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

DANCE

General course

Year 11 syllabus for teaching from 2027

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

As part of the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Refreshment, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) has revised the course rationale and aims, and updated the General Capabilities to create clearer connections with the syllabus content.

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2027.

Users of this syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the Authority on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

Copyright

© School Curriculum and Standards Authority, 2025

This document – apart from any third-party copyright material contained in it – may be freely copied, or communicated on an intranet, for non-commercial purposes in educational institutions, provided that the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) is acknowledged as the copyright owner, and that the Authority's moral rights are not infringed.

Copying or communication for any other purpose can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with prior written permission of the Authority. Copying or communication of any third-party copyright material can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with permission of the copyright owners.

Any content in this document that has been derived from the Australian Curriculum may be used under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence.

Contents

Rationale **1**

Aims **1**

Organisation **2**

Structure of the syllabus 2

Organisation of content 2

Progression from the Years 7–10 curriculum 2

Representation of the General Capabilities 3

Representation of the Cross-curriculum Priorities 4

Unit 1 – Exploring the components of dance **6**

Unit description 6

Unit content 6

Unit 2 – Dance as entertainment **9**

Unit description 9

Unit content 9

School-based assessment **12**

Assessment table – Year 11 12

Grading 13

Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 11 ..... **14**

Appendix 2 – Glossary **16**

Rationale

The Dance General course provides students the opportunity to explore various forms of dance genres/styles and develop skills in choreography. Dance is a physical art in which students can discover and demonstrate new ways to communicate ideas and emotions through movement. It has been part of human communication, as a means of expression and storytelling, throughout time and in all cultures of the world.

The course explores practical aspects of dance, including choreography, performance and contextual knowledge. Through developing dance skills in different genres/styles, students build their movement repertoire. The theoretical aspect of the course develops students' understanding of the historical, cultural and social aspects of dance.

Students in the course develop a range of physical and creative skills. Importantly, they learn about safe dance practices, including an understanding of injury prevention, while also developing their overall strength and fitness. By exploring the history of dance, students develop their knowledge and critical capacity when reflecting on dance works.

The skills and knowledge gained in the course have practical applications outside of dance, as students experience increased confidence and develop real-life skills in teamwork and collaboration. Beyond the practice of dancing, students will also develop an understanding of design concepts, costume, lighting, props and sets.

Through the course, students acquire lifelong skills that support both personal and professional development, whether pursuing dance or applying its skills in other fields. Although the course can prepare students for post-school opportunities in dance and the performing arts, the course also provides them with valuable transferable skills which can be applied to careers in areas such as education, health sciences and event management.

Aims

The Dance General course aims to develop students':

- ability to articulate and explore ideas
- skills in processes and performance
- ability to create dance for a range of functions, audiences and contexts
- understanding of the contextual relationships of dance
- ability to evaluate dance in performance
- transferable skills in creative problem-solving, collaboration, innovation, flexibility, social skills, self-regulation and leadership.

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 – Exploring the components of dance

In this unit, students explore the elements of dance and processes of choreography, and solve structured choreographic tasks to produce dance works for performance.

Unit 2 – Dance as entertainment

In this unit, students explore the entertainment potential of dance and choreography.

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 in to three content areas:

- Choreography
- Performance
- Contextual knowledge.

Suggested genres

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

Progression from the Years 7–10 curriculum

This syllabus builds on the dance skills, techniques, processes, elements and principles explored in the Years 7–10 Arts curriculum. This includes the interrelated strands of Explore, Create and Perform. The Explore strand facilitates students' understanding of the contexts of dance across times, places, cultures and communities, and the use of improvisation to develop movement. The Create strand focuses on students' use of the elements of dance, choreographic devices, choreographic structures and design concepts as part of the choreographic process. The Perform strand includes practical activities that may lead to a performance. Technique and skills and performance qualities in the chosen genres/styles are developed, along with reflecting and responding to the choreographic process.

Representation of the General Capabilities

The General Capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will support students to live and work successfully now and into the future. They are not assessed unless identified within the specified unit content. Teachers should find opportunities to incorporate the following General Capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Dance General course.

Critical and creative thinking

Students develop problem-solving skills through movement improvisation, creative expression by linking movement to concepts, and analytical skills through reflective evaluation. The course encourages risk-taking, curiosity and creative expression, and students develop critical and creative thinking skills as they pose questions, explore ideas, consider possibilities and make choices.

Ethical understanding

Students develop their ethical understanding by exploring dance and its purpose across cultures and contexts, building respect and sensitivity. Their artistic integrity grows through authentic interpretation of choreographic intent, while their responsible practice develops through safe participation guidelines and understanding of basic nutrition. These experiences foster students' ethical decision-making in creating and evaluating dance works.

Intercultural understanding

Students explore diverse cultural dance contexts, studying ritualistic, artistic and social functions across cultures. They develop global perspectives as they examine how cultural contexts influence dance forms. This understanding encourages open-mindedness toward different perspectives and appreciation for the cultural diversity in dance.

Literacy

Students develop multiple literacies and build oral literacy through dance terminology, visual literacy via movement exploration, text-based literacy through critical response using specialised vocabulary, and digital literacy by engaging with production technology. These practices develop students' literacy skills, helping them to express emotions, communicate with others and analyse and critique performances.

Numeracy

Dance creation involves numerical concepts as students manipulate space, time and form. Students develop measurement skills when using dance elements (body, dynamics, space and time – BDST), pattern recognition through choreographic devices like canon and unison, and proportional thinking via symmetrical shapes and alignment principles. These understandings enhance their awareness of and appreciation for spatial relationships within compositions.

Personal and social capability

The course promotes self-discipline through safe technique, goal-setting by developing genre-specific skills, and collaboration through effective rehearsal practices and theatre etiquette. These capabilities help students communicate effectively, work collaboratively, make group decisions and demonstrate leadership.

Addressing the other General Capabilities

Although the following General Capabilities have not been identified as a focus in the Dance General Year 11 syllabus, teachers may find opportunities to incorporate them into the teaching and learning program.

- Digital literacy

Such opportunities may occur through the application of different contexts, pedagogical practices and/or assessment strategies that relate to the syllabus as part of the teaching and learning program.

Summary representation of the General Capabilities in the Dance General course

The unit content and assessment types for this course provide students with the opportunity to develop the General Capabilities summarised in the table below.

Year	Course	Course type	General Capabilities						
			CCT	DL	EU	IU	L	N	PSC
Year 11	Dance (GEDAN)	General	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year 12	Dance (GTDAN)	General	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Key
CCT: Critical and creative thinking, DL: Digital literacy, EU: Ethical understanding, IU: Intercultural understanding, L: Literacy, N: Numeracy, PSC: Personal and social capability

Representation of the Cross-curriculum Priorities

The Cross-curriculum Priorities address contemporary issues that students face in a globalised world. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate them into the teaching and learning program for the Dance General 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 fostering 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 – Exploring the components of dance

Unit description

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

The elements of dance and processes of choreography are explored and students solve structured choreographic tasks to produce dance works for performance. They have first-hand experience of dance-making which actively engages them in exploration, improvisation, research, reflection and response. Technology and design concepts are introduced to the planning stage of dance creation.

A broad introduction to dance genres enables students to place dance in its time and place and then begin to understand its functions within this context.

Unit content

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

Suggested genres

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

Choreography

Choreographic processes

- ways to link movement and concept using gesture and drawing from experience
- ways to use and manipulate the elements of dance: body, dynamics, space, time (BDST)
- exploring choreographic devices: canon, unison
- exploring choreographic structure – the use of narrative
- ways to find solutions to movement tasks through improvisation

Design concepts

- introduction to dance design related to selecting appropriate:
  - lighting
  - music/sound
  - technology
  - costume
  - props, sets, staging

Performance

Technique and skills

- exercises and sequences that require a competent level of the components of fitness:
  - strength
  - flexibility
  - coordination
  - muscular endurance
  - cardiovascular endurance
- development of dance skills in:
  - floor work
  - standing work
  - turning
  - travelling
  - elevation
- technique specific to the dance genre
- safe execution of technique and skills

Safe and healthy dance

- importance of warm-up
- appropriate dress for safe dance participation
- rehearsal techniques, safety rules for working in rehearsal and performance space

Anatomy

- identifying major bones and muscle groups of the human body:
  - vertebrae
  - shoulder girdle
  - pelvic region
  - limbs

Performance qualities and preparation responsibilities

- techniques for focus and concentration, ways to practise with accuracy, retention, knowledge of variety of performance spaces
- ways to use effective rehearsal time
- different performance spaces for dance
- care and appropriate use of costumes and props
- cleaning up post-performance

Contextual knowledge

Dance language

- use of dance terminology to identify, respond to, and reflect on components and contexts of dance using given frameworks

Functions and contexts of dance

- introduction to the functions of dance: ritualistic, artistic, social
- broad overview of the purpose and value of dance in different cultures
- features of dance: genre, form, style and components
- contexts of dance: historical, social, economic, cultural and geographical

Unit 2 – Dance as entertainment

Unit description

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

Students explore the entertainment potential of dance and choreography. In practical lessons, they improve safe dance practices and their physical competencies while acquiring genre-specific technique. They explore and experiment with the elements of dance and processes of choreography to solve choreographic tasks for performance.

Students identify and select technology and design concepts which enhance the entertainment value of the dance and place it in its social, historical and economic context.

Unit content

This unit builds on the content covered in Unit 1.

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

Suggested genres

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

Choreography

Choreographic processes

- responding to stimuli to explore and create movement for concepts/themes; improvisation
- experimenting and adapting elements of dance: body, dynamics, space, time (BDST)
- ways to structure dance – beginning, middle and end
- choreographic devices: motif and contrast
- exploring movement that reflects mood/emotion

Design concepts

- adapting available design concepts and technology appropriate to genre, style and concept:
  - lighting
  - music/sound
  - technology
  - costume
  - props, sets, staging

Performance

Technique and skills

- exercises and sequences that require a competent level of the components of fitness:
  - strength
  - flexibility
  - coordination
  - muscular endurance
  - cardiovascular endurance
- development of dance skills in:
  - floor work
  - standing work
  - turning
  - travelling
  - elevation
- technique specific to the dance genre
- safe execution of technique and skills

Safe and healthy dance

- common dance injuries and prevention
- basic nutrition for the dancer

Anatomy

- basic human physiology: joint structure and range of movement
- postural conventions specific to dance alignment, such as balancing bones on bones, the plumb line

Performance qualities and preparation responsibilities

- ways to engage with the audience: facial expression, gesture, accurate reproduction of movement
- ways to adapt performances for different spaces
- theatre etiquette, such as appropriate backstage behaviour, noise levels, ways to demonstrate consideration for other performers, positioning in wings
- warm-up appropriate for performance
- effective rehearsal techniques

Contextual knowledge

Dance language

- use of dance terminology to respond to, reflect on and evaluate dance
- use of dance terminology to describe particular movements and styles

Functions and contexts of dance

- changes in the functions of dance
- how dance is influenced by the contexts in which it exists – participation and presentation
- dance as part of entertainment
- dance as an effective tool in marketing and advertising

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 General Year 11 syllabus and the weighting for each assessment type.

Assessment table – Year 11

Type of assessment	Weighting
Performance/production Exploring ideas, improvising, manipulating the elements of dance and using choreographic devices and structures to create original dance. Demonstrating competence in the use of technical dance skills, techniques/styles, interpreting choreographic intent and performance qualities in a range of performance contexts. A practical test is included in this assessment type.	70%
Response Response to, analysis and evaluation of own, others' or professional dance works. A written test is included in this assessment type.	30%

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.

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 General 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.

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

A	Demonstrates skilled execution of technical dance skills incorporating control of the body, fluency, quality of line, breadth of movement, and pliancy in use of weight.
	Performs confidently and consistently, demonstrating accomplished performance qualities.
	Creates dance which clearly communicates the choreographic intent. Selects and manipulates the elements of dance and choreographic structure and devices.
	Uses effective problem-solving techniques and rehearsal strategies when working collaboratively and individually.
	Describes in detail and interprets how the elements of dance, choreographic structure and devices, and design concepts are used to communicate the choreographic intent of a dance work.
	Communicates in detail the functions and contexts of dance.
	Develops informed responses that include a range of evidence with accurate use of relevant dance terminology.

B	Demonstrates competent execution of technical dance skills incorporating control of the body, fluency, quality of line, breadth of movement and use of weight.
	Performs with commitment and focus, demonstrating appropriate performance qualities.
	Creates dance which mostly communicates the choreographic intent. Selects and manipulates, with some effect, the elements of dance and choreographic structure and devices.
	Uses effective problem-solving techniques and rehearsal strategies when working collaboratively and individually.
	Describes in some detail and interprets how the elements of dance, choreographic structure and devices, and design concepts are used to communicate the choreographic intent of a dance work.
	Communicates in some detail the functions and contexts of dance.
	Develops responses that are supported with evidence and use of relevant dance terminology.

C	Demonstrates control of most technical dance skills but with inconsistencies in control of the body and/or fluency, quality of line, breadth of movement, and use of weight.
	Performs mostly with commitment and focus, demonstrating some appropriate performance qualities.
	Creates dance communicating choreographic intent with developing clarity. Selects and uses adequately the elements of dance and choreographic structure and devices.
	Uses some problem-solving techniques and rehearsal strategies when working collaboratively and individually.
	Outlines how the elements of dance, choreographic structure and devices, and design concepts are used in a dance work.
	Identifies and recounts the functions and contexts of dance using given formats.
	Develops responses that are sometimes supported with evidence and use of occasional dance terminology.

D	Demonstrates fundamental dance skills with inconsistencies.
	Performs inconsistently and demonstrates limited performance qualities.
	Demonstrates simplistic use of the elements of dance, and choreographic structure and devices when creating dance.
	Uses few problem-solving techniques and/or rehearsal strategies. Relies on teacher and/or peer input.
	Recounts in a simplistic way how the elements of dance, choreographic structure and devices and/or design concepts are used in a dance work.
	Outlines in a simple way the functions and contexts of dance using given frameworks.
	Develops responses that are often supported with little evidence and/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.'

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

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 (traverse 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, retrograde, 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 includes 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 technology to enhance dance. This includes lighting, music/sound, technology, costume, props, sets and staging. See Technology.

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

Dynamic qualities
Shadings in the amount of dynamics, intensity, power and subtle variation in the treatment of contrasts. The manner in which dynamics are applied, continued or arrested. Qualities can be described as: floating, swinging, sudden, smooth, sharp, percussive, vibratory and explosive. By manipulating the dynamics 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.

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

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

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.'

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 plan
A plan 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.'

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.

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.

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.

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.

Technology
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 technology (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.

