
Specification

**Level 1 Award in Graded
Examination in Dance
(Contemporary): Grades 1-3**

bbodance

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, Contemporary, Tap, Jazz, Modern and Musical Theatre. 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 Performance Awards and Freestyle Dance Awards 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. The document contains a summary of the examined dance content; a detailed syllabus 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).

bbodance Qualifications at a Glance

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

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1. Summary, Objectives, Aims and Philosophy

Summary

Grades 1, 2 and 3 are aligned with Level 1 of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (Ofqual 2016). These examinations are offered in a range of genres and are available to any candidate, with or without previous dance experience.

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

Objectives

- 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.
- To provide a broad education in and through dance which is accessible for all children, young people and adults, with or without prior dance experience.
- To 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.
- To 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 (Contemporary) are to:

- promote the study of dance (Contemporary) as a leisure and/or vocational activity
- provide a means of measuring the acquisition of technical, musical 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 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 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 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.

2. Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

The learning outcomes and assessment criteria for Grades 1-3 are given below.

Learning outcomes describe in broad terms what a candidate should know, understand or be able to demonstrate during the examination. Each bbo dance 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 bbo dance 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 vocabulary 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

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

Grade 2 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

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

Grade 3 Examination Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

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

Grade 1-3 Assessment

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

- Perform a series of prepared Contemporary exercises 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, although this may not always be sustained
- verbally respond to basic theory questions asked by the examiner.

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, although not always sustained and there is a clear understanding of performing within the dimensions of the space.

3. Syllabus Content

General

bbodance Level 1 Awards (Grades 1-3) are regulated qualifications in England and Wales.

Detailed descriptions of the set work for each examination are published online and available for download free of charge.

In all dance genres, the examination content for Grades 1-3 is gender neutral. bbodance upholds the rights of candidates to be examined in their preferred gender identity.

Graded Examinations

Candidates will be examined through the performance of the prescribed Examination Content as set out below.

Grade 1 Content (Contemporary)

Centre Practice	
1	Demi Plié
2	Positions of the Feet and Transference of Weight
3	Tendu
4	Foot Articulation
Travelling and Performance	
1	Walks
2	Petit Allegro
3	Dance (Option A or B)

Grade 2 Content (Contemporary)

Centre Practice	
1	Pliés with the use of the Upper Spine
2	Foot Articulation and Tendu
3	Rond de Jambe à Terre
4	Tendu and Grand battement
5	Preparation for Turns
Travelling and Performance	
1	Travelling
2	Falls
3	Petit Allegro
4	Allegro
5	Dance (Option A or B)

Grade 3 Content (Contemporary)

Centre Practice	
1	Pliés with Full Use of the Spine
2	Foot Articulation and Tendu
3	Rond de Jambe with Spine Release

4	Swings
Travelling and Performance	
1	Travelling Battements
2	Walks and Falls
3	Petit Allegro
4	Allegro
5	Dance (Option A or B)

4. Duration of Examinations

Number of Candidates	Timing (in minutes)
1	30 minutes
2	30 minutes
3	35 minutes
4	35 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 box below.

Grades 1-3 Mark Scheme

Examination Content	Marks
Coordination	10
Elevation	10
Extension	10
Footwork	10
Interpretation	10
Musicality	10
Performance Quality	10
Posture & Placing	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Theory/knowledge	10

Mark Descriptors (out of 10)

Mark	Descriptor
0	The candidate did not attend the examination or did not show the work required
1	Indicates an extremely limited ability to achieve
2	Indicates a very 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
9-10	Indicates an outstanding 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 areas of ability which may be very good. 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 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 quality. 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 learner to complete a qualification. This figure is for guidance only and does not mean that all learners 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 learners, 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

The regulated uniform for Grades 1-3 Contemporary is as follows:

- Black sleeveless leotard and black tights
- Black shorts or black fitting tracksuit bottoms and a black close fitting t-shirt
- Black socks – these may be worn as required per the studio floor for the Centre Technique exercises but should be removed for the Travelling Technique exercises and set dance.

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 <http://bbo.dance/shop>

8. Teaching Resources

The following resources are available for teachers entering candidates for Musical Theatre:

- Teacher's Handbook
- Specification
- Syllabus Transcript
- Syllabus Film

These resources are available to download from the bbodance website at <https://bbo.dance>