



Government of **Western Australia**  
School Curriculum and Standards Authority

# DANCE

ATAR COURSE

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Year 11 syllabus

## **Acknowledgement of Country**

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

## **Important information**

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2024.

Users of this syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

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## Rationale

Dance is dynamic and powerful. It embodies our ideas, thoughts, emotions and values and provides a unique opportunity to develop physically, creatively, aesthetically, emotionally and intellectually. People have always danced, and dance continues to evolve as a form of expression, fulfilling a variety of functions in society. As an art form, dance encourages artistic creativity and the active use of the imagination. The study of dance acknowledges the interrelationship between practical and theoretical aspects – the making and performing of movement and the appreciation of its meaning. It allows students to make and present dance relevant to their lives.

The Dance ATAR course develops and presents ideas through a variety of genres, styles and forms, as it provides a unique way in which to express our cultural view and understanding of the world. Through critical decision making in individual and group work, movement is manipulated and refined to reflect the choreographer's intent. Students use a wide range of creative processes, such as improvisation and the use of choreographic elements and devices, and draw on their own physicality and the interpretation of existing work of others to make dance works.

Students experience an intrinsic sense of enjoyment and personal achievement through expressing and challenging themselves physically. As a physical art form, dance is able to offer an opportunity for them to achieve an elite level of movement skills. They gain an understanding of the physical competencies specific to dance, including experiential anatomy (movement specific alignment), strength, flexibility, coordination and rhythmic understanding, while learning to use the body as a medium for artistic expression. The study of dance draws on other disciplines, including yoga, martial arts and gymnastics. It is essential that students demonstrate safe dance practices and understand health issues that will enhance their general physical well-being and prolong their dance involvement.

Students reflect on, respond to, and evaluate how dance styles and forms are historically derived and culturally valued. They learn about the origins of dance and its importance as a form of expression and that it can represent a variety of political, cultural and historical motivations. This understanding informs their own dance-making and the dance works of others. They use appropriate terms and language to describe dance.

In performing dance, technical, design and expressive skills are incorporated and developed. The opportunity to present dance to an audience enables students to understand and undertake a wide range of production and design concepts, skills and roles. Dance may draw on other art forms such as music, art and electronic media to broaden students' knowledge and interest in the Arts.

Through participation in the Dance ATAR course, students develop transferable skills essential to their future. These include communication skills, collaborative teamwork skills, negotiation and conflict resolution skills, problem-solving skills, as well as the ability to organise, analyse and evaluate. Participation may lead to opportunities for future study in dance or related arts fields.

## Course outcomes

The Dance ATAR course is designed to facilitate achievement of the following outcomes.

### Outcome 1 – Dance ideas

Students create, interpret, explore, choreograph and present ideas in dance.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- create and interpret dance ideas
- explore movement ideas and choreograph dance
- present dance ideas in performance.

### Outcome 2 – Dance as an arts practice

Students apply dance skills, technique and technologies.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- apply skills and technique appropriate to dance genre and style
- apply safe dance practices
- understand the components of production.

### Outcome 3 – Responses to dance

Students respond to, reflect on and evaluate dance.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- respond to dance performance and choreographic intent using processes of inquiry
- reflect on the process of creating and presenting own dance
- evaluate dance using critical frameworks.

### Outcome 4 – Dance in society

Students understand the role of dance in society.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand the interrelationships between dance and its historical and cultural contexts
- understand the social value and functions of dance.

## Organisation

This course is organised into a Year 11 syllabus and a Year 12 syllabus. The cognitive complexity of the syllabus content increases from Year 11 to Year 12.

### Structure of the syllabus

The Year 11 syllabus is divided into two units, each of one semester duration, which are typically delivered as a pair. The notional time for each unit is 55 class contact hours.

#### Unit 1 – Popular culture

This unit focuses on the exploration of dance in popular culture and how this leads to a wider understanding of the diverse contexts and functions of dance in society.

#### Unit 2 – Australian dance

This unit focuses on the diverse range of functions and contexts of dance in Australia. Students analyse critically their own cultural beliefs and values in relation to traditional and contemporary dance forms and styles, and develop an understanding of their own dance heritage.

Each unit includes:

- a unit description – a short description of the focus of the unit
- unit content – the content to be taught and learned.

### Organisation of content

This course is divided into three content areas:

- Choreography
- Performance
- Contextual knowledge.

#### Prescribed genre

In this course, students must work in the contemporary genre. This requirement is preparation for Year 12 studies where Performance 2 in the ATAR course Practical (performance) examination for Dance is the set solo in the contemporary genre provided by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

#### Suggested genres

Examples of other genres that may be studied in addition to contemporary include, but are not limited to: ballet, jazz, hip-hop, tap, ballroom and/or cultural dance, for example, Spanish, Indian.

## Progression from the Year 7–10 curriculum

This syllabus builds on the dance skills, techniques, processes, elements and principles explored in the Year 7–10 Arts curriculum. This includes the interrelated strands of Making and Responding. Making includes learning about and using knowledge, skills, techniques, processes, materials and technologies to explore dance practices and make artworks that communicate ideas and intentions. Responding includes exploring, responding to, analysing and interpreting dance.

Further, this syllabus extends the dance content explored in Year 7–10 Arts curriculum.

1	Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas in dance
2	Manipulating and applying the elements/concepts with intent in dance
3	Developing and refining understanding of dance skills and techniques
4	Structuring and organising ideas into form for dance
5	Sharing dance through performance
6	Analysing and reflecting upon intentions in dance
7	Examining and connecting dance in context.

## Representation of the general capabilities

The general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will assist students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Dance ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

### Literacy

Dance relies on multiple literacies; oral, visual, kinetic, text based and digital literacy as fundamental to learning, communicating, creating and responding. Students use and develop literacy skills as they describe, appraise and document their own dance and those of their peers. They respond to, interpret and analyse increasingly complex dance works made by others. They use their literacy skills to access knowledge, make meaning, express thoughts, emotions and ideas, interact with and challenge others.

### Numeracy

Creating dance works requires knowledge and understanding of measurement in order to manipulate space, time and form. Students develop an appreciation of and ability to apply numerical concepts such as size, space, scale, proportion, depth, ratio and pattern.

### Information and communication technology capability

Information and communication technology (ICT) capability enables students in the Dance ATAR course to use digital tools and environments to represent their ideas and dance works. They use digital technologies to locate, access, select, document, plan and evaluate information, work collaboratively, share and exchange information, and communicate with a variety of audiences.



### **Critical and creative thinking**

Dance is dependent on the development of creative research, reflective practice and critical thinking. In creating dance, students draw on their curiosity, imagination and analytic skills to pose questions and explore ideas. They consider possibilities and a variety of processes to make choices that assist them in taking risks and expressing their ideas creatively.

### **Personal and social capability**

All learning in the Dance ATAR course promotes self-discipline, initiative, confidence, goal-setting, empathy and adaptability as students work individually and collaboratively. When working with others, dance students develop and practise social skills that assist them to communicate effectively, work collaboratively, make considered group decisions and show leadership.

### **Ethical understanding**

Ethical understanding is developed and applied in the Dance ATAR course when students encounter or create dance that requires ethical consideration, such as dance work that is controversial, involves a moral dilemma or presents a biased point of view. They actively engage in ethical decision making when reflecting on their own and others' dance works.

### **Intercultural understanding**

Intercultural understanding in the Dance ATAR course assists students to explore new ideas, media and practices from diverse local, national, regional and global cultural contexts. Students are encouraged to demonstrate an open-mind to perspectives that differ from their own and to appreciate and draw on the diversity of cultures and contexts in which artists and audiences live.

## **Representation of the cross-curriculum priorities**

The cross-curriculum priorities address the contemporary issues which students face in a globalised world. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the priorities into the teaching and learning program for the Dance ATAR course. The cross-curriculum priorities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures**

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures carry an ancient tradition with stories that communicate histories of indigenous Australia that are both unique and share parallels with other ancient cultures. Exploration of the history and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples provides a rich opportunity to build a greater understanding of a part of Australian history and society as well as foster values of mutual understanding and respect between cultures included under the broad identity of this country.

### **Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia**

The Asia region represents a highly diverse spectrum of cultures, traditions and peoples with a third of the world's population located north of Australia. Engaging in a respectful exploration of particular traditions from countries like China, India, North Korea, South Korea and Japan, for example, enables students to understand more deeply the values and histories of our near neighbours with whom we share important interrelationships.

### **Sustainability**

Students use the exploratory and creative platform of dance to develop world views that recognise the importance of social justice, healthy ecosystems and effective action for sustainability.

Sustainability provides engaging and thought-provoking contexts in which to explore the nature of dance making and responding, and enables the investigation of the interrelated nature of social, economic and ecological systems.

# Unit 1 – Popular culture

## Unit description

Within the broad focus of popular culture, teachers select learning contexts that relate to the interests of their students and build upon the understandings that they have already acquired.

The exploration of dance in popular culture leads to a wider understanding of the diverse contexts and functions of dance in our society. Students understand and value the way dance is subject to different interpretations, and appreciate that informed responses should take into account the varying contexts within which dance works are created.

## Unit content

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

### Prescribed genre

Students must work in the contemporary genre. Note: This requirement is preparation for Year 12 studies where Performance 2 in the ATAR course Practical (performance) examination for Dance is the set solo in the contemporary genre provided by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

### Suggested genres

Examples of other genres that may be studied in addition to contemporary include, but are not limited to: ballet, jazz, hip-hop, tap, ballroom and/or cultural dance, for example, Spanish, Indian. Performance 1 in the Dance Practical (performance) examination is an original solo composition in genre of choice.

## Choreography

### Choreographic processes

- selection and combination of elements of dance: body, energy, space, time (BEST)
- choreographic devices: unison, canon, motif, contrast and repetition
- choreographic structure: narrative, binary
- incorporation of ideas from dance forms of diverse times and places
- movement exploration through improvisation
- documentation of choreographic ideas

### Dance language

- application of dance terminology and language to compare past and popular genres
- respond to, reflect on and evaluate dance using given frameworks

## Design concepts and technologies

- exploration of different cultural contexts past and present to provide inspiration for design concepts related to:
  - lighting
  - music/sound
  - multimedia
  - costume
  - props, sets, staging
- design concepts that reflect current popular trends

## Performance

### Skills and technique

- exercises and sequences that require a competent level of the components of fitness:
  - strength
  - flexibility
  - coordination
  - muscular endurance
  - cardio-vascular endurance
- development of dance skills in:
  - floor work
  - standing work
  - centre work
  - turning
  - travelling
  - elevation
- technique focusing on correct and accurate retention and execution specific to the dance genre
- increasingly complex and extended sequences
- safe execution of skills and technique

### Safe and healthy dance

- warm-up and cool-down specific to genre and class needs
- principles of safe exercising:
  - frequency
  - intensity
  - type
  - time

### Experiential anatomy

- neutral alignment to facilitate ease of movement
- biomechanical principles of movement:
  - centre of gravity
  - base of support
  - balance
  - motion
  - transfer of weight

### Performance qualities and preparation responsibilities

- techniques for focus and concentration for retention of complex sequences
- performance of popular dance genres/styles
- theatre etiquette, such as responsible backstage behaviour, care of costumes, props and set
- performance for particular audiences and performance spaces

### Contextual knowledge

#### Functions and contexts of dance

- introduction to the functions of dance: ritualistic, artistic, social
- Aboriginal dance and its influence
- dance genres/styles from diverse cultures and different times
- dance genres/styles reflecting changes in moral, social and cultural attitudes

#### Case study

Within the focus of popular culture, students must investigate **one** case study chosen from the following:

- dance companies
- choreographers
- dancers
- dance genre/style.

The case study must investigate the following:

- historical background information
- historical, cultural and social context in terms of time and place
- influences of popular culture.

## Unit 2 – Australian dance

### Unit description

Within the broad focus of Australian dance, teachers select learning contexts that relate to the interests of their students and build upon the understandings that they have already acquired.

An understanding of the diverse range of functions and contexts of dance in Australia allows students to make relevant comparisons between their own dance and the dance of others. They analyse critically their own cultural beliefs and values in relation to traditional and contemporary dance forms and styles, and develop deeper understandings of their own personal dance heritage. They understand that dance may give form to ideas and issues that concern the wider community.

### Unit content

This unit builds on the content covered in Unit 1.

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

### Prescribed genre

Students must work in the contemporary genre.

Note: this requirement is preparation for Year 12 studies where Performance 2 in the ATAR course Practical (performance) examination for Dance is the set solo in the contemporary genre provided by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

### Suggested genres

Examples of other genres that may be studied in addition to contemporary include, but are not limited to: ballet, jazz, hip-hop, tap, ballroom and cultural dance, for example, Spanish, Indian.

### Choreography

Students studying this unit must be able to understand and use choreographic processes outlined in Unit 1.

### Choreographic processes

- manipulate the elements of dance: body, energy, space, time (BEST) to reflect concept
- choreographic devices: fragmentation, embellishment, accumulation, reversal and retrograde
- choreographic structure: ternary, rondo
- elements of dance and choreographic processes produce dance works which reflect an understanding of contemporary Australian culture
- improvisational skills – introduction to improvisation score
- choreographic plans

## Dance language

- application of dance terminology to respond to and reflect on the development of ideas and concepts and to examine how dance in Australia is unique
- describe, analyse, interpret and evaluate dance using given frameworks

## Design concepts and technologies

- choices of design concepts to reflect concept and convey meaning and effect:
  - lighting
  - music/sound
  - multimedia
  - costume
  - props, sets, staging
- design concepts and technologies in planning and creating dance

## Performance

### Skills and technique

- exercises and sequences that involve a competent level of the components of fitness:
  - strength
  - flexibility
  - coordination
  - muscular endurance
  - cardiovascular endurance
- development of complex dance skills in:
  - floor work
  - standing work
  - centre work
  - turning
  - travelling
  - elevation
- technique focusing on correct and accurate retention and execution specific to the dance genre
- increasingly complex and extended sequences
- safe execution of skills and technique

### Safe and healthy dance

- warm-up and cool-down specific to genre and class needs
- injury prevention and treatment

## Experiential anatomy

- neutral alignment to facilitate ease of movement
- physical implementation of biomechanical principles of movement in locomotor and non-locomotor movement:
  - centre of gravity
  - base of support
  - balance
  - motion
  - transfer of weight

## Performance qualities and preparation responsibilities

- rehearsal techniques for performance
- warm-up appropriate for performance
- demonstration of appropriate theatre etiquette
- performance of movement with accuracy and style
- maintenance of performance focus
- development of a stage presence

## Contextual knowledge

### Functions and contexts of dance

- broad overview of the development of dance in Australia from the twentieth century to the present

### Case study

Within the focus of Australian dance, students must conduct **two** case studies from the following:

- Australian dance companies
- Australian choreographers.

Each case study must investigate the following:

- historical background information
- related and relevant dance works: significance of the dance work, choreographic intent, choreographic devices, choreographic structures, movement choices and design concepts
- historical, cultural and social context in terms of time and place
- the ways cultural identity can be represented through dance.



## School-based assessment

The *Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Manual* contains essential information on principles, policies and procedures for school-based assessment that needs to be read in conjunction with this syllabus.

Teachers design school-based assessment tasks to meet the needs of students. The table below provides details of the assessment types for the Dance ATAR Year 11 syllabus and the weighting for each assessment type.

**Assessment table – Year 11**

Type of assessment	Weighting
<p><b>Performance/production</b></p> <p>Exploring ideas, improvising, manipulating the elements of dance and using choreographic devices and structures to create original dance.</p> <p>Demonstrating competence in the use of technical dance skills, techniques/styles, interpreting choreographic intent and performance qualities in a range of performance contexts.</p>	50%
<p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Response to analysis and evaluation of own, others' or professional dance works using a range of critical frameworks and primary and secondary sources.</p> <p>Research work in which students plan, conduct and communicate case studies.</p> <p>The focus of case studies can include dance works of companies and/or choreographers. Each should be explored in relation to a range of contextual factors (historical, cultural and social) and explore a range of primary and secondary sources. The findings can be communicated in any appropriate form, for example, written, oral or graphical, or various combinations of these.</p>	30%
<p><b>Written examination</b></p> <p>Typically conducted at the end of each semester and/or unit. In preparation for Unit 3 and Unit 4, the written examination should reflect the examination design brief included in the Year 12 ATAR syllabus for this course.</p>	10%
<p><b>Practical (performance) examination</b></p> <p>Typically conducted at the end of each semester and/or unit. In preparation for Unit 3 and Unit 4, the practical (performance) examination should reflect the practical (performance) examination design brief included in the ATAR Year 12 syllabus for this course.</p>	10%

Teachers are required to use the assessment table to develop an assessment outline for the pair of units (or for a single unit where only one is being studied).

The assessment outline must:

- include a set of assessment tasks
- include a general description of each task
- indicate the unit content to be assessed
- indicate a weighting for each task and each assessment type
- include the approximate timing of each task (for example, the week the task is conducted, or the issue and submission dates for an extended task).

In the assessment outline for the pair of units, each assessment type must be included at least once over the year/pair of units. In the assessment outline where a single unit is being studied, each assessment type must be included at least once.

The set of assessment tasks must provide a representative sampling of the content for Unit 1 and Unit 2.

Assessment tasks not administered under test/controlled conditions require appropriate validation/authentication processes. For example, the teacher is able to cite clear evidence of the development of a response or performance/production.

## Grading

Schools report student achievement in terms of the following grades:

Grade	Interpretation
A	Excellent achievement
B	High achievement
C	Satisfactory achievement
D	Limited achievement
E	Very low achievement

The teacher prepares a ranked list and assigns the student a grade for the pair of units (or for a unit where only one unit is being studied). The grade is based on the student's overall performance as judged by reference to a set of pre-determined standards. These standards are defined by grade descriptions and annotated work samples. The grade descriptions for the Dance ATAR Year 11 syllabus are provided in Appendix 1. They can also be accessed, together with annotated work samples, through the Guide to Grades link on the course page of the Authority website at [www.scsa.wa.edu.au](http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au).

To be assigned a grade, a student must have had the opportunity to complete the education program, including the assessment program (unless the school accepts that there are exceptional and justifiable circumstances).

Refer to the *WACE Manual* for further information about the use of a ranked list in the process of assigning grades.

## Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 11

<b>A</b>	Demonstrates highly skilled execution of technical dance skills incorporating consistent control of the body, fluency, quality of line, breadth of movement, and pliancy in use of weight.
	Performs confidently, consistently demonstrating accomplished performance qualities.
	Creates dance which clearly and effectively communicates the choreographic intent. Sustains a skilled manipulation and considered selection of the elements of dance and choreographic structure and devices.
	Uses effective and consistent problem-solving techniques and rehearsal strategies when working individually and collaboratively. Demonstrates a high level of autonomy.
	Succinctly describes, analyses, interprets and evaluates how the elements of dance, choreographic structure and devices and design concepts are used to communicate the choreographic intent of a dance work.
	Uses case studies to examine and coherently communicate the significance of the functions and contexts of dance.
	Develops insightful responses that include substantial evidence and justification, using a range of accurate and relevant terminology.
<b>B</b>	Demonstrates skilled execution of technical dance skills incorporating control of the body, fluency, quality of line, breadth of movement, and use of weight.
	Performs confidently with commitment and focus, demonstrating competent performance qualities.
	Creates dance, communicating the choreographic intent with clarity. Uses a skilled manipulation of the elements of dance and choreographic structure and devices.
	Uses effective problem-solving techniques and rehearsal strategies when working individually and collaboratively.
	Analyses in some detail, interprets and evaluates how the elements of dance, choreographic structure and devices and design concepts are used to communicate the choreographic intent of a dance work.
	Uses case studies to clearly communicate in detail the functions and contexts of dance.
Develops informed responses that include evidence and justification using accurate and relevant dance terminology.	
<b>C</b>	Demonstrates control of most technical dance skills with minor inconsistencies in control of the body and/or fluency. Displays adequate quality of line, breadth of movement, and use of weight.
	Performs mostly with commitment and focus, demonstrating appropriate performance qualities.
	Creates dance communicating the stated choreographic intent with developing clarity. Selects and manipulates the elements of dance and choreographic structure and devices adequately.
	Uses some effective problem-solving techniques and rehearsal strategies when working individually and collaboratively.
	Describes and interprets how the elements of dance, choreographic structure and devices are used to communicate the choreographic intent of a dance work.
	Uses case studies to communicate briefly and/or superficially about the functions and contexts of dance.
Develops responses that include some evidence and justification with occasional use of relevant dance terminology.	

D	Demonstrates control in some technical dance skills with inconsistencies in control of the body and/or fluency, adequate quality of line, breadth of movement and use of weight.
	Performs inconsistently and often with a lack of focus and/or commitment demonstrating some appropriate performance qualities.
	Demonstrates simplistic manipulation of the elements of dance and use of choreographic structure and devices when creating dance.
	Uses few problem-solving techniques and rehearsal strategies. Relies on teacher and/or peer input.
	Outlines how the elements of dance and choreographic structure and devices and design concepts are used in a dance work.
	Uses case studies to communicate in a limited way some of the functions and contexts of dance.
	Develops responses that are supported with little evidence or justification or limited dance terminology.
E	Does not meet the requirements of a D grade and/or has completed insufficient assessment tasks to be assigned a higher grade.

## Appendix 2 – Glossary

This glossary is provided to enable a common understanding of the key terms in this syllabus.

### **Abstraction**

A choreographic device where a literal movement is manipulated to open the associations with the movement for an audience and remove its narrative elements.

### **Accumulation**

A choreographic device where new movements are added to existing movements in a successive manner. It generally begins with move 1, then 1 + 2, then 1 + 2 + 3. The word was used by Trisha Brown in 1971 to name a solo dance work based on adding one movement gesture to another, one at a time, and repeating the growing phrase with each new movement. As Trisha Brown's works are so widely known, this word has spread among the dance community and it is used nowadays to talk about a way of creating choreography as a choreographic device.

### **Aesthetics**

Exploring through performance and responses to dance, the role of human senses in making meaning and creating emotional or other experiences. Aesthetics relates to the principles and science of what engages our sensory attention and leads us to respond in particular ways.

### **Analysing dance**

This may be thought of as identifying the formal structures of dance and looking at the relationships between the elements of dance, choreographic devices and structure and/or design concepts with the choreographic intent.

For example, 'The choreographer manipulated the dancers in space to create symmetrical shapes and moments of stillness, and interspersed complex movement phrases with sections of improvisation.'

### **Artistic dance**

Dance that is performed primarily to express ideas and/or to entertain an audience. The dance often portrays and interprets aspects of life in order to challenge or confirm the values of the audience.

### **Asymmetrical**

A shape made by the body that has no line of reflection. An unbalanced proportion in the design of the shape.

### **Balance**

The equal distribution of weight. Harmonious arrangement of parts.

### **Base of support**

Base of support is a two dimensional area bounded by the points of contact of the body with the ground. The larger the area of the base of support, the easier it is to achieve and maintain balance.

### **Binary**

A two part choreographic structure with an A theme and a B theme (AB). The binary form consists of two distinct self-contained sections that share either a character or quality, i.e. the same tempo, movement quality or style.

**Body**

As an element of dance, it encompasses:

- body awareness – this centres on consciousness of the body in space, including body shapes, body bases, body parts, body zones, locomotor and non-locomotor movements
- body bases – the body parts that support the rest of the body, e.g. when standing the feet are the body base
- body parts – legs, arms, head, torso, hands and feet
- body activity – weight transference, travelling, turning, rising and falling
- body shapes – curved, straight, open, closed, symmetrical and asymmetrical
- body zones – body areas of right side, left side (sagittal plane), front, back (frontal or coronal plane), upper half or lower half (transverse plane).

**Canon**

A choreographic device that reflects the musical form of the same name, in which individuals and groups perform the same movement phrase beginning at different times.

**Choreography**

The art of planning and arranging dance movements into a meaningful whole; the process of building a composition; a finished dance work.

**Choreographic devices**

Tools of the choreographer used for the creation of dances, such as, abstraction, canon, motif, contrast, accumulation, repetition, reversal, retrograde, inversion, fragmentation and embellishment.

**Choreographic intent**

The purpose behind the composition or performance of movement.

**Choreographic processes**

The fundamentally accepted methods for creating dances.

**Choreographic structure**

The preconceived plan for the arrangement of movement in a particular structure, that a choreographer uses when creating a dance. Examples of such structures include AB (binary), ABA (ternary), rondo (ABACA), theme and variation (A, A1, A2, A3), and narrative.

**Contemporary dance**

Contemporary dance is a broadly inclusive term to describe an approach to dance that draws on modern dance elements, classical ballet, release work and other forms of dance, often reflective of the creative innovations of particular dance choreographers and directors. Contemporary dance may also draw on other dance forms, including, popular dance and forms from other cultures and times. Many contemporary dance pieces reflect explorations of structure and body dynamics in space/time.

**Contrast**

A choreographic device where dance elements are altered to create oppositions, thus making contrasts, such as, high/low or big/little.

**Cool down**

Following dancing, the dancer should allow the body to gradually warm down (cool down). Abruptly stopping vigorous activity causes pooling of the blood, sluggish circulation which hampers removal of waste products, cramping, soreness and even fainting. Light activity and stretching after the dance class is recommended.

**Culture**

The values, attitudes, customs, practices, language and conventions commonly shared by a particular group, that forms a part of their identity and contributes towards a sense of shared understanding.

**Describing dance**

This may be thought of as seeing and identifying the elements of dance, choreographic devices, structure and/or design concepts. For example, 'The lead dancer moved rapidly across the stage to join a trio of male dancers waiting in a tableau. The dancers then performed a canon.'

**Design concepts**

The use of design and technologies to enhance dance. This includes lighting, music/sound, multimedia, costume, props, sets and staging. See Multimedia and Technologies.

**Elements of dance**

The basic (key) components of dance: Body, Energy, Space, Time (BEST). These elements can be combined and manipulated to communicate and express meaning through movement. See Body, Energy, Space and Time.

**Embellishment**

A choreographic device where detail is added to the original movement sequence.

**Energy**

As an element of dance, it focuses on the weight and force of power (dynamics) needed to produce and/or manipulate a movement.

**Energy qualities**

Shadings in the amount of energy, intensity, power and subtle variation in the treatment of contrasts. The manner in which energy is applied, continued or arrested. Energy qualities can be described as: floating, swinging, sudden, smooth, sharp, percussive, vibratory and explosive. By manipulating the energy in a movement, the choreographer creates certain qualities e.g. a light free flowing movement may create a dream-like quality, and constrained movement may create an aggressive mood.

**Evaluating dance**

This may be thought of as making judgements about the dance, based on identified criteria. For example, 'The contrast of movement and music from one section to the next was quite spectacular, reinforcing the theme of the damage to the changing environment. It made me feel quite disturbed.'

**Experiential anatomy**

Understanding how the body reacts to movement. Applying physical skills and understandings of biomechanics and kinesiology in both experiential and theoretical contexts.

**Fall and recovery**

The process in movement yielding to, and resisting, gravity. A theory invented by modern dance pioneer Doris Humphrey.

**Focus**

Conscious attention toward a certain point, using eyes, body parts, or the direction in which the dancer faces. Focus is not just confined to the eyes; it also involves using the whole body to project and communicate the intention of the dance.

**Fragmentation**

A choreographic device, where only a part of the movement sequence/motif is manipulated. A movement is broken down into smaller units.

**Genre**

A specific category of dance that has a tradition or history, and is identifiable by specific characteristics and social and cultural contexts, e.g. classical ballet, jazz, contemporary or tap.

**Historical context**

The historical context focuses on when the dance was made. The relevant developments in that era may influence the dance.

**Improvisation**

Improvisational structures permit the dancer elements of freedom and creativity in making movement and dances. The dancer can employ any number of strategies and creative responses to pursue an outcome where the result is not fully known; for example:

- a floor plan which is 'scored' but in which the movement is unknown; or
- where the movement is designed but the floor plan is open and the dancer is given the freedom to make the spatial decisions.

Other decisions might affect the timing, choice of music or any elements of BEST.

**Improvisation score**

A score is a map for making dance. It is a frame of ideas that shapes the dance. It can range from highly specific and detailed structures, to a general and loosely defined set of options. It is like the rules of a game where the outcome is unknown and there are multiple variations of how you play/interact/respond.

**Interpreting dance**

This may be thought of as translating, reading or making sense of the dance work. For example, 'the shapes were sharp and awkward, and although the dancers were together they conveyed the image of pain, loneliness and isolation.'

**Inversion**

A choreographic device, used to create choreography that produces variations on a movement phrase. Inverting the movement phrase would mean executing it as if 'looking in a mirror.' For example, a forward step becomes a backward step; movement sideways remains in a lateral plane. Ballroom dance constantly makes use of this choreographic device, when dancers are facing each other.

**Kinesiology**

The study of the activity of muscles, and the functioning, mechanics and structures of the body parts involved in movement. Mechanics refers to the effect that energy and other forces have upon the body.



**Levels**

The altitude of a movement in relation to its distance from the floor; the height of the dance floor. There are three levels:

- low – close to the floor with the intention downwards
- medium – the level of everyday walking
- high – any movement done with elevation, not necessarily a jump. It implies a lifting of the chest and an upward focus.

**Locomotor movement**

Travelling movements involving a change in location of the body in space. The basic locomotor steps are walk, run, jump; irregular rhythmic combinations are skip, slide and gallop.

**Motif**

A movement, gesture or short movement phrase which has the potential to be developed during the dance/work. A movement motif functions as choreographic device within the choreography. It can contain the essence of the completed piece and is usually repeated with integrity and manipulated throughout the dance.

**Movement phrase**

Two or more movement ideas linked together.

A series of movements linked together to make a distinctive pattern.

**Movement sequence**

A series of movements, longer than a phrase, but shorter than a section of a dance.

**Multimedia**

The use of different forms of media to support and enhance dance. For example, graphics, text, digital media, audio and video (live or sampled).

**Musicality**

The music elements of a dance performance. Attention and sensitivity to the musical ear while creating or performing.

**Narrative**

A choreographic structure that follows a specific storyline and intends to convey specific information through that story.

**Neutral alignment**

Reflecting the strongest and most balanced alignment of the spine, including the three curves of the spine that appear naturally in a healthy spine: at the neck, the thoracic region and the lumbar/pelvic region. Neutral alignment also reflects correct alignment of the ears, shoulders, hips, knees and ankles to create a line directly down the side of the body, from the ears down, through to the feet of the dancer. A further imaginary line, also of great assistance in achieving neutral alignment, runs down the centre of the body (looking from the front) and corresponds to the median plane which divides the body into equal right and left halves.

**Non-locomotor movement**

Movement occurring above a stationary base; movement of the body around its own axis. Also called axial movement, it includes bending, stretching, pushing, pulling, bouncing, swinging, shaking and twisting.

**Parallel**

Feet in anatomical position, knees in line with arches of feet and directly under hip joint, fist width apart, 'train tracks'.

**Pathways**

Patterns created in the air, or on the floor by the body or body parts, as a dancer or dancers move through space.

**Performance persona**

Being cognisant of choreographic intent and how to convey a sense of 'character' (including emotion, mood, tone and/ or atmosphere) through the sustained use of body, facial expression and gesture.

**Personal style**

A distinctive or individualistic manner of expressing an idea. The dancer is capable of communicating a sense of physical and/or emotional connection to the movement material. Rather than 'presenting', they have a tangible sense of presence, awareness and embodiment that includes other dancers in the space and audience. This quality may be influenced by body structure, type of training, prior dance experience, personality and individual BEST preferences.

**Placement**

A balanced alignment of the body, hips, torso, limbs, head, knees and rib cage.

**Projection**

The communication of meaning through extension and focus of the body.

**Purposeful play**

A context for learning in dance, through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they can engage actively with people, objects and representations.

**Repetition**

A choreographic device whereby a movement or motif are repeated exactly for emphasis or to gain interest.

**Retrograde**

Another choreographic device used to create dance compositions that produce variations on a movement phrase. The movement phrase is performed backwards, as if rewinding a video. This can be a challenging device because of the way in which the human body is constructed and may require some physical compromises and creative decision-making on the part of the dancer.

For example, rewinding video.

**Reversal**

The performance of the movements of a motif or sequence in reverse order (but not in a backwards direction). For example, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

**Ritual dance**

Dance that is primarily performed in religious or other rites, and reflects specific cultural customs.

**Rondo**

A choreographic structure of three or more themes with an alternating return to the main theme (ABACADA).

**Safe dance practices**

The practice of selecting and executing movement safely. The focus is on providing dance activities and exercises which allows students to participate without risk of injury. All dance movement should be performed relevant to an individual's body type and capabilities. Safe dance practices also include safe emotional spaces, where individuals are able to take creative risks in a supportive learning environment.

**Social dance**

Dance that is primarily performed for the enjoyment of the participants.

**Social context**

A dance work that refers to the society or culture in which it is made and reflects the dynamics within that society or culture. For example, lifestyle, socio-economic status, employment and race may influence, or be reflected in, the dance work.

**Space**

Where the body moves, including level, dimension (3D and 4D), direction (up, down, left, right, forward, backward, diagonal), active space (the meaning the space takes through the dance), positive space (the space the dancer occupies), negative space (space outside the positive space), pathways (creation of shapes through the space), personal (area around the dancer's body) and performance space (the area designated for the dance performance). See Levels.

**Style**

Within the broad categorisation of genre, it is possible to draw further distinctions between constituent groups and identify them as particular styles. For example, ballet (genre) may be identified as romantic, classical or modern in style. More specific styles may relate to the country/origin, or the company or community who performed the dance. Choreographers also have their own distinctive styles (which may change and develop over time).

**Symmetrical**

A shape made by the body that has a line of reflection (mirror line). A balanced, even design.

**Technical skills**

Combinations of proficiencies in control, accuracy, strength, alignment, balance and coordination. This will include the acquisition of appropriate strength, flexibility, coordination and endurance in the performance of body actions, locomotor and non-locomotor movement and developed to be performed in specific dance styles and genres.

**Technique**

The acquisition and execution of dance skills within a dance genre or style.

**Technologies**

Equipment used to help create, present, explain, document, view, interpret, analyse, or learn about dance works, including dance props (e.g. scarf, chair), electronic media (e.g. video, computers) and production technologies (e.g. lighting, costume, sound).

**Ternary**

A three-part choreographic structure in which the second section contrasts with the first section (ABA). The third section is a restatement of the first section in a condensed, abbreviated, or extended form.

**Theme and variation**

A choreographic structure, in which a dance phrase or section of a dance, is followed by subsequent phrases or sections that are variations of the original, usually for the sake of variety (A, A1, A2, A3).

**Time**

Time refers to how long a dance takes, including metre, tempo, momentum, accent, duration, phrasing, rhythmic patterns, stillness and beat.

**Turned out**

A term used to describe a dance position where you stand with your legs and feet facing outwards. Your feet may be either together or apart, and involves the rotation of the thigh bone in the hip socket. All rotations are functional and should occur at the hip. The lower leg and foot remain aligned with the femur.

**Unison**

Two or more people performing the same movement at the same time.

**Warm-up**

Activities that raise the core body temperature and loosen the muscles before dancing. Movements are designed to raise the core body temperature and bring the mind into focus for the activities to follow.