

**Dance GA 1: Unit 3  
Dance GA 1: Unit 4**

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**UNIT 3**

This report is provided for the first year of implementation of this study and is based on the coursework audit and VCAA statistical data.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

The coursework observed in the auditing process demonstrated mostly high levels of implementation of both the teaching of the course and setting of comprehensive tasks that allowed students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the selected prescribed works.

Most teachers provided task sheets that gave students all relevant details of the task including the date, duration, required format of the task and the total marks available.

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

**Unit 3 Coursework**

Many selected Alvin Ailey's 'Cry' and the male solo 'Percussion 4' from Bob Fosse's *Dancin'* for analysis with other works from the list represented to a lesser extent.

**Outcome 1**

Analyse cultural influences on, and the movement vocabulary and use of, related phrases, movement sections, formal structures and dance design to communicate the expressive intention in prescribed solo dance works.

**Task type options**

- Written report
- Essay
- Annotated visual report

The most popular option was a written report. Well-designed tasks provided students with guidelines such as sub-headings or identified aspects of the work such as movement vocabulary, elements of movement, choreographic devices, related phrases or sections as well as the cultural influences on choices made by choreographers on the dance design and in relation to technical and production aspects to be referred to in the analysis.

Some teachers set tests for this assessment task. A test is not an option for this task.

The outcome requires analysis of two works and assessment tasks must require students to refer to aspects of both works in their analysis. Students will be severely disadvantaged in the end-of-year written examination if only ONE work has been studied or if only ONE work was tested within the assessment task.

**Assessment**

Most teachers had devised their own performance descriptors based on those suggested in the *VCE Dance Assessment Handbook*. Key descriptor words as matched to weightings suggested in the assessment handbook seemed to help teachers to form their judgments in the first year of using performance descriptors rather than criteria.

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**Outcome 2**

Choreograph, rehearse and perform a solo dance work using a personal movement vocabulary and technical, physical and performance skills to communicate their expressive intention, and analyse the processes used to choreograph, rehearse and perform the dance work.

**Task type options**

- A written report
- A test
- An annotated visual report

The task was mostly set as a test. There were some excellent examples of written tests that focused on the key knowledge needed for the making of this solo dance. Students were given questions that tested their knowledge of the necessary choreographic processes including manipulation of the elements of movement, use of movement creation processes and choreographic devices to build the phrases into sections and the creation of a broad range of body actions to demonstrate their technical and physical skills. Questions were also asked about the rehearsal processes and performance preparation for the final external examination.

Most teachers provided task sheets that gave students all relevant details of the task including the date, duration, number of questions to be answered and the total marks available

**Assessment**

Teachers should note that the assessment task for this outcome only focuses on analysis of processes used to choreograph, rehearse and perform the solo dance work, not on the actual choreography, rehearsal or performance. Assessment of the performance contributes to the 'S/N' judgment for this outcome but does not contribute to marks for School-assessed Coursework.

Most teachers had devised their own test result descriptors based on those suggested in the assessment handbook.

In the marking of the written task, most teachers used a marking scheme which addressed the student's ability to analyse ways they used to develop an expressive intention which allowed them to skilfully use movement creation processes, choreographic devices, a range of body action and technical and physical skills, variations of time, space and energy and the linking of movement phrases and sections to create their final dance.

The marking schemas were usually divided into three sections: the first relating to the analysis of the choreographic process – 10 marks; the second to the analysis of the rehearsal processes – 5 marks; and the last to the analysis of the pre-performance and the performance processes – 5 marks.

**Outcome 3**

Learn, rehearse and perform a group dance work created by another choreographer, and analyse the processes involved in learning, rehearsing and performing the work.

This task involves the learning, rehearsing and performing of a group dance made by another choreographer. Work sent in for audit demonstrated excellent understanding by teachers of the requirements of this school-assessed outcome. Tasks set usually covered about six lessons

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of learning and rehearsing. Most teachers seemed to have students record these processes in diary form to aid in the preparation for the final performance. The teacher material sent in for audit showed that final performance of the learnt group dance was presented to peers or within a school concert setting. Safety issues within the dance classroom seemed to have been addressed in more detail in 2007.

Most teachers provided task sheets that gave students all relevant details of the task including the date of the performance, duration of the dance, name of the choreographer, and the total marks available to each student for their part within the performance of the group dance work.

## **Assessment**

The assessment handbook descriptors statements were a guide to teachers of the standards expected of the performers within this outcome. These descriptors aided teachers in their understanding of the actual setting up of this task including the key knowledge of the learning, rehearsing and performing processes that must be developed.

Although only the performance of the learnt group dance is assessed in the School-assessed Coursework, most teachers set small written tasks to aid students to address all the key knowledge required to enable them to achieve to the best of their ability in the final performance of the learnt group dance. It is important such tasks are not assessed and that the assessment is based solely on the performance of the work.

In the marking of the task most teachers followed the marking scheme suggested on page 35 in the assessment handbook.

## **UNIT 4**

This report is provided for the first year of implementation of this study and is based on the coursework audit and VCAA statistical data.

## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

### **Unit 4 Coursework**

The material presented for Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework was of a high standard. For each Unit 4 outcome, schools involved in the audit presented cover sheets that provided detailed instructions to students, comprehensive tasks that covered all relevant key knowledge and skills, and appropriate marking schemas.

### **Outcome 1**

Analyse cultural influences on, and the use of, group structures and the elements of spatial organisation to communicate the expressive intention in prescribed group dance works.

#### **Task type options**

- A written report
- An essay
- An annotated visual report

For the Outcome 1 analysis of work from the 2007 prescribed list of group dance works, most teachers produced excellent question material. Most teachers selected a written report format for this task and provided a structure where students responded to prompts requiring short and extended responses. Areas covered in the prompts were:

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- the ways that the elements of spatial organisation and group structures related to the choreographer's expressive intention
- the impact of cultural influences on the choices within the choreographer's use of both dance design and the technical and production aspects of their dance works.

From the relatively small sample of work collected for audit, a very high percentage of teachers chose to have their students analyse the combination of Jerome Robbins' 'Cool' from *West Side Story* and the 'Snowflakes Scene' from *Nutcracker* choreographed by Graeme Murphy. The other three works from the prescribed list were represented but to a much lesser extent.

As for Unit 3, reference to study of **two** works from the prescribed list was not recorded on the task sheets or test material devised by some of the schools. Students would be severely disadvantaged in the written examination if only ONE work had been studied in Unit 4.

### Assessment

Teachers used descriptors from the *VCE Dance Assessment Handbook* or in rubric form of six bands (VH-VL) to form their judgments of student achievement for this task. More teachers included some form of descriptor in their submitted Unit 4 material than was evident for Unit 3 where use of criteria was more popular. In most cases teachers had indicated to the students the marks available for each section of the report.

### Outcome 2

Choreograph, rehearse and perform a solo dance work which has a unified composition and communicates an expressive intention through the manipulation of the elements of spatial organisation, and analyse the processes used to choreograph, rehearse and perform the dance work.

**Note:** only the section of this outcome based on analysis contribute to School-assessed Coursework.

### Task type options

- A written report
- A test
- An annotated visual report

For this School-assessed Coursework task, most teachers selected a test as the format for their task. Questions required the students to analyse their selection and implementation of the key knowledge factors relating to:

- the use of movement creation processes when developing their composition.
- their selection of expressive intention and manipulation of spatial organisation to further this intent
- the ways they placed their selected movement vocabulary into phrases and sections to produce the structure that resulted in a truly unified composition.

### Assessment

Assessment of this task was based on marks allocated to each test question. To form their final judgments, they gave evidence of either the suggested five-band guide on page 25 of the assessment handbook (2007–2011) or a personalised six band rubric.

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Some teachers used a dance journal type format for this task. This is not an acceptable format as it falls outside the guidelines for School-assessed Coursework task as described on page 37 of the assessment handbook which clearly state that tasks must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Teachers should note that assessment of this task must be independent of any feedback given to students about the performance aspect of Outcome 2. For example, if a student presents their composition to a peer group or in a concert setting for performance practice it would be wise to only give the student constructive **verbal** feedback regarding their performance of the composition.