciation of cultural framework, style and genre

## 5 Industry and student endorsements

“

I am delighted to have played a part in the creation of this new syllabus as I believe that it recognises the significant development of contemporary dance that has taken place over the years in the UK, and that it represents an important milestone in its future development.

Neville Campbell, Intermediate Solo Choreographer

“

The syllabus is geared towards students with different dance experience. It is very adaptable.

Laura Flanagan, The BRIT School for Performing Arts and Technology

“

The ISTD Contemporary Syllabus offers the teacher the necessary tools to deliver an informed and complete contemporary technique class. A class where students will feel inspired, challenged and empowered.

Antonio Borriello, Phoenix Dance Youth Academy Coordinator, ISTD Contemporary teaching team member

“

I'm delighted I have been tasked with a small contribution of creating a solo for this new contemporary dance syllabus. Having insight and input leaves me optimistic and believing these changes will impact positively on the dancers engaged in the programme. The dance sector has much to gain from this training syllabus which can only add value to not only what we do but how we do it!

Sharon Watson, Principal and CEO, Northern School of Contemporary Dance, Advanced 1 Solo Choreographer

“

It is deep work; not about making the shape but rather understanding where it originates from.' 'I feel calm, quite meditative, very powerful because you feel connection to energy from the floor.' 'I feel more aware of the way my body can move and that can be applied to other dance forms.

Students from The BRIT School for Performing Arts and Technology

# 6 Qualification structure and regulation

## Regulation – UK

ISTD Vocational Graded Examination qualifications are regulated in the UK by:

- Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) in England
- Qualifications Wales
- Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA Regulation) 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). There are nine qualification levels in the framework, labelled in order of difficulty from Entry Level to Level 8. For further information, visit <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>.

Size of the qualification on the RQF 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 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 (RQF) are as follows:

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours (GLH)	Total qualification time (TQT)	Total 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
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1	501/0760/4	150	325	33

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
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1	R/650/2623	150		33

## Regulation – Europe

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is an overarching framework that links the qualifications of different countries together and allows for comparison and translation. The EQF has eight levels across which qualifications can be mapped. The levels do not correspond directly with the UK's Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), although they are similar. The following table shows the level of our Vocational Examination qualifications on the RQF and the EQF.

Qualification title	RQF Level	EQF Level
Intermediate Foundation	Level 2	Level 3
Intermediate	Level 3	Level 4
Advanced 1	Level 4	Level 5

## 7 UCAS Points

In the UK, our Vocational Graded Examination qualifications can contribute towards entry into higher education through the allocation of UCAS points. UCAS tariff points translate your qualifications and grades into a numerical value, which some universities, colleges, and conservatoires may refer to in their course entry requirements.

Intermediate	Tariff points	Advanced 1	Tariff points
Distinction	20	Distinction	24
Merit	14	Merit	20
Pass	8	Pass	16

The number of points they can get depends on how well they performed in their examination i.e. Distinction, Merit or Pass.

## 8 Equivalence of qualification levels

Qualification level	Level	Equivalence
Intermediate Foundation	2	Equivalent to GCSE standard
Intermediate	3	Equivalent to A-Level and T-Level standard
Advanced 1	4	Equivalent to the first year of a degree or a Certificate of Higher Education or Higher National qualification at Level 4

### Equivalence exam qualification structure

ISTD Qualifications	UK National Levels	UK National Qualifications
Primary	Level 0 KS3 (up to year 9)	KS3 (Entry level)
Grade 1, 2 and 3	Level 1 KS4 (year 10 and 11)	GCSE 5-1 (C-G)
Grade 4 and 5 and Intermediate Foundation	Level 2 KS4 (year 10 and 11)	GCSE 9-6 (A*-B)
Grade 6 and Intermediate	Level 3 KS5 (year 12 and 13)	A Levels and T-levels
Advanced 1 and 2, plus Diploma in Dance Education	Level 4 Tertiary, Vocational or Higher Education	1st Year Degree
2nd Year Degree	Level 5 Tertiary, Vocational or Higher Education	2nd Year Degree
Diploma in Dance Pedagogy	Level 6 Tertiary, Vocational or Higher Education	Bachelors Degree

# 9 Entry conditions and general information

## Minimum age

There is a recommended minimum age of 13 years for Intermediate Foundation and above.

## Entry conditions

Entries must be submitted via a teacher who holds a relevant membership with the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.

## Prior learning

There are no prior examination requirements for Intermediate Foundation. Candidates are required to achieve the Intermediate Foundation qualification prior to entry for Intermediate. The Intermediate qualification is required prior to entry for Advanced 1.

## Language

All exams and assessments are conducted in English.

## Summary information

Examination	Number of candidates	Age	Time allowances		
			1 candidate	2 candidates	3 candidates
Intermediate Foundation	1 – 3	13+	60 minutes	60 minutes	75 minutes
Intermediate	1 – 3	13+	60 minutes	60 minutes	75 minutes
Advanced 1	1 – 3	13+	75 minutes	75 minutes	90 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.

Music system operators should be seated at a discreet distance from the examiner and where possible should aim to have their back to the examiner. Music system operators cannot be teachers, assistant teachers, or another candidate in the session.

## Clothing

Unitard, tight fitting stretch shorts or dance tights with a tight-fitting leotard or t-shirt to allow the lines of the body to be clearly seen. Candidates should work in bare feet or foot thongs if desired. Hair should be neat and securely held in place. Long hair should be tied back to allow a clear neck and headline. Jewellery or body piercings should not be worn.

## Equipment

Candidates may use a foam block if desired 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.

# 10 Qualifications

This section sets out the required teaching and learning content and how they should be delivered. The learning and teaching content for each qualification in the specification is set out in a similar way.

Learners should take examinations only once the learning and teaching content have been covered in full.

## Intermediate Foundation

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 2 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate Foundation	501/0764/1	150	275	28

## Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
<b>LO1</b> Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the <b>vocabulary and technique</b> of Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely</li> </ul>
<b>LO2</b> Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure <b>technical skills</b> in Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform exercises, sequences, and dances</li> </ul>
<b>LO3</b> Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of <b>musicality</b> in Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform exercises and dances to music</li> <li>• Create short, coherent sequences of movement to music</li> </ul>
<b>LO4</b> Apply and demonstrate a range of <b>performance skills</b> in Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills</li> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme</li> </ul>

## Syllabus content

### Warm up

Warm up: Standing breathings, going to the floor, meditative body limbering, Alexander Technique position

Limbering and the plough

### 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

### Standing work

Hip openings

Parallel brushes with fold and extend

Pliés in first and second

### 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

### 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

### Standing work: Jumps

Jump preparation one and two

Jump preparation three

### 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

### Solo work

Structured improvisation – unset task to be given by examiner

Solo – set solo

### Centre practice

Bows

# Intermediate

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate	501/0728/8	150	275	28

## Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
<b>LO1</b> Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the <b>vocabulary and technique</b> of Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely</li> </ul>
<b>LO2</b> Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure <b>technical skills</b> in Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform exercises, sequences, and dances</li> </ul>
<b>LO3</b> Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of <b>musicality</b> in Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform exercises and dances to music</li> <li>• Create short, coherent sequences of movement to music</li> </ul>
<b>LO4</b> Apply and demonstrate a range of <b>performance skills</b> in Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills</li> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme</li> </ul>

## Syllabus content

### Warm up

Warm up: Standing breathings, going to the floor, meditative body limbering, Alexander Technique position

Limbering and the plough

### 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 with deep contractions in second

Rocking foot exercise

Exercise in fourth with leg to second and contraction

Fish Asana contraction with crawl

Roll up

### Standing work

Hip openings with high release

Parallel brushes with high release

Pliés in first and second, adding fifth and fourth crouches

### Standing work integrating fall theme

Turned 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

### Travelling straight across the room

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

### Standing work: Jumps

Prances on the spot

### Travelling jumps straight across the room

Prances moving sideways

Prances moving sideways with stride leap

Prances moving sideways with stride leap and turn

### Travelling jumps diagonally across the room

Stride leap preparation

Stride leap

Stride leap sequence

Side prances with stride leaps and attitude hops

### Solo work

Structured improvisation – unset task to be given by examiner

Solo – set solo

### Centre practice

Bows

# Advanced 1

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1	501/0760/4	150	325	33

## Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
<b>LO1</b> Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the <b>vocabulary and technique</b> of Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely</li> </ul>
<b>LO2</b> Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure <b>technical skills</b> in Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform exercises, sequences, and dances</li> </ul>
<b>LO3</b> Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of <b>musicality</b> in Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform exercises and dances to music</li> <li>• Create short, coherent sequences of movement to music</li> </ul>
<b>LO4</b> Apply and demonstrate a range of <b>performance skills</b> in Contemporary Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills</li> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme</li> </ul>

## Syllabus content

### Warm up

Warm up: Standing breathings, going to the floor, meditative body limbering, Alexander Technique position

Limbering and the plough

### Floor work

Bounces and breathings combined

Spirals with contraction and throw

Limbering stretch in second, deep contractions in second and rocking foot exercise with throw

Snake contractions in fourth

Fish Asana with contraction fall

Pleadings

Roll up

### Standing work

Hip openings, parallel brushes, and pliés

### Standing work integrating contraction theme

Turned out brushes with contraction

Contractions on the sport with turned in fourth (training exercise)

Contractions on the spot with turned in and turned out fourth (training exercise)

Contractions on the sport with turned in fourth, turned out fourth and swivel contraction

### Travelling sideways across the room

Contraction with turned in fourth across the space (training exercise)

Contraction with open fourth across the space (training exercise)

Contraction with two fourths across the space

### Standing work integrating contraction theme

Contraction with second position plié (training exercise)

### Travelling sideways across the room

Contraction with second position plié across the space

### Standing work integrating contraction theme

Contraction with hang from elbow (training exercise)

### Travelling diagonally across the room

Contraction with hang from elbow phrase across the space

### Travelling sideways across the room

Step draw (training exercise)

Step draw with contraction in fourth position

### Travelling forwards across the room

Crab walks (training exercise)

Crab walks with contraction (training exercise)

Crab walks with turn and contraction

### Standing work: Jumps

Jumps in first and second position

Warm up jump

### Travelling jumps diagonally across the room

Big tilt jump

Big tilt jump with flexed front foot

Tilt jump with flexed foot and claw the air (training exercise)

Tilt jump with flexed foot and claw the air sequence

Double attitude leap

Bison double attitude leap

### Solo work

Four falls

Structured improvisation – unset task to be given by examiner

Solo – set solo

### Centre practice

Bows

# 11 Scheme of assessment - vocational examinations

## Method of assessment

Vocational Graded Examinations are assessed by an Examiner who is recruited, trained, and monitored by the ISTD.

### ISTD Examiners:

- are selected for their expertise and undergo rigorous training which continues throughout their career for marking both face-to-face and remote examinations
- create a welcoming and reassuring environment at the exam venue, ensuring a positive experience for candidates
- complete a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (or equivalent body where available) and adhere to ISTD policies and procedures, including equality and diversity, safeguarding and data protection
- do not usually examine at the same exam venue within any two-year period.

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 worthy of credit was presented for assessment.

The examination is divided into sections and each section consists of several components which are individually assessed and aggregated to give the section total. The total number of marks available in the examination is 100.

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 and 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>

## Determining a mark

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100.

## Determining a grade for vocational qualifications

To reflect the need for competence across the range of components, a candidate will not attain a grade 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.

**If all components are achieved, then the overall grade is indicated as follows:**

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

## Mark scheme

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 is expected in the candidate's evidence for that mark band. The indicative content for each component of assessment is exemplified or stated at the bottom of each column/group of columns.

Section		Physical and technical skills /40				Performance, presentation and response /40				Artistic application /20		
Component		Floor work	Standing work	Travelling work	Jumps and elevation	Style and theme	Use of space	Presentation skills	Recall of syllabus content	Structured improvisation	Set solo	
9-10	Clear	Excellent				Excellent				Excellent		
	Just											
7-8	Clear	Good				Good				Good		
	Just											
5-6	Clear	Fair				Fair				Fair		
	Just											
3-4	Clear	Limited				Limited				Limited		
	Just											
1-2	Clear	Weak				Weak				Weak		
	Just											
0		Nothing worthy of credit				Nothing worthy of credit				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, safe practice				e.g. embodiment of movement content, weight, energy, style, theme, safe practice	eg. general spatial awareness, awareness of others, use of peripheral vision, directions, pathways, levels, embodiment of space, safe practice	e.g. commitment, concentration, confidence, projection, focus, expression, emphasis, timing, musicality	Accuracy of demonstration; response to instructions, safe practice	e.g. response to instructions, innovative manipulation of movement material, response to music, choreographic coherence of finished improvisation, artistry, safe practice	Content: accuracy of demonstration, use of physical and technical skills,  Style: fall, shift of pelvis through space, use of weight, flow, artistic performance  safe practice	

## Levels of response mark bands

The lower mark in each band 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.

The candidate is marked against all components of assessment.

## Classification of results

Candidates receive both a final mark 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

#### Distinction: 80-100 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Distinction**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- extremely strong technique
- high clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- excellent precision in the technique of the genre
- excellent use of dynamics and spatial elements
- very confident and accurate responses to instructions, questions asked and/or tasks set
- very strong performing skills.

#### Merit: 65-79 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Merit**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- well established technique
- good clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- good precision in the technique of the genre confident use of dynamics and spatial elements
- confident and accurate responses to instructions, questions asked and/or tasks set
- strong performing skills.

#### Pass: 50-64 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Pass**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- generally established technique
- some clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- some precision in the technique of the genre
- fair understanding of the use of dynamics and spatial elements
- broadly relevant and mostly appropriate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set
- secure performing skills.

#### Not attained: 00-49 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Not Attained**' will demonstrate 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.

# 12 Examinations and quality assurance

This section focuses on the administrative requirements for delivering the examinations and related quality assurance processes.

## Exam booking information

Exam bookings are only permitted to be made by the registered members of the Society who conduct themselves in accordance with the Member Agreement/Professional Code of Conduct.

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

### UK Examinations

Website: [www.istd.org/uk-examinations/](http://www.istd.org/uk-examinations/)

Email: [ukdanceteachers@istd.org](mailto:ukdanceteachers@istd.org)

### International Examinations

Website: [www.istd.org/international-examinations/](http://www.istd.org/international-examinations/)

Email: [internationalteachers@istd.org](mailto:internationalteachers@istd.org)

## Quality assurance

Quality assurance is a set of policies and procedures the Society have in place to ensure that our examinations and assessments are inclusive and accessible, and students completing our qualifications are issued a fair grade based on their performance. Our quality assurance processes are there to safeguard the integrity of our qualifications by ensuring that high standards are always delivered.

The detailed information about the quality assurance of our qualifications and the related policies can be found at [www.istd.org/quality-assurance/](http://www.istd.org/quality-assurance/).

For further guidance please contact the Quality Assurance department at [csqa@istd.org](mailto:csqa@istd.org).

## Inclusivity and accessibility of examinations and assessments

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

## Reasonable adjustments

We are committed to providing fair access to our assessments for candidates with specific needs by putting in place access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. A reasonable adjustment is a process that is made before a learner takes an assessment. It ensures that they have fair access to demonstrate the requirements of the assessments taking account the needs of individual learners. However, it would also not be deemed reasonable to make changes to assessment standards or requirements as this would undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indicator of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the candidate.

## Special consideration

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

## Enquiries

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

## Malpractice

Malpractice refers to acts that undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications, and/or actions that may damage the authority of those responsible for delivering the assessment and certification.

We take any form of malpractice very seriously. Registered Members and candidates must follow the requirements set out in this specification, exam regulations and all other ISTD policies about the delivery of our exams. In cases where Registered Members or candidates have committed malpractice, a sanction or penalty may be given.

## Results and certification

Quality Assurance will issue learner results and certificates direct to primary organiser unless requested otherwise. All learners will be issued with a report sheet containing the marks for each component; successful candidates also receive a certificate that shows the qualification title as well as the subject and level that they have been examined in. We aim to release results and issue the qualification documents in line with the schedules on our Customer Service Policy on our website.

# 13 Appendix

## Syllabus books, CDs, DVDs and downloads

Resources are available to purchase for those who attend teachers courses only.

### Written resources

- Cohan, R. *The Dance Workshop*. London: Unwin, 1986
- DeMille, A. *Martha*. New York: Vintage Books, 1990
- Grotowski, J. *Towards a Poor Theatre*. London: Methuen. 1981
- Graham, M. *Blood Memory*. New York: Doubleday, 1991
- McKim, R (Ed). *The Essential Inheritance of the London Contemporary Dance Theatre*. London: Dance Books, 2001
- McKim, R. *Shamans in the Cathedral*. London: London Books, 2002
- McKim, R. *In the Shadow of the Dancing Shamans*. London Books, 2004
- McKim, R. *Ascent*. London: London Books, 2008

### Video resources

- Gielgud, S. *The Gospel Of Ross McKim*. Gielgud Films, 2016
- *Dance Rebels - a story of modern dance*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lasPpe1BZ2o>
- *Diversions of Angels - Martha Graham*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klqvWQZNKpY>
- *Peacemaker - Moving Visions Dance Theatre*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7kSSh\\_CsNM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7kSSh_CsNM)
- *Moving Visions Dance Theatre*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOiU1fyauKc>
- *Night Journey - Martha Graham*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFNsKeMbW20>

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