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# Specification

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**Level 2 Award in Graded  
Examination in Dance:  
Grade 4**

**Level 2 Award in Graded  
Examination in Dance:  
Grade 5**

**Level 2 Certificate in  
Vocational Graded  
Examination in Dance:  
Intermediate Foundation**

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**Level 2**

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*Qualifications regulated in England and Wales*

This specification is valid from January 2019 to January 2023

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 examinations in Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Modern, Musical Theatre and Contemporary. Recognised under the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), these examinations are regulated by Ofqual and Qualifications Wales. The examinations are delivered both nationally and internationally.

In addition to regulated qualifications, bbodance offers Graded Assessments<sup>2</sup> and Dance Awards<sup>3</sup> for students who do not wish to take formal examinations. Information on all qualifications and awards can be found on our website (<https://bbo.dance>).

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.

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<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).

<sup>2</sup> Formally Performance Dance Awards. Graded Assessments commence from September 2019

<sup>3</sup> Formally Freestyle Dance Awards. Dance Awards commence from September 2019

## bbodance Qualifications at a Glance

	Qualification	Genre/s	Level/Award
Graded	Grade 1	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern; Musical Theatre; Contemporary	Level 1 Award
Graded	Grade 2	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern; Musical Theatre; Contemporary	Level 1 Award
Graded	Grade 3	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern; Musical Theatre; Contemporary	Level 1 Award
Graded	Grade 4	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern; Musical Theatre	Level 2 Award
Graded	Grade 5	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern; Musical Theatre;	Level 2 Award
Vocational	Intermediate Foundation	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern	Level 2 Certificate
Graded	Grade 6	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern	Level 3 Certificate
Graded	Grade 7	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern	Level 3 Certificate
Graded	Grade 8	Ballet; Tap; Modern	Level 3 Certificate
Vocational	Intermediate	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern	Level 3 Certificate
Vocational	Advanced 1	Ballet; Tap; Jazz; Modern	Level 4 Certificate
Vocational	Advanced 2	Ballet; Tap; Modern	Level 4 Diploma
Teacher Training	L4 Diploma in Dance Teaching	Unspecified	Level 4 Diploma
Teacher Training	L5 Diploma in Dance Teaching	Unspecified	Level 5 Diploma
Teacher Training	L6 Diploma in Dance Teaching	Unspecified	Level 6 Diploma

Teacher Training	L6 Extended Diploma in Dance Teaching	Unspecified	Level 6 Extended Diploma
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# 1. Summary, Objectives, Aims and Philosophy

## Qualification Titles and Numbers

Qualification Title	Ofqual Qualification Number	Qualification Wales Approval/Designation No.
BBO Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 4	600/3169/4	C00/1719/8
BBO Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 5	600/3059/8	C00/1718/7
BBO Level 2 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate Foundation	600/3144/X	C00/1719/6

## Summary

### Grades 4 and 5

Grades 4 and 5 are aligned with Level 2 of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (Ofqual 2016). These examinations are offered in a range of genres (see the table on page 3) and are available to any candidate, with or without previous dance experience. Successful candidates receive a Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance.

Grades 4 and 5 are conceived as a progression which covers a basic dance vocabulary at an achievable pace for students attending one or two dance classes per week. Candidates are advised to complete each Graded Examination in succession.

### Intermediate Foundation

The Intermediate Foundation examination is a Vocational Graded Examination aligned with Level 2 of the RQF. Successful candidates receive a Level 2 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance.

Intermediate Foundation marks the beginning of the Vocational Graded Examination route which differs in the volume of work from Graded Examinations at the same level.

Candidates may choose to do one or more examinations at Level 2 in various genres, choosing from both the Graded and Vocationally Graded Examinations.

## Objectives

The objectives of Level 2 Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance are to:

- provide access to nationally recognised examinations in dance which, at the higher level, are accepted by the industry as benchmarks of achievement and taken into account by universities and other Higher Education (HE) institutions offering degree courses and programmes in dance and dance teacher education
- 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 3 (Grades 6-8 and Intermediate).

## Aims

The aims of Level 2 Graded and Vocational 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 and 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 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 dance 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, standardisation exercises and performance reviews
- 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 2 Graded or Vocational Graded Examinations.

Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations are open to candidates of any age, although bbodance recommends that candidates should be aged 10 or above before undertaking the Grade 4 examination, and aged 12 or above before undertaking the Grade 5 and Intermediate Foundation examinations.

For students who wish to undertake an examination at an earlier age, we offer Level 1 Awards in Dance for which bbodance recommends that candidates should be aged 7 or above before undertaking the Grade 1 examination. These examinations can help prepare candidates for Level 2 Awards and recognise achievement at earlier stages of learning. We also offer Introduction to, Pre-Syllabus, Pre-Primary and Primary in Dance examinations in multiple genres for students below the age of 7.

## 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 2 Descriptor

Candidates who have successfully completed a Level 2 Award (Grades 4-5) or Level 2 Certificate (Intermediate Foundation) have demonstrated sound knowledge and understanding of the set movement vocabulary in a selected dance genre. They have shown technical proficiency throughout, although there may still be some areas in need of development. Spatial awareness is clearly evident in floor patterns and in accommodating other candidates. There is clear understanding of a range of musical rhythms and dynamics as the basis for expressive movement. At this level, candidates can demonstrate a clear sense of performance, although this may not always be fully sustained.

### Grade 4 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 a range of selected dance vocabulary with secure technical facility</li><li>perform some complex steps and movement sequences</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of dance vocabulary</li><li>demonstrate sound technical skills</li><li>demonstrate sound co-ordination of the whole body</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>refine their understanding of the relationship between music and dance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>perform with musicality and appropriate dynamics</li><li>perform complex dance rhythms</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>develop individual expressive qualities in dance performance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>demonstrate a variety of expressive movement qualities</li><li>perform for an 'audience' with spatial awareness and confidence</li></ul>

## Grade 5 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcomes: the candidate will;	Assessment Criteria: the candidate can;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform a range of selected dance vocabulary</li> <li>perform some complex steps and movement sequences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of dance vocabulary</li> <li>demonstrate sound technical skills</li> <li>demonstrate sound co-ordination of the whole body</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>refine their understanding of the relationship between music and dance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform with musicality and appropriate dynamics</li> <li>perform complex dance rhythms</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop artistic and expressive qualities in dance performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate a variety of expressive movement qualities</li> <li>perform for an 'audience' with spatial awareness and confidence</li> </ul>

# Intermediate Foundation Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcomes: the candidate will;	Assessment Criteria: the candidate can;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform a range of selected dance vocabulary with secure technical skills</li> <li>perform complex steps and movement sequences with other candidates and by themselves</li> <li>perform a limited selection of pointe work (female ballet syllabi only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of dance vocabulary</li> <li>demonstrate a consistent technical foundation</li> <li>perform with a clear sense of direction and personal space</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>refine their understanding of the relationship between music and dance</li> <li>develop different skills needed for faster/slower movement styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate consistent musicality across a range of musical tempos and rhythms</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop artistic and expressive qualities in dance performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interpret expressive qualities in music or other stimuli</li> <li>perform with confidence</li> </ul>

## Grade 4-5 and Intermediate Foundation Assessment

In the examinations candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- perform a series of prepared exercises which require the ability to demonstrate secure posture, correct weight placement, 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, throughout the examination, with expression and communication
- verbally respond to basic theory questions asked by the examiner

For Level 2 qualifications candidates are expected to demonstrate an increasing vocabulary of dance steps and an increasing awareness and control of dance technique. Candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge of vocabulary as defined by the chosen syllabus content. A secure understanding of dance technique is reflected in the ability to co-ordinate movements to produce combinations of steps with appropriate quality of movement (i.e. precision and control), within the range of the candidates' physical capacity.

Candidates are required to communicate an increasing confidence in performance. They should be able to interpret music and display a developing sensitivity to musical content and style. Candidates' performances should communicate a developing spatial awareness, an ability to work with others and responsiveness to an audience.

## 3. Syllabus Content

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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 which the examiner will ask, related to vocabulary covered in the syllabi; both verbal and physical demonstration responses are acceptable.

In Tap, Jazz, Modern, Musical Theatre and Contemporary, the examination content for Grades 4-5 is gender neutral. There are some alternative male and female exercises within the ballet syllabi. Pointe work is introduced for Vocational Graded Examinations, beginning with Intermediate Foundation. All candidates who opt to undertake the female ballet syllabi have pointe work examined and must obtain a mark of 4 or above for Footwork/Pointe work in order to be successful overall. It is recommended that candidates identifying as female and considering pursuing further vocational training choose to be examined in this area. bbodance upholds the rights of candidates to be examined in their preferred gender identity.

## 4. Duration of Examinations

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### Grades 4 and 5

#### Ballet and Musical Theatre

Number of Candidates	Duration
1	45 minutes
2	45 minutes
3	55 minutes
4	55 minutes

## Tap, Jazz and Modern

Number of Candidates	Tap	Jazz	Modern
1	30 minutes	60 minutes	30 minutes
2	40 minutes	60 minutes	30 minutes
3	45 minutes	70 minutes	40 minutes
4	45 minutes	70 minutes	40 minutes

## Intermediate Foundation

### Ballet

Number of Candidates	Duration
1	75 minutes
2	75 minutes
3	90 minutes
4	90 minutes

## Tap, Jazz and Modern

Number of Candidates	Tap	Jazz	Modern
1	30 minutes	75 minutes	40 minutes
2	45 minutes	75 minutes	40 minutes
3	60 minutes	80 minutes	50 minutes
4	60 minutes	80 minutes	50 minutes

# 5. Marks and Achievements

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## 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 4-5 and Intermediate Foundation Mark Scheme

### Ballet and Modern

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

## Tap

Examination Content	Marks
Clarity of Tapping	10
Co-ordination, Balance & Control	10
Footwork	10
Legwork & Alignment	10
Musical Dynamics	10
Musical Rhythm	10
Performance Quality/ Interpretation	10
Posture & Placing	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Theory/Knowledge	10

## Jazz

Examination Content	Marks
Co-ordination & Control	10
Elevation	10
Extension & Isolations	10
Footwork	10
Musicality	10
Performance Quality	10

Posture, Placing & Alignment	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Style/Interpretation	10
Theory/Knowledge	10

## Musical Theatre

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

Excellent in most aspects of technique with consistency across all exercises and set dances. The quality of performance and musicality is also very well developed with demonstration of a range of dynamics. At the upper end of the mark range for Distinction, the candidate demonstrates an excellent or outstanding overall achievement.

## Merit

Good in most aspects of technique with some very good areas of ability. Some aspects of performance quality and musicality are well developed but may lack consistency. At the upper end of the mark range for Merit is work which is very good overall.

## Pass

Acceptable or adequate in the control of technique with some inconsistency across the full range of examined work. Some musical awareness and sense of performance is demonstrated but not fully developed. Some areas of the work examined show limited ability but overall the learning outcomes for the level have been met.

## Standard Not Yet Achieved

Limited technical ability with insufficient strength or control. 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)

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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 Grades 4 and 5 is 95 hours with 75 hours of Guided Learning and 20 hours of Other Learning. The TQT for Intermediate Foundation is 275 hours with 150 hours of Guided Learning and 125 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

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

Hair should be secured neatly away from the face. Candidates should not wear watches or jewellery in the examination room.

Uniforms may be obtained from any dancewear supplier, however, for information on the bbodance approved stockist go to <https://bbo.dance/shop>.

## 8. Teaching Resources

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The following resources are available for teachers entering candidates for Level 2 Award/Certificate in Graded/Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Grades 4-5 and Intermediate Foundation:

- 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.