
Specification

**Level 4 Certificate in
Vocational Graded
Examination in Dance:
Advanced 1**

**Level 4 Diploma in
Vocational Graded
Examination in Dance:
Advanced 2**

Level 4

Qualifications regulated in England and Wales

This specification is valid from January 2019 to January 2023

bbodance¹ (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 Assessments² and Dance Awards³ 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.

¹ 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).

² Formally Performance Dance Awards. Graded Assessments commence from September 2019

³ 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.
Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1	600/3141/4	C00/1719/3
Level 4 Diploma in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 2	600/3142/6	C00/1719/4

Summary

Vocational Grades Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 are aligned with Level 4 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 4 Certificate in Graded Examination in Dance or a Level 4 Diploma in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance.

Candidates may choose to do one or more examinations at Level 4 in any genre. The content of Vocational Grades Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 is conceived as a linear progression and candidates are advised to follow the numerical order.

Objectives

The objectives of Level 4 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 vocational training for aspiring dance students for entry to a career in dance such as: professional dancer, teacher, examiner, choreographer, notator, historian, lecturer and community practitioner and/or progression to further study at Level 5
- 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.

Aims

The aims of Level 4 Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance are to:

- promote the vocational study of dance in preparation for a professional career
- provide a means of measuring the acquisition of technical, musical and dance performance skills at an elite/professional level
- promote and encourage dance as a theatre art
- provide all candidates with an opportunity of experiencing dance accompanied by live or recorded music
- encourage personal self-confidence in dance performance
- encourage creative artistry in the unique relationship between dance and music
- provide vocational training which reflect the principles of safe dance practice
- provide teachers with a means by which to develop and monitor the individual progress of vocational students
- reward achievement and motivate career aspirations.

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 4 Vocational Graded Examinations.

Vocational Graded Examinations are open to candidates of any age, although bbodance recommends that candidates should be aged 16 before undertaking the Advanced 1 or Advanced 2 examination.

For students who wish to undertake an examination at an earlier age, we offer Level 3 Awards and Certificates in Dance for which bbodance recommends that candidates should be aged 14 or above before taking Grades 6-8 and Intermediate examinations.

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 bbody 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 bbody examination is marked according to a series of assessment criteria which reflect the level of the award.

Level 4 Descriptor

Candidates have demonstrated extensive breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding in a selected dance genre. They have performed with mastery of the technique combined with an inherent expressive quality which is the mark of a professional dancer. Their physical stamina, strength and control has been maintained throughout the complex movement material; they are able to perform at speed and at a sustained, lyrical pace. Candidates at this level have demonstrated artistic versatility in engaging with a variety of performance styles from the past and present dance repertoire.

Advanced 1 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcomes: the candidate will;	Assessment Criteria: the candidate can;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform an extensive range of dance vocabulary with technical precision and command • perform on pointe with secure and safe footwork (female ballet syllabi only) • perform across diverse artistic styles from past and current repertoire • sustain a high level of performance throughout the examination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge in a selected dance genre • undertake significant independent study to enhance their own progress • integrate theoretical and practical learning in their performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consolidate their understanding of the relationship between music and dance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform to a range of musical tempos and rhythms with sustained focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop individual expressive qualities and artistic integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate individuality and audience awareness in dance performance • demonstrate some qualities which are at or near the level of a professional dancer

Advanced 2 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcomes: the candidate will;	Assessment Criteria: the candidate can;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perform an extensive range of dance vocabulary with technical precision and command perform on pointe with secure and safe footwork (Option A ballet syllabi only) perform across diverse artistic styles from past and current repertoire sustain a high level of performance throughout the examination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge in a selected dance genre undertake significant independent study to enhance their own progress integrate theoretical and practical learning in their performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consolidate their understanding of the relationship between music and dance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perform to a range of musical tempos and rhythms with sustained focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop individual expressive qualities and artistic integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate individuality and audience awareness in dance performance demonstrate some qualities which are at or near the level of a professional dancer

Advanced 1 and 2 Assessment

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

- perform a series of prepared dance exercises with an advanced level of technical proficiency in relation to posture, weight placement, co-ordination of the whole body, control, line, spatial awareness and dynamic values
- dance, throughout the examination, with musicality and some original interpretation of music content
- dance with individual expression and performance quality, sustained throughout the examination
- perform a complex and demanding set dance/s or enchaînement/ which requires the integration of all of the above aspects of technique, music and performance at an advanced level.

For Level 4 qualifications, candidates are expected to demonstrate an advanced knowledge of dance vocabulary, to sustain control of the body during complex movements and to dance safely within their physical capacity.

Candidates are required to communicate a confident and mature performance. Musicality is evident throughout the performance and there is a clear understanding of artistic integrity.

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

In all dance genres, the examination content for Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 are gender neutral. For the Ballet syllabi, Pointe Work is introduced for Vocational Graded Examinations, beginning with Intermediate Foundation. All candidates who opt to undertake Optional A of the 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. All candidates who opt to undertake Option B of Ballet syllabi must obtain a mark of 4 or above in Elevation. bbodance upholds the rights of candidates to be examined in their preferred gender identity.

4. Duration of Examinations

Advanced 1

Number of Candidates	Ballet	Tap	Jazz	Modern
1	75 minutes	30 minutes	75 minutes	40 minutes
2	75 minutes	45 minutes	75 minutes	40 minutes
3	90 minutes	60 minutes	80 minutes	50 minutes
4	90 minutes	60 minutes	80 minutes	50 minutes

Advanced 2

Number of Candidates	Ballet	Tap	Modern
1	75 minutes	60 minutes	40 minutes
2	75 minutes	60 minutes	40 minutes
3	90 minutes	75 minutes	50 minutes
4	90 minutes	75 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

Advanced 1 and 2 Mark Scheme

Ballet

Examination Content	Marks
Co-ordination	10
Elevation* & Beats	10
Extension	10
Footwork/Pointe Work*	10
Musicality	10
Performance Quality	10
Posture & Alignment	10
Strength & Control	10
Style/Interpretation	10
Turns	10

*In addition to the overall score, candidates must obtain a mark of 4 or above in Pointe Work (female syllabi) or Elevation (male syllabi) to gain this qualification.

Tap

Examination Content	Marks
Clarity of Tapping	10
Co-ordination & Control	10
Footwork	10
Musicality Rhythm & Dynamics	10
Musicality Timing & Phrasing	10
Performance Quality	10
Interpretation	10
Posture & Alignment	10
Spatial Awareness & Directional Change	10
Turning Steps	10

Jazz

Examination Content	Marks
Co-ordination, Strength & Control	10
Elevation	10
Footwork	10
Isolations	10
Musicality Dynamics	10
Musicality Phrasing	10

Performance Quality	10
Posture & Alignment	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Turns	10

Modern

Examination Content	Marks
Co-ordination, Strength & Control	10
Elevation	10
Footwork	10
Musicality Dynamics	10
Musicality Phrasing	10
Performance Quality	10
Posture & Alignment	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Turn Out/Parallel	10
Turns	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)

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 an examination.

The TQT for Advanced 1 (Level 4 Certificate) is 325 hours. This figure comprises 150 Guided Learning Hours and 175 hours of 'Other Learning'.

The TQT for Advanced 2 (Level 4 Diploma) is 375 hours. This figure comprises 150 Guided Learning Hours and 225 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.

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

The following resources are available for Teachers entering candidates for Level 4 Certificate/Diploma in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance:

- 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.