



This year there were 61 candidates sitting pre-tertiary Choreography and Dance Performance. The schools represented were The Tasmanian Academy; Hobart, Newstead, Don and Hellyer Campuses; Rosny, Elizabeth, Launceston and Claremont Colleges; St Brendan Shaw College, St Michael's Collegiate and Guilford Young College.

The standard across the state this year was generally very even and the examiners were extremely pleased with the committed and mature attitude apparent in most exam centres. Thanks must also be made to the stage four dancers and technical crews who supported this hard working atmosphere. It was generally felt that the spirit of the course was clearly understood and that over the years, solid improvement has been made in the interpretation of both the choreographic and performance demands of the course.

Pro-formas

Despite having mentioned this in previous reports, some schools are still not using the appropriate pro-formas for the practical exam. It is reminded that these forms are updated each year on the TQA website and should be downloaded accordingly.

Things to remember:

- Use the current form as it differs from earlier versions.
- The requirement is for a photo of the candidate dressed in the costume they will be wearing for the solo assessment. This is very important in the identification of each candidate and also facilitates the checking of common standards across the exam period. In short, the photo helps the examiners remember each candidate and the work produced.
- *Please read the guidelines about the exam for general information about requirements.*
- Timing is a particular issue of contention. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that pieces are within the required guidelines. Candidates are penalised if their pieces are too short or too long. In one centre we saw a solo run for 6 minutes! It is expected that the time entered on the pro forma is actually reasonably accurate. Some schools seem to write the same timing for each candidate!

Practical Assessment

It was really pleasing this year to see some new and original ideas for solos and groups. In most cases, there was also a clear contrast between the idea for the solo and the group piece. This allows candidates to show the wide range of their skills and is essential if candidates wish to achieve at the higher end of the assessment scale.

A word about intention statements. These are still important even in the face of the longer folio statement. Candidates should not rely on their folio analysis to clarify the intention of the piece. So make the statements clear and appropriate to the piece. It is understood that the pieces may have developed further since the initial writing of the statement in line with folio submission, but clarity of expression and idea is encouraged. Don't write what cannot be expressed; rather try to identify the key concepts in the piece without clouding with too much detail. Direct us in regard to what to look for. Too big an idea is sometimes a problem as it is very hard to communicate in such a small time frame.

There was some sensitive and beautiful work presented in both groups and solos and it is encouraged that candidates continue to explore making of vocabulary and the sequencing of phrases. In many cases, we saw beautiful openings, utilising lovely shapes and use of space. Endings still seem to require some work, as often a piece just seemed to stop without a real sense of completion or unity.

Teachers are reminded that safety is an issue to consider in the performance of aerial work. Some floor work also seemed to be risk taking at times and candidates are encouraged to carefully consider the safety issues inherent in falling and collapsing movements. **Socks are not appropriate safe dancewear for either rehearsal or performance.**

In most cases, production tools were carefully considered and appropriate for the pieces. This year there were several examples of costuming, which did not effectively cover essential parts of the body. *Please make sure that tops are long enough, underwear is appropriate and pants/dance tights or trousers remain up!* Most musical choices ably supported the choreographic intention; however candidates need to be careful about editing. Some cuts were quite messy and created a negative impact. It is worth considering whether the splicing of two or three tracks is appropriate in a short solo. Sometimes the unity of a piece is hampered by too many musical changes. A change of musical mood does not alone constitute a contrast in the piece; this should be supported by vocabulary and choreographic choices.

It is exciting to see so many candidates performing with focus and commitment, however in some cases pieces seemed rather under rehearsed and obviously this may take away from the communication of intention. While it is recognised that some candidates need to perform in several pieces, a certain standard of familiarity is expected.

Folio - Part A

It is certainly of great assistance to the examiners to read candidate folios before seeing the practical performances. Candidates are reminded that they need to be specific in their comments. There is no point *listing* the devices, form, phrases etc used in the choreography unless this is *linked to the intention* of the piece, and goes in some way toward explaining how this intention was communicated.

In some cases, solo and groups pieces were not explained to the same standard and this resulted in an unequal discussion which resulted in a lower assessment. Avoid padding; be specific and selective in order to communicate your ideas clearly.

Written skills do count in the communication of ideas, and while first person is appropriate, sentences should still be complete and ideas make sense. Slang is inappropriate.

Teachers are asked to ensure the word count is clearly visible either at the end or beginning of the piece. This is compulsory and candidates will be penalised if the folio is considerably under or over the word limit. **This is stated in the guidelines.**

Teachers are also asked to discuss with their candidates, the use of appendices. These are relevant when clearly referred in the body of the discussion, but a list of terms attached to the end of the essay does not add to the general rigour of the folio. It is also reminded that if quotations or other reference material are used in the body of the work, it should be **appropriately referenced in a recognised method such as Harvard or Oxford.**

It is advised that candidates carefully edit folios, as many were affected by poor spelling and careless typographical errors. In particular, the spelling of “canon” and the use of “complement” and “compliment” need to be addressed.

Folio – Part B

Quite a range of pieces were discussed here and there was a pleasing understanding of essay form. Most essays were clearly structured and developed. Candidates who were able to compare and contrast ideas and build a discussion were rewarded with higher ratings than those who wrote three separate essays within the whole, where each piece was discussed separately, and a short comparative sentence was added at the end. It is better however to make general points of contrast, for example, vocabulary or form, rather than trying to find a specific movement that was used across each of the three pieces. This tended to limit candidates’ capacity to write well. Again, candidates should not just list what was seen but try to make links with how this communicated the intentions of the piece. The better answers were able to balance the different elements discussed in the essay rather than talking for two thirds of the essay about production tools. In a limited word count, candidates should not waste time with irrelevant information about choreographers or the circumstances of the piece.

Word counts were an issue in this section also. They must be clearly visible.

Common errors

- Ternary and binary are not choreographic devices.
- Sentence structure and use of apostrophes were at times, quite creative.
- Refer to choreographers or dancers by surnames not Christian names.
- Tansdance is one word.
- “Moves” and “routine” are not examples of academic writing; better to discuss movements, phrases and sequences.

It is essential that teachers make sure that candidates choose appropriate pieces to discuss. Please read the guidelines with your candidates. A dance sequence from a musical or a pop

concert is not appropriate and is not considered a discrete dance piece. Candidates will be penalised if they do not discuss three separate dance pieces.

Thank you to all candidates, teachers, technical crew and examiners for, in most centres, a very smooth examination period. Please discuss this report with your future candidates in conjunction with the comments also made on past reports.

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