

National Association of Teachers of Dancing

**Graded and Vocational Graded
Examinations in Dance**

Specification

June 2017

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Specification at a Glance

Qualification Titles	Total no. of units	Level	Guided Learning Hours	Total Qualification Time	Credit value	Discipli
NATD Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 1	1	1	60	70	7	Classic Ballet Ballet Modern National Tap Contemp
NATD Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 2	1	1	60	70	7	
NATD Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 3	1	1	60	70	7	
NATD Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 4	1	2	75	95	10	
NATD Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 5	1	2	75	95	10	
NATD Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 6 (Ballet, Classic Ballet and Contemporary only)	1	3	90	130	13	
NATD Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 7 (Ballet only)	1	3	90	130	13	
NATD Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 8 (Ballet only)	1	3	90	130	13	
NATD Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate Foundation	1	2	150	275	28	
NATD Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate	1	3	150	275	28	
NATD Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1	1	4	150	325	33	
NATD Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 2	1	4	150	375	38	

Assessment

Form of assessment	All assessment is by external assessment. Candidates should register through their teacher or dance school for assessment which will be carried out by an NATD Examiner.
Examination Format	The examination (unit) specifications contain the title, learning outcomes (what has to be learnt) and assessment requirements (evidence on which the candidate is assessed). (See Appendix 1)
Bands of Assessment	There are three bands of attainment, pass, merit or distinction.
Quality Assurance	Quality Assurance ensures that all assessments are carried out to the same standard by external assessment of candidates' work. A team of external examiners is appointed, trained and standardised by NATD and the qualifications conform to the normal quality assurance procedures and processes operated by NATD.

SECTION A: Qualification Summary

Welcome to the NATD specification for Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance. This specification is designed to give teachers and learners practical information on the graded examinations run by NATD.

If you have any general queries about these qualifications or any other NATD qualifications, then please do not hesitate to call us on 01635 868888 or email us at info@natd.org.uk

A.1 Aims and broad objectives

The aim of the NATD Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance is to provide candidates with the opportunity to obtain recognised qualifications in dance. The qualifications are available to all learners from pre-16 to 19+.

The qualifications also aim to promote enjoyment of movement as a form of physical exercise, encourage personal self-confidence and group awareness, and develop a general appreciation of dance.

The purpose of NATD's Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance is to motivate and encourage candidates of all ages and levels through a system of progressive mastery and to provide a form of physical training that is safe, alongside the development of artistic and musical appreciation. The qualifications are not only beneficial to those studying dance as a recreational pursuit, but also, and particularly for Vocational Graded Examinations, support entry to the industry and prepare for further learning by helping learners to develop their skills enabling them to progress to the next level.

The broad objectives are:

- To focus delivery and assessment on dance performance skills;
- To provide progression to higher levels of dance practice through progressive mastery of the genre.

A.2 Progression

Graded Examinations in Dance provide a viable pathway into the creative industries sector for dancers working either as performers or teachers. It can be argued that grade exams by themselves are not strictly speaking 'vocational' in that they are not absolutely essential for entry into the world of professional dance. However, they remain a positive means of determining progress and enable students to learn the necessary techniques to gain entry to higher level courses either in FE, HE or through the vocational schools. Graded exams operate according to a well-established methodology of 'progressive mastery'. They allow dancers to be tested in discrete stages in the development of a range of skills necessary for mastery of a particular genre. They tend to be more rigorous than other types of exams and for that reason the profession is confident that achievement at the highest level gained by candidates of graded exams will have the skills necessary to perform or work in other areas of the business.

A.3 Qualification Structure

A Graded or Vocational Graded Examination in dance consists of pre-prepared elements as specified by a detailed syllabus, all of which are performance based. They are single unit qualifications in which candidates are asked to undertake dance sequences as

specified in the relevant syllabus. The unit specifications for each grade can be found in Appendix 1 below and include the unit title, the level, the Guided Learning Hours (GLH:) which indicates the taught time, the Total Qualification Time (TQT) which indicates the total learning time and the credit value (notional learning hours), the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. For more information, the content of particular genre please contact us for a copy of the relevant syllabus at info@natd.org.uk.

SECTION B: Assessment Information

B.1 Assessment Methodology

The underlying philosophy for assessment is that learners should receive credit for positive achievement, and that all should be encouraged to reach their fullest potential.

All assessment of these qualifications is external and is assessed by NATD Examiners. Please see our publication *Understanding the Marking System for Theatrical Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations Handbook* for more detail about how NATD marks and grades its qualifications.

B.2 Expectations of Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

The Graded and Vocational Graded Examination system is one based on the principle of 'progressive mastery': each step in the exam chain demonstrates learning, progression and skills in a chosen genre in incremental steps. Successful learning is characterised by a mastery of the fundamentals of the skills of that particular genre demanded in each grade. Learners will complete a set of dance sequences (the complexity and variety of which are determined by the level of qualification being attempted) which allow them to demonstrate discipline-specific artistic appreciation. These technical and performance skills set a firm platform for further technical and artistic development by the learner.

B.3 Quality Assurance

All graded dance examinations are standardised according to the processes and procedures laid down by NATD which are set out in the document "*Understanding the Marking System for the Theatrical Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations Handbook*".

SECTION C: Candidate Access and Registration

The qualifications will:

- be available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- be free from any barriers that restrict access and progression
- offer equal opportunities for all wishing to access the qualifications

There are no prerequisites for other qualifications to be completed, and no specified prior knowledge, skills or understanding required prior to taking a graded dance qualification. It is expected, however, that for successful learning, the skills demanded in each grade are likely to be mastered before progressing to the next grade.

Please see NATD's Teacher's Handbook for details about registering candidates for NATD examinations.

SECTION D: Complaints and Appeals

Please see NATD's Customer Services Handbook for details about how we operate our complaints and appeals procedures

SECTION E: Equal Opportunities Policy

NATD is committed to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities in the management of its qualifications in which individuals are selected and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities without regard to race, religion, colour, sex, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation, and are given equal opportunities within the company. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no candidate entering an examination receives less favourable treatment on grounds not relevant to good candidate practice.

Our equal opportunities policy can be found in the NATD Customer Services Handbook.

SECTION F: Contacts & Support

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NATD Area Branches □

Anglian □

London Ballroom □

London Theatrical □

Midlands □

North Eastern

North Midlands

Northern

South Western

Appendix 1: Unit Specifications by Grade

Unit specifications are divided into learning outcomes and assessment requirements:

- A Learning Outcome shows what candidates need to know, understand or be able to do.
- An assessment criterion shows what candidates need to do to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

The unit specifications also contain information about the credit value (notional learning) and the Guided Learning Hours (GLH) which shows an indication of taught time.

Title:	Graded Examination in (discipline): Grade 1	
Level:	1	
GLH:	60	
TQT:	70	
Credit Value:	7	
Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
The learner will:	The learner can:	
1. Be able to perform simple movement sequences showing an awareness of basic technique in (discipline)	1.1 Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the vocabulary of (discipline) 1.2 Demonstrate basic technical skills	
2. Be able to perform simple movement sequences showing an awareness of musicality in (discipline)	2.1 Demonstrate a basic sense of appropriate timing and rhythm 2.2 Demonstrate a basic responsiveness to music	
3. Be able to show an awareness of performance in (discipline)	3.1 Demonstrate a basic use of expression 3.2 Demonstrate a basic awareness of an audience	

Title:	Graded Examination in (discipline): Grade 2	
Level:	1	
GLH:	60	
TQT:	70	
Credit Value:	7	
Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
The learner will:	The learner can:	
1. Be able to perform simple movement sequences showing an awareness of basic techniques in (discipline)	1.1 Demonstrate knowledge and basic understanding of the vocabulary of (discipline) 1.2 Demonstrate technical skills	
2. Be able to perform simple movement sequences showing an awareness of musicality in (discipline)	2.1 Demonstrate a sense of appropriate timing and rhythm 2.2 Demonstrate a responsiveness to music	
3. Be able to show an awareness of performance in (discipline)	3.1 Demonstrate a basic use of expression as appropriate 3.2 Demonstrate an awareness of an audience	

Title:	Graded Examination in (discipline): Grade 3	
Level:	1	
GLH:	60	
TQT:	70	
Credit Value:	7	
Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
The learner will:	The learner can:	
1. Be able to perform simple movement sequences showing an awareness of basic techniques in (discipline)	1.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of (discipline) 1.2 Demonstrate consistent technical skills	
2. Be able to perform simple movement sequences showing an awareness of musicality in (discipline)	2.1 Demonstrate a basic understanding of appropriate timing and rhythm 2.2 Demonstrate a responsiveness to music appropriately	
3. Be able to show an awareness of performance in (discipline)	3.1 Demonstrate the use of expression appropriately 3.2 Demonstrate an appropriate awareness of an audience	

Title:	Graded Examination in (discipline): Grade 4	
Level:	2	
GLH:	75	
TQT:	95	
Credit Value:	10	
Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
The learner will:	The learner can:	
1. Be able to perform movement sequences showing an awareness of technique in (discipline)	1.1 Demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of (discipline) 1.2 Demonstrate secure technical skills	
2. Be able to perform movement sequences demonstrating musicality in (discipline)	2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of a range of rhythmical sounds, accents and timings 2.2 Demonstrate an understanding of musical interpretation including: a) Phrasing b) Dynamics c) Atmosphere	
3. Be able to show a sense of performance in (discipline)	3.1 Demonstrate the use of expression and performance skills appropriately 3.2 Communicate appropriately with the audience	

Title:	Graded Examination in (discipline): Grade 5	
Level:	2	
GLH::	75	
TQT:	95	
Credit Value:	10	
Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
The learner will:	The learner can:	
1. Be able to perform movement sequences showing an understanding of technique in (discipline)	1.1 Demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of (discipline) 1.2 Demonstrate sound and secure technical skills	
2. Be able to perform movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in (discipline)	2.1 Demonstrate a clear understanding of a range of rhythmical sounds, accents and timings 2.2 Demonstrate a clear understanding of musical interpretation including: a) Phrasing b) Dynamics c) Atmosphere	
3. Be able to show a sense of performance in (discipline)	3.1 Demonstrate the secure use of expression and performance skills appropriately 3.2 Communicate confidently and appropriately with the audience	

Title:	Graded Examination in (discipline): Grade 6	
Level:	3	
GLH	90	
TQT:	130	
Credit Value:	13	
Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
The learner will:	The learner can:	
1. Be able to perform complex movement sequences showing an understanding, and secure use of technique.	1.1 Demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of Ballet 1.2 Demonstrate sound, secure and confident technical skills	
2. Be able to perform complex movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality	2.1 Demonstrate a clear understanding of a range of complex rhythmical sounds, accents and timings 2.2 Demonstrate a sensitive musical interpretation including: a) Phrasing b) Dynamics c) Atmosphere	
3. Be able to present an assured performance	3.1 Demonstrate a personal sense of style and confidence in performance 3.2 Use varied expression and a range of performance skills with appropriate engagement with the audience	

Title:	Graded Examination in Ballet: Grade 7	
Level:	3	
GLH:	90	
TQT:	130	
Credit Value:	13	
Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
The learner will:	The learner can:	
1. Be able to perform complex movement sequences showing an understanding, and secure use of technique in Ballet	1.1 Demonstrate a detailed and thorough knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of Ballet 1.2 Demonstrate confident and assured technical skills	
2. Be able to perform complex movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Ballet	2.1 Demonstrate a secure understanding of a range of complex rhythmical sounds, accents and timings 2.2 Demonstrate a confident and sensitive musical interpretation including: a) Phrasing b) Dynamics c) Atmosphere	
3. Be able to present an assured performance in Ballet	3.1 Demonstrate an assured personal sense of style and confidence in performance 3.2 Use varied expression and a range of performance skills confidently with appropriate engagement with the audience	

Title:	Graded Examination in Ballet: Grade 8	
Level:	3	
GLH:	90	
TQT:	130	
Credit Value:	13	
Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
The learner will:	The learner can:	
1. Be able to perform complex movement sequences showing an understanding, and secure use of technique in Ballet	1.1 Demonstrate a consolidated knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of Ballet 1.2 Demonstrate consolidated technical skills	
2. Be able to perform complex movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Ballet	2.1 Demonstrate a consolidated understanding of a range of complex rhythmical sounds, accents and timings 2.2 Demonstrate a confident, sensitive and varied musical interpretation including: a) Phrasing b) Dynamics c) Atmosphere	
3. Be able to present an assured performance in Ballet	3.1 Demonstrate a mature personal sense of style and confidence in performance 3.2 Use varied expression and a range of performance skills confidently and consistently with appropriate engagement with the audience	

Title:	Vocational Graded Examination in (discipline): (Intermediate Foundation)
Level:	2
GLH:	150
TQT:	275
Credit Value:	28

Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of (discipline)	1.1 Apply and demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the mechanics and purpose of the required vocabulary 1.2 Respond to and interpret direction correctly
2. Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in (discipline)	2.1 Demonstrate strength and stamina in technical skills 2.2 Demonstrate a disciplined approach in a range of technical skills including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Spatial awareness b) Control c) Co-ordination
3. Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in (discipline)	3.1 Demonstrate a clear understanding of a more complex range of rhythmical sounds, accents and timings 3.2 Demonstrate a clear understanding of musical interpretation within more complex sequences including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Phrasing b) Dynamics c) Atmosphere
4. Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in (discipline)	4.1 Demonstrate the ability to engage an audience 4.2 Demonstrate an emerging awareness of the subtleties of performance including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Expression b) Communication c) Projection

Title:	Vocational Graded Examination in (discipline): (Intermediate)
Level:	3
GLH:	150
TQT:	275
Credit Value:	28

Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will:	The learner can:
1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a sound and established knowledge and understanding of the fundamental and relevant technique and vocabulary of (discipline)	1.1 Apply and demonstrate a sound and established knowledge and understanding of the mechanics and purpose of the required vocabulary 1.2 Demonstrate a mature approach in responding to and interpreting direction
2. Perform a range of complex movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in (discipline)	2.1 Demonstrate appropriate physical awareness, strength and stamina in technical skills 2.2 Demonstrate a disciplined and mature approach in a range of technical skills including: a) Spatial awareness b) Control c) Co-ordination
3. Perform a range of complex movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in (discipline)	3.1 Demonstrate a sound and secure understanding of a more complex range of rhythmical sounds, accents and timings 3.2 Demonstrate a sound and secure understanding of musical interpretation within more complex sequences including: a) Phrasing b) Dynamics c) Atmosphere
4. Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills with assurance in (discipline)	4.1 Demonstrate the ability to engage appropriately with an audience 4.2 Demonstrate a developed awareness of the subtleties of performance including: a) Expression b) Communication c) Projection

Title:	Vocational Graded Examination in (discipline): (Advanced 1)
Level:	4
GLH:	150
TQT:	325
Credit Value:	33

Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Apply and demonstrate through performance a thorough knowledge and understanding of the fundamental and relevant technique and vocabulary of (discipline)	1.1 Apply and demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the mechanics and purpose of the required vocabulary 1.2 Demonstrate a mature and professional approach in responding to and interpreting direction
2. Perform a range of complex and physically demanding movement sequences showing highly developed technical skills in (discipline)	2.1 Demonstrate advanced technical skills showing appropriate physical awareness, strength and stamina 2.2 Demonstrate a disciplined, mature and professional approach in a range of advanced technical skills including: a) Spatial awareness b) Control c) Co-ordination
3. Perform a range of complex movement sequences showing a highly developed understanding of musicality in (discipline)	3.1 Demonstrate a highly developed understanding of a more complex range of rhythmical sounds, accents and timings 3.2 Demonstrate a highly developed understanding of musical interpretation within more complex sequences including: a) Phrasing b) Dynamics c) Atmosphere
4. Apply and demonstrate mature and appropriate range of performance skills with assurance in (discipline)	4.1 Demonstrate the ability to engage with an audience in a mature, appropriate and professional way 4.2 Demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the subtleties of performance including: a) Expression

	b) Communication c) Projection
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Title:	Vocational Graded Examination in (discipline): (Advanced 2)
Level:	4
GLH:	150
TQT:	375
Credit Value:	38

Learning outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Apply and demonstrate through performance a thorough knowledge and understanding of the fundamental and relevant technique and vocabulary of (discipline)	<p>1.1 Apply and demonstrate a thorough and detailed knowledge and understanding of the mechanics and purpose of the required vocabulary</p> <p>1.2 Demonstrate a mature, professional and assured approach in responding to and interpreting direction</p>
2. Perform a range of complex and physically demanding movement sequences showing highly developed technical skills in (discipline)	<p>2.1 Demonstrate high level technical skills showing appropriate physical awareness, strength and stamina</p> <p>2.2 Demonstrate a disciplined, mature, confident and professional approach in a range of high level technical skills including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Spatial awareness b) Control c) Co-ordination
3. Perform a range of complex movement sequences showing a highly developed understanding of musicality in (discipline)	<p>3.1 Demonstrate a highly developed and mature understanding of a more complex range of rhythmical sounds, accents and timings</p> <p>3.2 Demonstrate a highly developed and mature understanding of musical interpretation within more complex sequences including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Phrasing b) Dynamics c) Atmosphere
4. Apply and demonstrate a mature and appropriate range of performance skills with assurance in (discipline)	4.1 Demonstrate the ability to engage with an audience in a mature, appropriate, assured and professional way

	<p>4.2 Demonstrate a well developed appreciation and understanding of the subtleties of performance including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Expressionb) Communicationc) Projection
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