

---

# Specification

---

**Level 1 Award in Graded  
Examination in Dance:  
Grade 1**

**Level 1 Award in Graded  
Examination in Dance:  
Grade 2**

**Level 1 Award in Graded  
Examination in Dance:  
Grade 3**

---

**Level 1**

---

bbodance<sup>1</sup> (formally the British Ballet Organization) was established in 1930 to improve standards of dance teaching. Our mission is to inspire excellence and promote the education, training and enjoyment of dance. We are an inclusive, innovative and dynamic organisation which supports its members through a lifelong partnership.

bbodance is accredited by the Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) and offers Performing Arts Graded Examinations in Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Modern, Musical Theatre and AcroDancer. Recognised under the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), these Examinations are regulated by Ofqual and Qualifications Wales. The Examinations are delivered both nationally and internationally.

This Specification sets out the aims, objectives, assessment criteria and content for the named qualification/s. Detailed genre specific syllabi can be found on the website and can be downloaded for free (bbodance Registered Teachers and Associate Members only) or purchased from our online shop.

---

<sup>1</sup> bbodance is a trading name for The British Ballet Organization Ltd., a Charity registered in England (No. 277177) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (No. 1402656).

# Contents

---

1. Summary, Objectives, Aims and Philosophy .....	4
Qualification Titles and Numbers .....	4
Summary .....	4
Objectives .....	4
Aims .....	5
Fitness for purpose .....	5
Entry Criteria .....	6
2. Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria .....	7
Level 1 Descriptor .....	7
Grade 1 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria .....	7
Grade 2 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria .....	8
Grade 3 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria .....	8
Grade 1-3 Assessment .....	9
3. Syllabus Content.....	10
4. Duration of Examinations .....	10
5. Marks and Achievements .....	11
Overview of the Mark Scheme.....	11
Grades 1-3 Mark Scheme.....	11
Mark Descriptors.....	14
Achievement Categories.....	16
Achievement Descriptors.....	17
6. Total Qualification Time (TQT) .....	18
7. Uniform.....	18
8. Teaching Resources .....	18

# 1. Summary, Objectives, Aims and Philosophy

---

## Qualification Titles and Numbers

Qualification Title	Ofqual Qualification Number	Qualification Wales Approval/Designation No.
BBO Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 1	600/3139/6	C00/1719/1
BBO Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 2	600/3168/2	C00/1719/7
BBO Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 3	600/3140/2	C00/1719/2

## Summary

Grades 1, 2 and 3 are aligned with Level 1 of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). These Examinations are offered in a range of genres and are available to any Candidate, with or without previous dance experience. Successful Candidates receive a Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance.

Candidates may choose to do one or more Examinations at Level 1 in various genres. The content of Grades 1-3 is conceived as a linear progression and Candidates are advised to follow the numerical order.

## Objectives

The objectives of Level 1 Graded Examinations in Dance are to:

- provide access to nationally recognised Examinations in Dance
- provide a broad education in and through dance which is accessible for all children, young people and adults, with or without prior dance experience
- contribute to the development of a wide range of competencies and life skills, such as motor control, health and safety awareness, self-expression, physical fitness and stamina, discipline, mental ability and confidence
- provide a sound platform in dance knowledge and skills for progression to subsequent Graded and/or Vocational Graded Examinations at Level 2 (Grades 4 and 5 and Intermediate Foundation).

# Aims

The aims of Level 1 Graded Examinations in Dance are to:

- promote the study of dance as a leisure and/or vocational activity
- provide a means of measuring the acquisition of technical, musical and dance performance skills
- promote and encourage enjoyment of dance as a form of physical exercise
- provide all Candidates with an opportunity of experiencing dance accompanied by live or recorded music
- encourage personal self-confidence and group awareness through the experience of dancing solo, with partners or in small groups
- aid the development of a general appreciation of music through dancing to various musical styles and rhythmic patterns
- motivate students by providing a series of clearly defined goals which have been structured to reflect the principles of safe dance practice
- provide Teachers with a means by which to develop and monitor the individual progress of their students
- reward achievement and motivate further learning.

## Fitness for Purpose

A qualification will only be fit for purpose if it secures the requirements of:

- validity
- reliability
- comparability
- manageability
- minimising bias

bbodance aims to meet these requirements through a rigorous internal Quality Assurance Framework which includes:

- identifying and mitigating conflicts of interest in the delivery of Examinations
- adopting policies and procedures which encourage access to Examinations, minimise or remove barriers, and treat all students and Candidates without bias
- providing initial Examiner training which includes seminars, 'shadowing' existing Examiners and a mentoring support scheme
- providing on-going training for Examiners and monitoring their work through annual seminars, moderation and standardisation exercises

- undertaking regular reviews of syllabus content, Examination procedures and marking methodologies in order to meet regulatory requirements and the needs of Examination ‘users’
- undertaking statistical analysis of marks and adjustment where appropriate
- monitoring the use of Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration procedures and sharing best practice with other dance Awarding Organisations
- maintaining an appropriately skilled, competent and dedicated team of staff to design, deliver and quality assure dance Examinations.

## **Entry Criteria**

No previous dance qualifications are necessary in order to enter for Level 1 Graded Examinations.

Graded Examinations are open to Candidates of any age, although bbodance recommends that Candidates should be aged 7 or above before undertaking the Grade 1 Examination.

For students who wish to undertake an Examination at an earlier age, we offer Introduction to, Pre-Syllabus, Pre-Primary and Primary in Dance Examinations in multiple genres. These Examinations can help prepare Candidates for Level 1 Awards and recognise achievement at earlier stages of learning.

## 2. Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

**Learning outcomes** describe in broad terms what a Candidate should know, understand or be able to demonstrate during the Examination. Each bbodance Examination is underpinned by a set of learning outcomes which are appropriate for the level of the award.

**Assessment criteria** specify the standard a Candidate is expected to meet in order to demonstrate that the learning outcomes have been achieved. Each bbodance Examination is marked according to a series of assessment criteria which reflect the level of the award.

### Level 1 Descriptor

Candidates who have successfully completed a Level 1 qualification will have demonstrated a basic knowledge of a chosen dance genre with some basic technical skills. They will be able to perform simple movements with co-ordination and correct alignment. Their musicality is not yet developed but they are able to keep time with the music and express a basic awareness of musical rhythm. They are able to express some aspects of performance but this may not always be sustained. At Grade 3, Candidates can demonstrate some secure technique, with growing confidence in musicality and expressive performance.

### Grade 1 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

<b>Learning Outcomes: the Candidate will;</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria: the Candidate can;</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>perform basic dance vocabulary with sufficient technical facility</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>demonstrate knowledge and understanding of some basic dance vocabulary</li><li>demonstrate some basic technical skills</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>perform with basic awareness of musical rhythm and tempo</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>demonstrate some aspects of musical timing</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>develop some artistic and expressive qualities in dance performance</li><li>develop basic spatial awareness in relation to the body</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>demonstrate some expressive movement qualities</li><li>demonstrate basic awareness of performing for an audience</li><li>demonstrate some basic floor patterns</li></ul>

## Grade 2 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcomes: the Candidate will;	Assessment Criteria: the Candidate can;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform basic dance vocabulary with sufficient technical facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a basic dance vocabulary</li> <li>demonstrate a basic technical foundation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform with basic awareness of musical rhythm and tempo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate understanding of musical rhythm and timing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop artistic and expressive qualities in dance performance</li> <li>develop spatial awareness in relation to the body and performance space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate a range of expressive movement qualities</li> <li>demonstrate different floor patterns</li> <li>demonstrate awareness of an audience</li> </ul>

## Grade 3 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcomes: the Candidate will;	Assessment Criteria: the Candidate can;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform basic dance vocabulary with sufficient technical facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a basic dance vocabulary</li> <li>demonstrate a consistent technical foundation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform with basic awareness of musical rhythm and tempo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate a consistent understanding of musical rhythm and timing</li> <li>respond to expressive qualities in music or other stimuli</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop artistic and expressive qualities in dance performance</li> <li>develop spatial awareness in dance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate an appropriate performance style</li> </ul>



- perform with a clear sense of direction and personal space

## Grade 1-3 Assessment

In the Examinations Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- perform a series of prepared exercises in their chosen genre with a basic level of technical proficiency in relation to posture, weight placement, transference of weight, co-ordination of the whole body, control, line, spatial awareness and dynamic values
- dance, throughout the Examination, in time to the music and show responsiveness to the music
- dance with expression and performance quality
- verbally respond to theory questions.

For Level 1 qualifications, Candidates are expected to demonstrate a basic knowledge of dance vocabulary and increasing control of the body. Co-ordination during simple movements is secure and Candidates are able to dance safely within their physical capacity.

Candidates are required to communicate an element of confidence in their performance. Musical awareness is evident and there is a clear understanding of performing within the dimensions of the space.

## 3. Syllabus Content

---

A detailed genre-specific syllabus for each Examination can be found on the website and can be downloaded for free (bbodance Registered Teachers and Associate Members only) or purchased from our online shop.

Candidates will be examined through the performance of the prescribed Examination Content as set out in the genre-specific syllabi. The Examination is mainly practical in nature, with the inclusion of theory questions, related to vocabulary covered in the syllabi; both verbal and physical demonstration responses are acceptable.

bbodance upholds the rights of Candidates to be examined in their preferred gender identity. The majority of bbodance syllabi are gender neutral, however, where options have been presented based upon gender, the Candidate has the option to self identify.

## 4. Duration of Examinations

---

Ballet, Tap, Modern, Musical Theatre and AcroDancer

Number of Candidates	Duration
1	30 minutes
2	30 minutes
3	35 minutes
4	35 minutes

Jazz

Number of Candidates	Duration (Grade 1)	Duration (Grade 2)	Duration (Grade 3)
1	30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes
2	30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes
3	35 minutes	35 minutes	50 minutes
4	35 minutes	35 minutes	50 minutes

## 5. Marks and Achievements

---

### Overview of the Mark Scheme

The Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria detailed in Section 2 are differentiated across the Examination via three related assessment areas: technique, musicality and performance.

Technique, musicality and performance are assessed using a mark scheme which comprises a total of 100 marks, applied to the various elements as shown in the tables below.

Where genre-specific criteria differ, the mark scheme below denotes

### Grades 1-3 Mark Scheme

#### Ballet, Modern and Musical Theatre

Examination Content	Marks
Co-ordination	10
Elevation	10
Extension	10
Footwork	10
Interpretation	10
Musicality	10
Performance Quality	10
Posture & Placing	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Theory/Knowledge	10

## Tap

<b>Examination Content</b>	<b>Marks</b>
Clarity of Tapping	10
Co-ordination & Balance	10
Footwork	10
Interpretation	10
Legwork & Alignment	10
Musicality	10
Performance Quality	10
Posture & Placing	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Theory/Knowledge	10

Examination Content	Marks
Co-ordination	10
Elevation	10
Extensions & Isolations	10
Footwork	10
Interpretation	10
Musicality	10
Performance Quality	10
Posture & Placing	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Theory/Knowledge	10

Examination Content	Marks
Balance	10
Co-ordination	10
Flexibility	10
Footwork	10
Musicality	10
Performance Quality	10
Posture & Placing	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Strength	10
Syllabus Knowledge	10

## Mark Descriptors

Mark	Descriptor
1	The Candidate did not show the work required
2	Indicates an extremely limited ability to achieve
3	Indicates a limited ability to achieve
4	Indicates an acceptable ability to achieve
5	Indicates some good ability to achieve
6	Indicates a consistently good ability to achieve
7	Indicates a very good ability to achieve
8	Indicates an excellent ability to achieve
9	Indicates an outstanding ability to achieve
10	Indicates an exceptional ability to achieve

## Achievement Categories

Category of Achievement	Overall Mark
Standard Not Yet Achieved (SNYA)	0-39
Pass (P)	40-54
Merit (M)	55-69
Distinction (D)	70-84
Distinction* (D*)	85-100



# Achievement Descriptors

## Distinction \*

An excellent performance of the examined dance material, with some outstanding achievement in technique, musicality and performance quality. Candidates demonstrate an exceptional degree of technical control and spatial awareness with assured musical phrasing throughout. Artistic interpretation is outstanding and Candidates demonstrate a distinctive personal style and sense of performance. Overall, Candidates in this category surpass all expectations for the level.

## Distinction

A very good performance of the examined dance material which may include excellent achievement against some of the assessment criteria. Candidates demonstrate a very high level of technical control overall, with confident musicality and clear artistic engagement. Musical phrasing, interpretation and sense of performance are assured but without the confidence and originality of the Distinction\* Candidate.

## Merit

A good performance of the examined dance material with clear evidence of the appropriate knowledge and skills for the level. Some aspects of technique may require fuller development but the level of control is good overall. Musicality is clearly evident but may not always be sustained in more complex dance sequences. Artistic engagement and a sense of performance may also be less assured but overall, the work is commendable.

## Pass

An acceptable or adequate performance of the examined dance material with sufficient evidence of the appropriate knowledge and skills for the level. Control of technique with some inconsistencies across the full range of examined work. Some areas of the work examined show limited ability but overall the learning outcomes for the level have been met.

## Standard Not Yet Achieved

A limited performance of the examined dance material with insufficient evidence of the knowledge and skills required for the level. Technical clarity and control are not yet achieved. Musical awareness is not clearly demonstrated and there is a lack of performance style. Whilst there may be some potential ability, the learning outcomes have not been met; further study is required.

## 6. Total Qualification Time (TQT)

---

TQT is a measure of the time taken for an average student to complete a qualification. This figure is for guidance only and does not mean that all students must undertake a specified number of hours before undertaking Examination.

The TQT for Level 1 is 70 hours with 60 hours of Guided Learning and 10 hours of Other Learning.

**Guided Learning** is the time set aside for teaching or supervising students, including weekly lessons, additional coaching and rehearsals.

**Other Learning** includes a diverse range of activities which support or extend the learning in class. These activities might include 'homework' tasks such as online dance research, reading books on dance technique, seeing a live dance performance or viewing a filmed extract online.

Following consultation with Awarding Organisations the figures for TQT were approved by the Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre (April 2016).

## 7. Uniform

---

Recommended uniform for each genre is detailed in the bbodance Teachers' Handbook.

For all Examinations no jewellery or watches should be worn. Hair should be securely tied off the face and neck in an appropriate hairstyle for the genre. All Candidates in each Examination set should have the same uniform.

We encourage Examination Candidates to wear bbodance approved uniform because it is fit for purpose, ensuring the health and safety of Candidates and allowing freedom of movement. Approved uniform is supplied by Dansez and is available to purchase via <https://dans-ez.com/collections/bbodance>.

The bbodance approved uniform has been designed so that items can be mixed and matched across genres.

## 8. Teaching Resources

---

The following resources are available for Teachers entering Candidates for Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grades 1-3:

- Specification
- Syllabus Transcript
- Syllabus Film (where available)
- Teachers' Handbook
- Continuing Professional Development offered throughout the year by bbodance

These resources are available on the website and can be downloaded for free (bbodance Registered Teachers and Associate Members only) or the syllabi transcript can be purchased from our online shop.