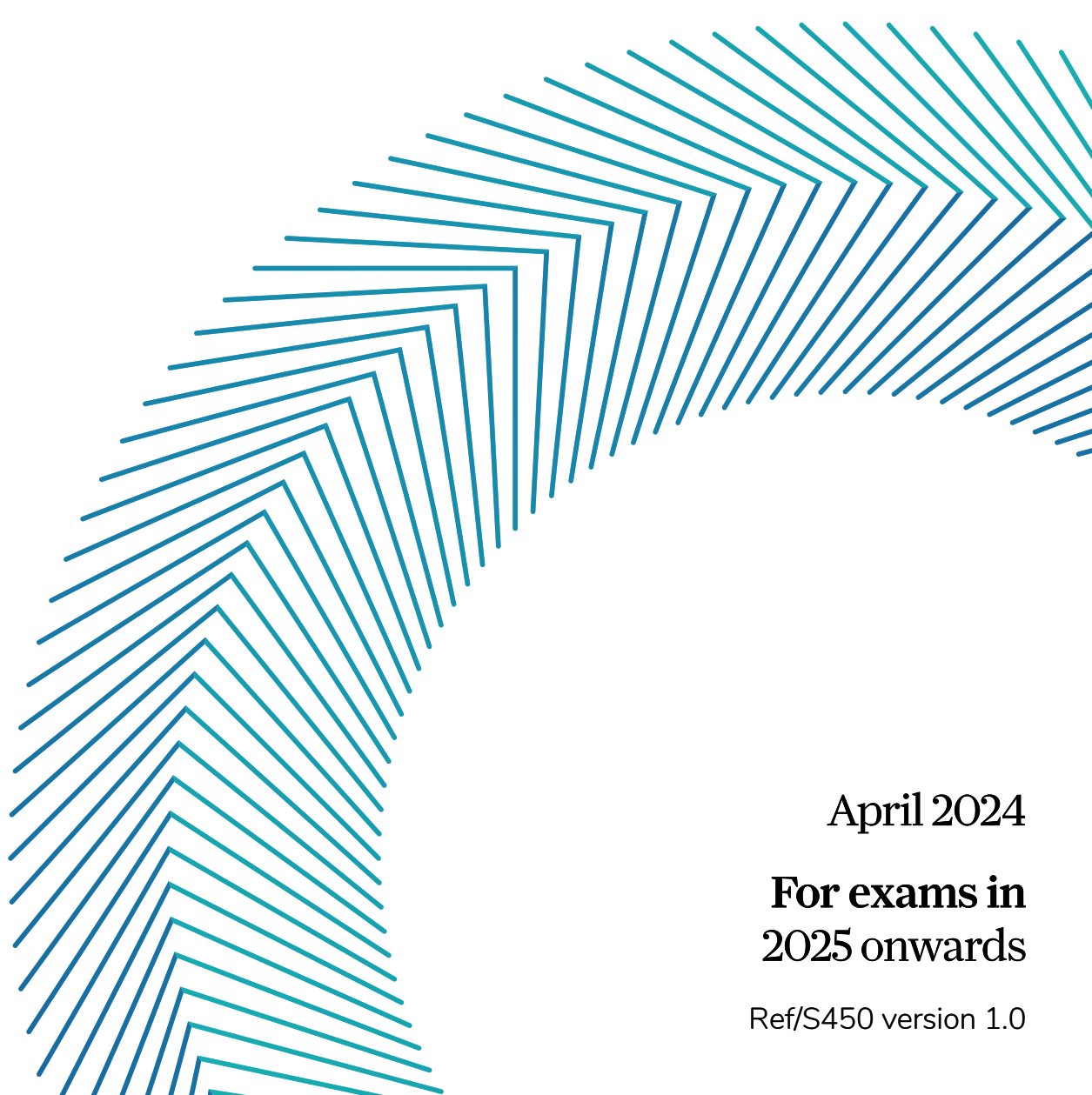




Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing
Street Dance

Medal Tests Specification



April 2024

**For exams in
2025 onwards**

Ref/S450 version 1.0



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

The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) exists to inspire, teach and support dancers and dance teachers around the world; making teaching and learning dance accessible to all.

Our membership is recognised as the mark of quality dance training globally. We support teachers to develop their careers and business through progressive training, performance qualifications and events. Together we aim to build a diverse and sustainable dance profession by championing inclusion and increasing access to dance teaching.

Since 1904, we've provided quality dance training across a diverse range of genres – enabling our members to inspire their students with a passion for dance. Our dance syllabi are carefully structured to support both children and adults in developing and progressing their technical dance skills.

Our clearly defined structure allows learning to take place in the context of safe dance practice and is designed to cater equally for those who wish to progress to make dance their profession. We offer a range of teacher training routes and pathways to develop careers into teacher training and examining.

The Society is a registered educational charity (250397), regulated examinations board and membership association. Find out more istd.org

2 Street Dance

Introduction

Street Dance is the umbrella term for a range of urban dance styles including Locking, Popping, Waacking, Hip Hop, House, Breaking (*Breakdance*). These dance styles mainly originate from the African and Latin American Communities in the USA. Music, influences the development of street dance styles, which are often a response to social and political matters within communities. Street Dance is constantly evolving, introducing newer styles such as *Krump* and *Litefeet*. Each style has its own history, technique, cultural influences and music that's inspired its creation and evolution.

More young people than ever before are seeing the benefits of learning and dancing Street. The standard of ability and creativity is extremely high, with rising numbers of street dancers and crews taking part in competitions, battles, talent shows and performances than ever before.

History

Originating in the mid-20th Century, Street Dance is new in comparison to classical genres of dance. It's grown in popularity due to the ever-increasing presence of Street Dance and Hip Hop in film, theatre, television and social media.

Hip Hop is an integral part of Street Dance. It's important to note that Hip Hop dance and Hip Hop culture are two different things. The culture is a lifestyle that includes: music, DJing, rap, MCing, graffiti art, dance and fashion. Hip Hop dance is a dance that forms part of the Street Dance umbrella, inspired by Hip Hop music.

Culturally, the birth of Hip Hop made run-down communities active and creative. Authorities would allow block parties in derelict buildings to happen as they often resulted in less crime on the streets. People were able to channel their frustrations through dance, art, poetry, rap, fashion and music. Hip Hop was considered a positive movement within the communities of New York and Dance Battles became a way that people settled their differences as well as inspire new relationships.

Since the birth of Hip Hop in the early 1970s multiple dance styles have developed. Some of these dance and movement styles have been inspired by popular culture such as cartoons and Hollywood glamour. As well as being heavily influenced by music, whether people gathered at block parties or on the dance floor of discotheques. As new music genres evolve, so too does the dance.

Musical influences were different on the east and west coast of America, and this influenced the different styles of Street Dance that developed across the USA. Funk music was very prominent in the 60's and 70's and the culture in west coast America (California) saw Locking and Popping become the dance trends that people were enjoying. Then, as Disco became alive in the nightclub culture towards the late 70's, Waacking entered the dancefloors. As you journeyed to the east coast, Breaking was very Funk driven and Hip Hop was the evolutionary genre of music to inspire a new generation towards the late 70's. House music came out of Chicago and as DJ's toured big cities, New York also became prominent for house music, and thus, there came House Dance.

Despite these dances being created on different coasts, they quickly travelled across the USA and soon enough, went global. Coming to the UK and other countries worldwide, thanks to music artists that were inspired to create and perform (dance) to the music, increasing the popularity and accessibility of this genre.

Most of the time it is impossible to credit specific people within Street Dance, since the dances evolve outside of professional dance environments where there is no social and/or legal record documenting the evolution. Street Dance pioneers also rarely have degrees in dance, distinguishing Street Dance from other modern dance forms.

There are many hybrid styles that originate from the pioneers, but to detail all of these would be next to impossible due to the ever-evolving movement of Street Dance. There is some disagreement within the Hip Hop world regarding the true origins and names of certain steps, and these often differ from one generation to the next, however, the principles are always the same.

As a relatively new genre of dance, without a written history, there is a lot of information that is still being learnt and new dances under the banner of Street Dance are being created and included into the culture as time moves on. Some are trends that don't stand the test of time, however, there are some that remain and create a significant impact within our social environments and communities.

In this specification we focus on the dance elements and credit some of those pioneers and innovators that made a significant impact within certain styles. It is important that we also remember to keep researching and acknowledging all those involved in establishing this exciting, vibrant and socially important style of dance, as we learn about Street dance, its culture, its history and its impact on dance today.

Basic Foundation of Street Dance

With any style that you learn under the umbrella of Street Dance, there are some core foundations that are generic and may feature across multiple genres. This may involve musical crossovers, dance battle involvement, understanding of choreography / freestyle and the differences, but most of all, the natural body movement.

Groove

Today we understand this to be an integral part of Street Dance. It is the heartbeat/pulse/essence/body/connection, a very individual feeling that will be expressed differently by each dancer. You could say it is ones DNA and how a person naturally moves when they hear the music. This is then used as the natural core foundation which brings the dancers individuality to the dance they are expressing.

Freestyle vs Choreography

Freestyle is another integral part of Street Dance and its origins. It encourages self-expression, allows for musical interpretation and means exactly that; free style. Born on the street and not in a dance studio, freestyle is where Street Dance began. It was more a physical expression to music, taking inspiration from other styles of movement, media and everyday life. This is part of the free, organic, social and ever evolving nature of Street Dance and is accessible to everyone, regardless of previous training or background. We often see it in the form of cyphers (dance circles) and the *Soul Train line* as well as battle structures. In its truest form it is about sharing, encouraging and breaking down barriers.

Choreography means routine; it is pre-thought with a clear intention in mind to perhaps showcase the music or a subject matter. Traditionally, choreography would be used for film, TV, music videos and theatre which allowed dancers to work collectively and perform in unison. Michael Jackson set the tone when it came to using dancers for his music videos (or short films as he liked to call them), by using choreographers to create dances, hire dancers and teach them in a studio setting to then implement the routines into such works. Choreography is not exclusive to just dance, it can be used within staging, martial arts and movement more generally.

Music

It is respectful to Street Dance culture that there is a good understanding of music when it comes to learning these dance styles. Knowing the difference between Hip Hop, Disco, Funk, Soul etc. will help and support learning the styles, and we must not forget that the dances came from the music.

Street Dance Styles

Locking (Foundation style)

Locking originated as a character dance with lots of personality in the late 1960's. Originally it was known as the Campbellock named after the inventor, Don Campbell, and was traditionally performed to funk music such as James Brown and therefore dubbed a Funk style. To Lock means to stop or hold your position to create a picture moment. Locking comprises arm/hand movements that align with the body, combined with movements that were made up collectively by *The Lockers*, a group that Don formed. The seven original members included: Don Campbellock, Greg 'Campbellock' Jnr, Shabba Doo, Flukey Luke, Slim The Robot, Fred Berry and Toni Basil.

Much of the movement vocabulary was invented organically in response to how Don Campbell conducted himself on the dancefloor; for example, Fives originated when he went to parties and danced in this new style, he would go to high five his audience who initially did not respond, which resulted in giving himself a high five.

Popping (Foundation style)

This is a Funk style pioneered by The Electric Boogaloes in the 1970's. Although they were not the only group dancing the style at the time, The Electric Boogaloes were the first to bring it to the mainstream when they followed in the footsteps of *The Lockers* by performing on *Soul Train* in 1978. The group was formed by Boogaloo Sam (Sam Soloman) and originally included himself, Popin Pete (Boogaloo Sam's brother), Puppet Boozer, Robot Dane and Creepin' Sid to name a few. The Popping technique involves a jerking motion where muscles are quickly tensed and released in succession, thus creating the Pop. Popping is also a technique that is applied on top of your dance (Groove). As a style, Popping also encompasses the following:

Electric Boogaloo: A fluid leg-orientated style utilising rolls of the hips, knees, legs and head which were later combined with Popping. Toyman, Puppet and Scarecrow are the other fundamental moves that characterise the dance.

Robotics: This style imitates a robot and uses a technique called Dime Stopping which means to move your body and stop suddenly. Popping technique can be applied on top of Robotics to make it look more dynamic.

Ticking: A form of Popping where the dancer Pops at very small intervals.

Waving: A series of fluid movements that give the illusion of a wave travelling through the dancer's body.

Other styles include King Cobra, Strobing, Tutting and Gliding/Sliding.

Breaking (Breakdance / B-Boy or B-Girl) (Foundation style)

Breaking was popularised in the 1980's and is an acrobatic, physically demanding dance style characterised by Power Moves that include back spins and head spins. It involves elements such as Top Rock, Footwork, Freezes and Power Moves. The term Breakdance stems from the percussion and drum breaks in the music which the Breakers would dance to. Commercially, it is known as Breakdance, however the original term is Breaker Boy / Breaker Girl AKA B-Boy / B-Girl or known generally as Breakin'.

DJ Kool Herc pioneered mixing two different tracks together on vinyl within the 'breakdown' which prompted dancers to the dancefloor to get down and show their moves. Grandmaster Flash is another notable DJ who was recognised at this time for bringing methods of his mixing skills to the forefront. Pioneer Breakin' crews include the Rock Steady Crew and New York City Breakers. Films that popularised the style were *Beat Street* and *Breakin'*.

Hip Hop (Dance)

It is highly documented that the birthplace of Hip Hop was 1520 Sedgwick Ave, NYC on 11 August 1973. Hip Hop is a dance (as well as a culture) which didn't surface as a dance style until the early 1980's, pioneered by a group of dancers that included Link, Caleaf, Buddah Stretch, Ejoy and Loose Joint. Stretch, Link and Loose Joint are now collectively known as Elite Force. The four elements of the style are Bounce, Rock, Roll and Skate, and within the elements, movements such as the Running Man, Bart Simpson, Steve Martin and Harlem Shake to name but a few, were created. These movements were danced in social settings and were somewhat used in response to the social and economic issues that were surrounding the black and Hispanic communities of NYC at the time. In time, Hip Hop became more recognised by music artists and was brought to the mainstream by the likes of Michael Jackson, Janet Jackson, Mariah Carey and many more.

House (Dance)

House began in a Chicago nightclub called The Warehouse (also the birthplace of House music). From its inception House Dance has emphasised fast footwork and upper-body moves. The three elements that contribute to the style are Footwork, Jack (the Groove) and Lofting (floorwork).

The Footwork aspect incorporates a series of slides, kicks, cross steps and heel-toe moves. The Jack is integral to House Dance, and while the movement of the Jack can vary, the essence of a rhythmic movement from the knees and hips to the torso remains the same. Dependent on the dancer, it can be taken a number of ways, from an upward rippling motion to a straight forward and back one. The Groove is always incorporated into the dance and can initiate more complex, quick footwork. Lofting is the floor work within House Dance that evidences agility, flow, threading etc.

House Dance is very reliant on the music and is an extremely free form of movement, taking influences from many other styles of dance, including Tap, Jazz and Latin steps such as, Salsa.

Waacking

An evolution of the dance style Posing, Waacking (also known as Punking) derives from the 70's Disco movement of the underground Queer scene in Los Angeles and is inspired by Hollywood Glamour and Silent Films. It is characterised by dynamic arm movements, extensions and poses. The original spelling Whacking, literally means to strike with force in relevance to the arm movements which were inspired by martial arts, Looney Tunes cartoons and American cheerleading. Musicality and the dancer's interpretation of the music is one of the biggest factors in Waacking. One of the pioneers, Tyrone 'The Bone' Proctor, once said "If you don't understand the music, you will never understand the dance". Other pioneers included: Arthur, Tinker Toy, Andrew Frank, Lonnie Carbajar, Viktor Manoel, Archie Burnett and Billy Goodson to name a few.

Evolution of Street Dance timeline

	60's	70's	70's/80s	80's		
Location	West Coast USA (California)	West Coast USA	East Coast USA	East Coast USA	East Coast USA (Chicago)	
Dance style	Locking	Popping	Waacking	Hip Hop	Breaking	House
Musical influences	Funk		Disco	Hip Hop	Hip Hop	House
Key music artists	James Brown, The Meters, Chaka Khan, The Isley Brothers, Kool & The Gang	Zapp, The Gap Band, Cameo	Diana Ross	DJ Kool Herc, Afrika Bambaataa, Sugarhill Gang	Rock Steady Crew, Grandmaster Flash	Frankie Knuckles, Larry Levan, Marshall Jefferson

Other styles and references

Vogue

Is characterised by model-like poses, inspired by Vogue magazine, integrated with angular, linear and rigid arm, leg and body movements. This dance style developed between the 1960's and 80's in New York. It was originally called Performance and evolved into the more intricate and illusory form that is now called Vogue. Pioneers include Willie Ninja (House of Ninja).

Krump

This style can be misinterpreted as an aggressive dance when performed, but in fact, the style comes from a place of spirituality and the expression of feelings. Originating from west coast America and pioneered by Ceasare 'Tight Eyez' Willis and others, Krump is mainly freestyled, rarely choreographed, and the five basic moves include stomps, jabs, chest pops, jumps, and arm swings.

Litefeet

Litefeet is a style that originated in the early 2000's in Harlem, New York. The name came from the term to 'Get light' on your feet and incorporates jumps and fast floaty footwork. Mr. YouTube and Chrybaby Cozie are among those that are recognised for pioneering the dance style.

Commercial (Dance)

Within the performance dance industry, Commercial Dance is the term given to the style that is used mostly for commercial purposes or in essence, 'to sell'. This style originally came about in the 90's as seen on MTV with slick routines being specially choreographed in videos for artists such as Janet Jackson, Michael Jackson, Britney Spears and Madonna. It can incorporate all the Street Dance styles and genres such as Jazz, Tap, and Contemporary. Commercial Dance could now be considered the widest of all dance styles, taking influence from almost every dance genre.

With current music trends as a guide, choreographers are focussing more on musicality, expression and interpretation of instrumental sounds and lyrics. It is essential however to remember that crossovers between them occur constantly. Commercial Dance does not have a set technical dance structure and can literally include any dance influence. It is mainly taught in a more choreographic scenario within dance studios and aided to promote or sell.

Michael Jackson (MJ) Style

Michael Jackson was the ultimate trail blazer when it came to popularising Street Dance. He was inspired by both classical and Street Dance styles, successfully implementing them into his act and creating a new movement style that would ultimately be recognised as his own. Fusing dance inspiration from Fred Astaire, The Nicholas Brothers, Electric Boogaloo, The Lockers etc, Michael Jackson pushed the narrative of dance to include the styles of Popping, Locking, Tap and Jazz, and became a master at performing them.

In 1982, he brought out the album *Thriller* which went on to become the biggest selling album of all time, and a year later, released a nine-minute short film to promote his single with the same name. This was the first time that the world saw both Street and Jazz dancers come together in a music short (music video) and Michael Jackson subsequently became the first male black artist to be shown on MTV. This was ground-breaking for dancers and choreographers around the world as it gave them a platform that could be used commercially and catapult them into the dance, music and entertainment industries.

3 About the syllabus

In this section you will find information on the purposes of the following examination levels in this specification:

	Solo entry	Crew entry	One Dance Tests
Introductory tests			
Social Dance Tests – 1, 2, 3, 4	✓	✓	✓
Under 6 Tests – 1, 2, 3, 4	✓	✗	✗
Under 8 Tests – 1, 2, 3, 4	✓	✗	✗
Medal series			
Pre-Bronze – 1, 2, 3, 4	✓	✓	✓
Bronze - 1, 2	✓	✓	✓
Silver	✓	✓	✓
Gold	✓	✓	✓
Higher Awards			
Gold Star - 1, 2, 3	✓	✓	✗
Platinum Award - 1, 2, 3	✓	✗	✗
Supreme Award	✓	✗	✗

This syllabus aims to allow teachers and students to explore a range of Street Dance styles through the creation and presentation of Street Dance routines for examinations. This provides space for teachers and students to nurture their skills, explore different Street Dance styles, old and new, as well as focus on and develop their genre specialisms.

The progressive examination framework is designed to support teachers to build street dancing skills in their students and enter them for examinations. Examinations can be entered as an individual at all levels, and as a crew at Social Dance Test and Pre-Bronze through to Gold Star.

To support an authentic student experience, teachers are encouraged to engage in continual learning through attendance at ISTD courses and personal research on Street Dance styles, their history and musical influences as well as new and upcoming trends.

4 Examination entry conditions and general information

Categories of entry for examinations

Candidates can enter Street Dance Medal Tests under the following categories:

1. Solo Entry

Entries for solo examinations can be made for up to two candidates per examination. Each candidate is assessed individually. The number of dances performed differs according to the level of examination being taken. Candidates that pass the examination receive a report form, certificate and medal. Please refer to the Examination Content section for further detail.

2. Crew entry

Medal Tests for crews of six to 16 dancers of any age may be taken at Social Dance and Pre-Bronze through to Gold Star level. Crews may be any combination of dancers. Dancers do not need to have taken a solo entry examination. Crews perform a single routine at all levels. Please refer to the Examination Content section for further detail. One joint report form is issued and each dancer receives a certificate and medal. The teacher may request a crew trophy on payment of an additional fee.

Examination levels

Multiple tests e.g. Pre-Bronze 1, 2, 3, 4, are designed to enable candidates to participate in examinations and to engage in Street Dance and may be used to support as many pupils as possible in completing medal tests and/or if the teacher feels they are not ready to progress to the next level of examination. Different dances must be performed at each time the candidate takes an examination.

Where examinations have multiple entry options at the same level, Tests 2, 3, and 4 do not require a higher standard of dancing than Test 1. Candidates are not required to complete all Tests at the same level before progressing to the next level.

Entry conditions

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

The minimum age requirement for examination is 3 years.

Up to two Medal Tests can be taken at the same exam session from under 6 up to Silver level, however, different dances must be shown.

If the candidate wishes to retake a Medal Test for any reason (e.g. due to failing or desire to improve mark), there must be a minimum interval of three months from the date of the original examination.

Prior learning

No prior learning is required for the Introductory Tests.

It is recommended that the Medal Series are passed in sequence from Pre-Bronze to Gold.

The Gold exam must be passed prior to entry for Gold Star. A minimum of one Gold Star medal must be achieved prior to entry for the Platinum Award. A minimum of one Platinum Award medal must be achieved prior to entry for the Supreme Award.

Language

All exams and assessments are conducted in English, unless the Examiner is fluent in the candidates native language. In which case, the examination may be conducted in that language.

Choreography/routines for examination

Teachers are responsible for the safety and actions of their pupils performing dance routines and/or choreography which must be suitable for the age and level of the dancer. ISTD set dances and dances learnt at CPD courses are permissible for entry for examination.

Please refer to the Examination Content section for choreography guidance which outlines and offers suggestions for choreography content at each examination level.

Demonstrators

A demonstrator is permitted for Introductory level and Pre-Bronze level examinations, however, they must not impede the Examiner's view of the candidates.

Musical accompaniment

Teachers are responsible for choosing and providing music for the examination. As a guide, music should be selected which does not contain cross phrasing and/or long introductions. Teachers should use their discretion to select music that is appropriate for the age of the candidates.

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 a candidate in the session.

Clothing

Suitable Street Dance clothing, which is appropriate to the age of the candidate, should be worn with appropriate footwear, laces tied and secure. The chosen clothing should enable the Examiner to clearly see the action of the body, limbs and head.

Number cards

For solo entries, number cards should be worn and attached securely to the front of the candidates clothing. Number cards are not required for crew entries.

Props

Props are not permissible for examinations.

Studio layout for the examination

Teachers should select the most suitable studio layout for the examination to allow candidates to demonstrate fully. Mirrors in the studio should be completely covered or made opaque and a table and chair provided for the Examiner, positioned at the front of the room.

Warm up

All candidates should warm up fully prior to taking an examination.

5 Examination content

This section sets out the examination content at each level. Learners should take examinations when all of the content has been prepared in full.

Introductory tests

Introductory test examinations are available at the following levels:

Social Dance Test – 1, 2, 3, 4

Under 6 - 1, 2, 3, 4

Under 8 - 1, 2, 3, 4

Aims

- To enable dancers to have experience of performing and **participate** in dance performance

Objectives

- Demonstrate safe performance of simple dance routines

Choreography content guidance

- Basic use of body parts - e.g. use of arms and legs working together
- Simple use of space appropriate to the style e.g. travelling forwards and backwards
- Simple rhythmic patterns in response to music.

Summary information – Solo entry

Exam	No. of dances to be performed	Routine requirements	Time allowances (minutes)	
			1 candidate at a time	2 candidates at a time
Social Dance Test - 1, 2, 3, 4	2	Minimum 8 bar repeatable routine to be performed for approx. 1 minute 30 seconds	5	6
Under 6 - 1, 2, 3, 4		OR		
Under 8 - 1, 2, 3, 4		Choreographed to a piece of music and must last approx. 1 minute 30 seconds if not repeatable		

Summary information – Crew entry

Exam	No. of dances to be performed	Routine requirements	Number of candidates	Time allowance (minutes)
Social Dance Test - 1, 2, 3, 4	1	1 minutes 30 second performance choreographed to music Examiner will see the routine twice	6 to 16	10

Medal series

Medal Series examinations are available at the following levels:

Pre-Bronze – 1, 2, 3, 4

Bronze - 1, 2

Silver

Gold

Aims

- **Pre-Bronze:** To enable dancers to develop **fundamental** technical, expressive, and performing skills in Street Dance styles
- **Bronze:** To enable dancers to **consolidate** technical, expressive, and performing skills in Street Dance styles
- **Silver:** To enable dancers to develop **sound** technical, expressive, and performing skills in Street Dance styles
- **Gold:** To enable dancers to develop **established** technical, expressive, and performing skills in Street Dance styles

Objectives

- Demonstrate safe performance of dance routines
- Demonstrate appropriate technical and expressive skills in performance

Choreography content guidance

Pre-Bronze

- Co-ordination of body parts
- Some variety in use of space
- Some rhythmic patterns in response to music
- Some evidence of style and groove
- Focus (directed eyeline)

Bronze

- Co-ordination, balance and control of body parts
- Use of varied pattern and directional changes
- Use of varied rhythmic patterns in response to music
- Use of some dynamics/movement qualities
- Evidence of the style and groove
- Projection (audience awareness)

Silver

- Co-ordination, balance and control of body parts including extension and isolation
- Challenging use of patterns and directional changes incl. turns, and changes to level
- Challenging rhythmic patterns in response to music e.g. accents, highlights, syncopations
- Use of varied dynamics/movement qualities
- Stylistic variety
- Projection (audience awareness)

Gold

- Co-ordination, balance and control of body parts including extension and isolation
- Complex patterns and use of direction incl. turns, changes to level and elevation
- Complex rhythmic patterns in response to music e.g. accents, highlights, syncopations, stillness
- Use of complex and contrasting dynamics/movement qualities
- Stylistic complexity
- Projection and appropriate use of facial expressions

Summary information – Solo entry

Exam	No. of dances to be performed	Routine requirements		Time allowances (minutes)	
		Routine length	Other	1 candidate at a time	2 candidates at a time
Pre-Bronze - 1, 2	2	Minimum 8 bar repeatable routine to be performed for approx. 1 minute 30 seconds OR	n/a	5	6
Bronze - 1, 2	2		n/a	5	6
Silver	3	Choreographed to a piece of music and must last approx. 1 minute 30 seconds if not repeatable	Teachers are encouraged to prepare dances of varying style and speed	7	9
Gold	4		Dances must show varying style and speed	9	11

Summary information - Crew entry

Exam	No. of dances to be performed	Routine requirements	Number of candidates	Time allowances (minutes)
Pre-Bronze 1, 2, 3, 4	1	1 minutes 30 seconds choreographed to music	6 to 16	10
Bronze 1, 2		Examiner will see the routine twice		
Silver		2 minutes choreographed to music Examiner will see the routine twice		
Gold		3 minutes choreographed to music Examiner will see the routine twice		

Higher awards

Higher Awards are available at the following levels:

Gold Star - 1, 2, 3

Platinum Award - 1, 2, 3

Supreme Award

Aims

- **Gold Star:** To develop a **high level/advanced** technical, expressive and performing skills.
- **Platinum Award and Supreme Award:** To show **full mastery** of technical, expressive and performing skills.

Objectives

- Demonstrate safe performance of sophisticated/complex and contrasting dance routines
- Demonstrate high level/advanced technical and expressive skills in performance

Choreography content guidance

- Co-ordination, balance and control of body parts including extension and isolation
- Complex patterns and use of direction incl. turns, changes to level and elevation
- Complex rhythmic patterns in response to music e.g. accents, highlights, syncopations, stillness
- Use of complex and contrasting dynamics/movement qualities
- Stylistic complexity
- Projection and appropriate use of facial expressions.

Summary information – Solo entry

Exam	No. of dances to be performed	Routine requirements	Time allowances (minutes)	
			1 candidate at a time	2 candidates at a time
Gold Star 1, 2 3	5 Dances: 1.Preparation for dance sequence* 2.1 x foundation style routine (Popping, Locking or Breaking) 3, 4 & 5. 3 x routines to show varying style and speed	Dance 1: Continuous sequence for approx. 1 minute 30 seconds Dances 2-5: Minimum 16 bar repeatable routine to be performed for approx. 1 minute 30 seconds OR Choreographed to a piece of music and must last approx. 1 minute 30 seconds if not repeatable	10	15
Platinum Award 1, 2, 3				
Supreme Award				

Summary information – Crew entry

Exam	No. of dances to be performed	Routine requirements	Number of candidates	Time allowance (minutes)
Gold Star - 1, 2 3	1	3 minutes choreographed to music Examiner will see the routine twice	6 to 16	10

*Dance 1: Preparation for dance sequence should be a pre-prepared continuous sequence of movement for approximately 1 minute 30 seconds. The sequence needs to show the candidate performing a short routine that enables them to warm up and prepare for dance activity. This should include joint mobilisation, pulse raising and dynamic and/or static stretching to include all major muscle groups, and should not include any end range stretching or high impact movement. Music should be selected to enable gentle preparation for exercise and the Examiner will be checking that all movements are performed safely and with control.

One dance tests

One dance tests provide an opportunity for students to participate in examinations with one dance if they are not ready to undertake the full examination. A one dance test does not equate to a full qualification, therefore, it is recommended that those undertaking a one dance test should complete the full exam before moving on to the next level.

One dance tests can be entered at the following examination levels:

Social Dance Test - 1, 2, 3, 4

Pre-Bronze – 1, 2, 3, 4

Bronze - 1, 2

Silver

Gold

Aims

- Aims and objectives for all one dance tests are as per the full examination at the relevant levels as outlined on pages 11 and 12.

Choreography content guidance

- Choreography content guidance for all one dance tests is as per the full examination at the relevant levels as outlined on pages 11 to 13.

Summary information – Solo entry

Exam	No. of dances to be performed	Routine requirements	Time allowances (minutes)	
			1 candidate at a time	2 candidates at a time
Social Dance Test - 1, 2, 3, 4	1	Minimum 8 bar repeatable routine to be performed for 1 minute 30 seconds OR Choreographed to a piece of music and must last approx. 1 minute 30 seconds if not repeatable	3	5
Pre-Bronze – 1, 2, 3, 4				
Bronze - 1, 2				
Silver				
Gold				

6 Scheme of assessment

Method of assessment

Medal Tests 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 for each component (shown on the accompanying grid). A mark of 0 indicates that nothing worthy of credit was presented for assessment.

Determining a grade

Maximum marks allocated for each dance is 100. The marks for each dance are then aggregated and the overall result is indicated as a percentage as follows:

Grade	Total marks
Honors	85-100%
Commended	75-84%
Pass	65-74%
Unsuccessful on this occasion	0-64%

If any dance is awarded 0-64, the candidate will be graded Unsuccessful on this occasion.

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 performance for that mark band. The indicative content for each component of assessment is stated at the bottom of each column.

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 both components of assessment.

Street Dance Mark Scheme Introductory Tests

The candidate is marked against both components of assessment.

Component		Physical & Technical skills (50)	Performance skills (50)
Top of the Excellent Band	48-50	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Excellent Band			
Top of the Very good Band	45-47	The candidate demonstrates Very good ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Very good Band			
Top of the Good Band	42-44	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Good Band			
Top of the Secure Band	39-41	The candidate demonstrates Secure ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Secure Band			
Top of the Sufficient Band	36-38	The candidate demonstrates Sufficient ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Sufficient Band			
Top of the Limited Band	33-35	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Limited Band			
Top of the Weak Band	30-32	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Weak Band			
Not evidenced	0-29	Indicative content Not evidenced	
Indicative Content		Co-ordination Timing Groove Use of space	Use of focus Musicality Confidence Commitment

Street Dance Mark Scheme Medal Series and Higher Awards

Component		Physical & Technical skills (50)	Performance skills (50)
Top of the Excellent Band	48-50	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Excellent Band			
Top of the Very good Band	45-47	The candidate demonstrates Very good ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Very good Band			
Top of the Good Band	42-44	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Good Band			
Top of the Secure Band	39-41	The candidate demonstrates Secure ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Secure Band			
Top of the Sufficient Band	36-38	The candidate demonstrates Sufficient ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Sufficient Band			
Top of the Limited Band	33-35	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Limited Band			
Top of the Weak Band	30-32	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content	
Bottom of the Weak Band			
Not evidenced	0-29	Indicative content Not evidenced	
Indicative Content		Co-ordination Stamina Alignment Mobility Isolation Strength Timing Groove Spatial awareness/Use of space Control Higher Awards only Accuracy of: Breaking technique/ Locking technique/ Popping technique	Projection Use of focus Musicality Confidence Commitment Stylistic interpretation Appropriate dynamics

Please note that not all indicative content will always be met at each level of examination. The amount of content required is set out in the aims and objectives for each level.

Aims and objectives overview of all examination levels

Exam	Level of demonstration	Aim	Objective
Introductory tests: Social Dance Test (1,2,3,4)	Participate (Show dancing)	To enable dancers to have experience of performing and participate in dance performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate safe performance of simple dance routines
Introductory tests: Under 6 (1,2,3,4), under 8 (1,2,3,4)	Participate (Show dancing)	To enable dancers to have experience of performing and participate in dance performance.	
Medal Test: Pre-Bronze 1, 2, 3, 4	Fundamental (Basic understanding)	To enable dancers to develop fundamental technical, expressive, and performing skills in Street Dance styles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate safe performance of dance routines • Demonstrate appropriate technical and expressive skills in performance
Medal Test: Bronze 1, 2	Consolidated (Basic application)	To enable dancers to consolidate technical, expressive, and performing skills in Street Dance styles.	
Medal Test: Silver	Sound (Good understanding and application)	To enable dancers to develop sound technical, expressive, and performing skills in Street Dance styles.	
Medal Test: Gold	Established (Consistent understanding and application)	To enable dancers to develop established technical, expressive, and performing skills in Street Dance styles.	
Higher Awards: Gold Star 1, 2, 3	High level/advanced (High level embodiment and application)	To develop a high level/advanced technical, expressive and performing skills.	
Higher Awards: Platinum Award 1, 2, 3 Supreme Award	Mastery (Complete embodiment and application)	To show full mastery of technical, expressive and performing skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate high level/advanced technical and expressive skills in performance

Classification of results

Candidates receive individual marks for both components for each dance performed and an attainment grade. It is not expected that a candidate in a particular attainment grade will necessarily consistently demonstrate all of the characteristics listed in that band.

Attainment grade descriptors

Honours: 85-100%

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

- high clarity of intention in execution of physical and technical skills
- excellent precision in the performance of the genre
- very strong performance skills.

Commended: 75-84%

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

- established clarity of intention in execution of physical and technical skills
- clear precision in the performance of the genre
- strong performance skills.

Pass: 65-74%

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

- some clarity of intention in execution of physical and technical skills
- some precision in the performance of the genre
- fair performance skills.

Unsuccessful on this occasion – 00-64%

A candidate who achieves a '**Unsuccessful on this occasion**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- poor physical and technical skills
- weak precision in the performance of the genre
- weak performance skills.

7 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, cancellation fees, guidance, and exam regulations are available on:

UK Examinations

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

Email: ukdanceteachers@istd.org

International Examinations

Website: www.istd.org/international-examinations

Email: 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.

For further guidance please contact the Quality Assurance department at 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 and appeals about results

The Society endorses the principle of the right to enquire about a result awarded to a candidate. If a teacher has genuine cause to believe that the result cannot possibly be correct, the teacher can appeal within the published timescales outlined in the Enquiries and Appeals About Results Policy. 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 the 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.

8 Teacher resources

Notes and video content are available to purchase from ISTD shop.

Relevant websites

www.lockerlegends.net

www.westcoastpoppin.com

9 ISTD street dance competitions

Annual ISTD Street Dance competitions take place for amateur medallists. For more information visit www.istd.org/events

10 Summary of updates from 1 January 2025

Street Dance Medal Test Examinations:

1. Pairs is no longer available as a category for examination.
2. Age divisions have been removed .
3. Demonstrators are permissible for Social Dance Test and Under 6 to Pre-Bronze level examinations only (no longer permissible at Bronze).
4. Pre-Bronze forms part of the Medal Series rather than Introductory Tests.
5. At Silver level, teachers are encouraged to enter dances of varying style and speed.
6. From Gold level examinations onwards, dances must show varying style and speed (previously slow, medium and fast tempo).
7. From Gold Star, the 'Warm up' will now be referred to as 'Preparation for dance sequence'. This should always been shown first in the examination.
8. From Gold Star level examinations onwards, candidates must show a Foundation style routine, i.e. Breaking, Locking or Popping (previously known as Pure Style). This should be shown as the second dance in the examination.
9. Platinum Award replaces Imperial Award.

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**Imperial Society of
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