



GCSE

DANCE

42301 – Critical Appreciation of Dance
Report on the Examination

4230
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General Comments

Once again it was very pleasing to see some very well answered scripts, with full and detailed responses to questions. In such scripts, it was clear that candidates had been given the opportunity to study professional works in their entirety as well as being able to articulate their understanding of different aspects of practical work from other units within the course. Centres are advised to consult the specification regularly throughout the course and to use the AQA fact file.

Candidates are advantaged when they read through the first two questions of the paper before deciding to name their dance work 1 and 2, as some of the questions may suit one professional dance work over another.

It was very pleasing to see that some candidates backed up contributions of production aspects with examples of the work and full explanations to clarify their answers. Candidates who bullet point answers can fail to explain contributions fully, whereas candidates who write in continuous prose usually explained their points in more detail and were awarded more marks accordingly.

Question 4 was generally answered very well. Most candidates correctly identified at least one technical skill, although fewer were able to accurately define the named skill. Several responses included balance and stamina. These were not awarded as they did not directly relate to the image. The dancers were photographed in elevation, not balancing and there was no indication of the length of time the dancers had been performing, therefore stamina could not accurately be identified. Part c of question 4 was very well answered with many responses receiving full marks. This showed a clear link in ability to relate responses to studio practice.

Again, a small number of candidates used both Swansong and Ghost Dances in their responses. It is worthy to remind candidates that only one work by Christopher Bruce can be accepted.

The most popular works studied were: Swansong, 'Still Life' at the Penguin Cafe, Ghost Dances, Fault Line, Perfect and Nutcracker!. It was very pleasing to see increasing numbers of candidates using Overdrive, And Who Shall Go To The Ball and Rosas Danst Rosas. It should be noted however that while one of the themes for Rosas Danst Rosas is rage, candidates writing about 'frustration' were not awarded marks. Similarly, marks were not awarded for suggesting that the dancers are in a mental institution.

Dance work 1

Question 1(a) (i)

Many candidates left this blank or gave a general description of the set design. Marks were awarded for phonetic responses with incorrect spelling eg proseanium.

Question 1 (a) (ii)

This was well answered with colour, intensity, types and direction being included in responses.

Question 1 (a) (iii)

The majority of candidates accurately described features of the set design.

Question 1 (b) (i)

This question was well answered. The majority of candidates could identify the stimulus/starting point, theme or idea of their chosen dance work. There was an occasional response indicating how and where the dancers were at the start of the dance.

Question 1 (b) (ii)

Many candidates were awarded at least one mark. Marks were lost where candidates either failed to accurately identify a stimulus/starting point, theme or idea of their chosen dance work or failed to links between the physical setting and the named stimulus/starting point, theme or idea of their chosen dance work.

Dance work 2

Question 2 (a) (i)

Many candidates left this blank or gave a general description of the set design. Marks were awarded for phonetic responses with incorrect spelling eg proseenium.

Question 2 (a) (ii)

The majority of candidates accurately described features of the set design.

Question 2 (a)(iii)

This was well answered with colour, intensity, types and direction being included in responses.

Question 2(b)(i)

A well answered question as there were many things to consider. Lots of responses included colour, type and direction.

Question 2 (b)(ii)

This was well answered as the question enabled many things to be considered. Many candidates were awarded full marks. - Many candidates scored 1 mark for saying, for example, that the colour of lighting can have an effect on the mood. The better candidates went on to give a pertinent example of a particular colour giving a happy mood for the extra mark.

Both works

Question 3 (a)

This question was well answered with many candidates achieving full marks. Up to 3 marks could be awarded for descriptions of one professional dance work and this advantaged candidates who knew one work more than the other. There were a variety of responses including named found and natural sounds and key features within the accompaniment such as trills, use of crescendo etc.

Question 3(b)

Extended questions on accompaniment have traditionally fared less well than other aspects of production. Responses this year seemed better. Many candidates wrote using PEE (point, evidence, explanation) paragraphs and this is to be recommended. Examiners look for candidates making a point, finding a reference to that point within the dance work (an example) and then explaining the contribution that point makes to our understanding of the dance work.

There are still some candidates scoring 0 marks, which is usually due to writing purely descriptive prose. Some candidates failed to link a contribution to one work, writing generically, and occasionally there was no response to the question at all.

QWC (quality of written communication) is now awarded for questions worth 6 marks or more. The majority of candidates were awarded 1 or 2 marks for this question. Candidates who gained full marks used dance terminology appropriately and accurately. They also demonstrated excellent use of correct spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout question 3 (b). Where 0 marks were awarded for QWC candidates either wrote nothing at all or incorrectly answered the question.

Own work

Question 4(a)

Many candidates correctly named technical skills particularly flexibility, posture, alignment and strength. Some candidates confused technical with expressive skills and others named balance and stamina which were not indicated in the photograph.

Question 4(b)

This question clearly asked for a definition of the term named in 4(a). Some candidates confused this with a movement example. Candidates lost marks if they repeated the skill within the definition, for instance alignment – when the limbs are aligned with each other, or strength – being strong.

Question 4(c)

This was a well answered question and again showed strong understanding of studio practice.

Question 5

Responses varied here. There were some very knowledgeable answers with very clear understanding of what each expressive skill was and how it was effectively demonstrated in their unit 3 performances. Some candidates confused expressive skills with choreographic devices or technical skills.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

[UMS conversion calculator](#)