



GCSE DANCE 8236/W

Component 2 Dance appreciation

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](https://www.aqa.org.uk)

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a specific mark within that level

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

General Annotations:	Specific Annotations:
E = Example/Exemplification	S = Staging/set
C = Contribution to ...	CC = Choreographic content
PI = Personal Interpretation	W1 = Work One
	W2 = Work Two

Section A – Knowledge and understanding of choreographic processes and performing skills

Answer **all** questions in this section.

37.5% (30 marks) – you should spend about 30 minutes on this section.

You are choreographing a **solo** (a dance for one dancer) using a prop, accessory or object: **a coin** as a stimulus.

All answers to **Questions 01–07** must relate to this stimulus.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
01		Outline a choreographic intent for your solo, which refers to the stimulus and the use of one dancer. Choreographic intent: mood(s); meaning(s); ideas(s); theme(s); style/style fusion(s). Answer indicates choreographic intent (1). Makes reference to the stimulus (1) (the answer may not relate directly to the stimulus, but it must make reference to the way in which features of the prop, accessory or object informed the chosen choreographic intent). Refers to the use of one dancer/a solo (1). eg: My choreographic intent is about a dancer (1) who has to make a choice between two things (1) and uses a coin (1) to make that choice.	3

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
02	1	Identify two dynamics you could include in your solo. 1 mark awarded for each appropriate dynamic and can include: Fast, slow, sudden, sustained, acceleration, deceleration, strong, light, direct, indirect, flowing, abrupt. Award marks for any acceptable dynamic.	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
02	2	Describe one way you could develop each dynamic you have identified in Question 02.1. 1 mark for development of each dynamic. There must be a clear reference to a development of the original dynamics in 02.1. eg: Instead of moving quickly I would slow down (1). eg: I would repeat a movement softly (1) rather than with strength.	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
03		Describe one way you could use spatial content to support the choreographic intent outlined in Question 01. Spatial content can include: pathways; levels; directions; size of movement; patterns; spatial design. 1 mark for a simple description of spatial content. eg: The dancer performs small (1) gestures. 2 marks for a more detailed answer which indicates how the choice of spatial content supports the choreographic intent. eg: The dancer performs a small hand gesture (1) which gradually increases in size during the dance to show that his/her luck is improving (1).	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
04		Describe one way you could use contrast to support the choreographic intent outlined in Question 01. Contrast can refer to any contrast and can include: action, space, dynamic, mood, aural setting etc. 1 mark for a simple description of contrast. eg: I would use fast then slow movements (1). 2 marks for a more detailed description of contrast to support the choreographic intent. eg: I perform a small gesture when throwing the coin in the air in the first section and repeat it but make it bigger (1) in the second section to show the frustration of bad luck (1).	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
05		Describe one action you could use to support the choreographic intent outlined in Question 01. Action content can include: travel, turn, elevation, gesture, stillness, use of different body parts, floor work, transfer of weight. 1 mark for a simple description of an action. eg: I would roll (1) on the floor. 2 marks for a more detailed description of an action to support the choreographic intent. eg: I would throw (1) a coin in the air, catch it and flip it onto my hand to show I was taking a chance (1). eg: I would circle my right arm (1) over my head whilst turning to represent a coin being flipped over (1).	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
06		Describe one way you could use a ternary structure to support the choreographic intent outlined in Question 01. 1 mark for a simple description of a ternary structure. Refer to SSV definition of Ternary – A composition in three parts. eg: My solo would have three sections (1). eg: My solo would have an ABA structure (1). 2 marks for a more detailed description of how the ternary structure supports the choreographic intent. eg: My solo would have one section showing good luck, the second section would have contrasting movements to show bad luck (1) and I would repeat but develop the first section at the end to show my luck has returned (1).	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
07		Describe one way a proscenium arch or end stage performance environment could be used to support the choreographic intent outlined in Question 01. 1 mark for a simple description of a proscenium arch or end stage performance environment and can include references to: backdrops, creating a defined space, provides opportunities for visual storytelling, creates a mood/atmosphere, helps focus on dancer, lighting, entrances/exits, set. eg: The audience see the dance from one side (1). 2 marks for a more detailed answer which indicates how the choice supports the choreographic intent outlined in Question 01 IF linked to CI in question 01. eg: My dancer will enter from stage right (1) at the beginning of the dance and leave stage left to show that her luck has changed (1). eg: The curtains close at the end (1) whilst the dancer is still performing to show their luck has run out (1).	2

Questions 08–12.2 refer to your knowledge and understanding of performance skills.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
08		What is the definition of 'stamina'? Tick (✓) one box. An independent movement of part of the body. ☐ The ability to maintain physical and mental energy over periods of time. ☒ The ability to start and stop movement, change direction and hold a shape efficiently. ☐ The maximum force generated by a muscle against resistance in a single effort. ☐	1

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
09	1	Define the dance term 'mobility'. The range of movement in a joint; the ability to move fluently from action to action. Either statement can be awarded the mark. Not necessary to mention both. Accept synonyms for range of movement and moving fluently.	1

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
09	2	Give two reasons why it is important for a dancer to have good mobility. 1 mark for each appropriate reason. eg: Makes dancer's movement appear more seamless (1), reduces risk of injury (1), increases efficiency of movement (1), increases possible range of movement (1), to achieve accurate flow in dynamics (1), to achieve accurate timing (1), increased accuracy of movement (1), ability to perform different styles (1).	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
10	1	Give two reasons for cooling down after a dance class. 1 mark for each correct reason (max 2 marks). eg: Prevents build-up of lactic acid (1), prevents muscle soreness (1), mental preparation for the next class (1), helps heart rate return to normal (1), helps breathing return to normal (1), helps avoid dizziness (1), prevents blood pooling in veins (1), reduces body temperature (1).	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
10	2	Describe one exercise a dancer could do to cool down. 1 mark for a simple response. eg: Passive stretching (1). Two marks for a more detailed description of a specific cool down exercise. eg: Breathing in and out to a count of eight (1) whilst rolling through the spine (1).	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
11		Describe one way to improve sensitivity to other dancers in a dance performance. Responses can include during OR rehearsing for a performance. 1 mark for a simple response that relates to sensitivity to other dancers as an expressive skill. eg: Use peripheral vision (1). 2 marks for a more detailed response which references how to improve sensitivity to other dancers as an expressive skill. eg: We would decide and agree when to have eye contact (1) to make sure we are all connected (1).	2

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
12	1	Define the dance term 'phrasing'. The way in which the energy is distributed in the execution of a movement phrase. Accept synonyms for distributed and execution.	1

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
	2	Give two reasons why phrasing is important in a dance performance. 1 mark for each correct reason why phrasing is important as an expressive skill in a dance performance (max 2 marks). Eg: Phrasing can support the interpretation of the music (1), can support the interpretation of the choreographic intent (1), can support sensitivity to other dancers (1), can help with the mood (1), meaning (1), style (1) of the dance, captivates the audience (1), can help create a character (1), created an engaging and exciting performance (1).	2

Section B – Critical appreciation of own work

Answer **all** questions in this section.

22.5% (18 marks) – you should spend about 25 minutes on this section.

With reference to your own GCSE Dance Component 1: Performance.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
13		Explain how your use of technical skills contributed to the overall effectiveness of one of your set phrases. Technical skills can include references to: Action content, dynamic content, spatial content, timing content, rhythmic content or style. 6 marks Excellent knowledge and understanding of how the use of technical skills contributed to the overall effectiveness of one of the set phrases. Well-selected examples illustrate this. 5 marks Highly developed knowledge and understanding of how the use of technical skills contributed to the overall effectiveness of one of the set phrases. Good examples illustrate this. 4 marks Sound knowledge and understanding of how the use of technical skills contributed to the overall effectiveness of the one of the set phrases. Examples are provided. 3 marks Limited explanation of how the use of technical skills contributed to the overall effectiveness of one of the set phrases. 2 marks Description of at least two technical skills and their contribution to the overall effectiveness of one of the set phrases. 1 mark Description of one technical skill and its contribution to the overall effectiveness of one of the set phrases. 0 marks No evidence or nothing worthy of credit.	6

With reference to your own GCSE Dance Component 1: Choreography.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
14		Explain how you used choreographic processes to create your choreography. Choreographic processes can include references to: Researching, improvising, generating, selecting, developing, structuring, refining and synthesising. 6 marks Excellent knowledge and understanding of how choreographic processes were used to create the choreography. Well-selected examples illustrate this. 5 marks Highly developed knowledge and understanding of how choreographic processes were used to create the choreography. Good examples illustrate this. 4 marks Sound knowledge and understanding of how choreographic processes were used to create the choreography. Examples are provided. 3 marks Limited explanation of how choreographic processes were used to create the choreography. 2 marks Description of at least two choreographic processes and their contribution to the choreography. 1 mark Description of one choreographic process and its contribution to the choreography. 0 marks No evidence or nothing worthy of credit.	6

With reference to your own GCSE Dance Component 1: Choreography.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
15		Explain how your use of action content supported the choreographic intent of your choreography. Action content can include references to: Travel, turn, elevation, gesture, stillness, use of different body parts, floor work, transfer of weight. 6 marks Excellent knowledge and understanding of how action content supported the choreographic intent of the choreography. Well-selected examples illustrate this. 5 marks Highly developed knowledge and understanding of how action content supported the choreographic intent of the choreography. Good examples illustrate this. 4 marks Sound knowledge and understanding of how action content supported the choreographic intent of the choreography. Examples are provided. 3 marks Limited explanation of how action content supported the choreographic intent of the choreography. 2 marks Description of at least two actions and how they supported the choreographic intent of the choreography. 1 mark Description of one action and how it supported the choreographic intent of the choreography. 0 marks No evidence or nothing worthy of credit.	6

Section C – Critical appreciation of professional works

Answer **all** questions in this section.

40% (32 marks) – you should spend about 35 minutes on this section.

All questions in this section refer to the professional dance works in the GCSE *Dance Anthology*.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
16		Identify one dance relationship used in Within Her Eyes. 1 mark for any appropriate dance relationship eg: • Action and reaction • Complement • Contact • Contrast • Lead and follow	1

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
17		Explain how the dance relationship content contributes to the choreographic intent of Within Her Eyes. Responses can include references to: Relationship content: • Action and reaction • Complement • Contact • Contrast • Lead and follow. Choreographic Intent: • Maintaining the emotional intensity and visceral energy of the live stage performance • Portrayal of an abstract tragic love story • Mood is very tender, emotional and sombre • Dancers perform in complete contact • Totally dependent on each other • With the female dancer never once touching the floor throughout the entire duet • Creating a very unique vocabulary and style both physically and emotionally • Two people's friendship growing out of a grief-stricken situation and the journey of them becoming closer and falling in love over time • They're unable to give into those feelings due to the awareness they have on the past which they don't feel they can betray • A love story • A story about these two people who can't or won't allow themselves to love each other • The male dancer never initiates or manipulates, he merely responds to her every move • Devoted to her. 6 marks Excellent knowledge and understanding of how the dance relationship content contributes to the choreographic intent. Well-selected examples illustrate this. 5 marks Highly developed knowledge and understanding of how the dance relationship content contributes to the choreographic intent. Good examples illustrate this. 4 marks Sound knowledge and understanding of how the dance relationship content contributes to the choreographic intent. Examples are provided.	6

		3 marks Limited explanation of how the dance relationship content contributes to the choreographic intent. 2 marks Description of how the dance relationship content contributes to the choreographic intent. 1 mark Limited description of how the dance relationship content contributes to the choreographic intent. 0 marks No evidence or nothing worthy of credit.	
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Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
18		Identify one feature of the staging/set used in Artificial Things. 1 mark for naming any appropriate feature of the staging/set and can include: • Crudely painted heavy backdrop in which paint looks as if it is running down the canvas • Vitrine on its side with a snowdrift inside the cabinet • Paper snow scattered on the ground in a diagonal • Stools • Headless suit on mannequin legs • Light grey dance floor • Wooden frame • Wheelchair.	1

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
19		Discuss how the use of staging/set and choreographic content contribute to the choreographic intent of Artificial Things. Responses can include references to: Staging/set: • Crudely painted heavy backdrop in which paint looks as if it is running down the canvas • Vitrine on its side with a snowdrift inside the cabinet • Paper snow scattered on the ground in a diagonal • Stools • Headless suit on mannequin legs • Light grey dance floor • Wooden frame • Wheelchair. Choreographic content: • Movement content (action, dynamics, space and relationships) • Structuring devices and form (binary, ternary, rondo, narrative, episodic, beginning/middle/end, unity, logical sequence, transitions) • Choreographic devices (motif and development, repetition, contrast, highlights, climax, manipulation of number, unison and canon) • The scene opens with two duets. The first is ground-based contact work involving a dismantled wheelchair. The second duet was influenced by the dancers improvising around the idea of inviting touch, and leading and following • The group unites and use ground-based contact work to stay connected whilst manipulating the dismantled wheelchair • The trio of Amy, David Willdrige and Laura begins to find harmony whilst dancing with one another and Laura's wheelchair. Following Laura's lead they explore the movement of the chair, and each dancer takes responsibility for the wheelchair • The trio eventually gathers around David Toole and they re-enact portraits of past family photos influenced by the paintings of Djurovic. They find stillness as if frozen in the snow globe • David Toole leaves the group as the music '<i>The Sunshine of Your Smile</i>' begins and finds a lonely spotlight. He dances a simple solo. He returns to the group and is frozen in time with the other characters as the scene comes to a close • A kind of unison of textures; where the dancers tumble around Laura, creating circular patterns with her, using her movement material • Circular patterns (tracks in the snow) • Several tumbling sequences get repeated but in a different direction or with a different person doing a different element of the dance. And within those tumbling sections there's little details from Laura's movement vocabulary; like her chin or her shoulders that hook all the dancers in together so that although they've got different physicalities they're blending really nicely in the unison	12

		• The scene is a really slow and gradual build up to a climax. Choreographic intent can include references to: mood, meaning, idea, theme, style, style fusion: • Characters coming to terms with life's limitations – we all live within certain confinements, and we are subject to the gaze of 'the other' • Characters constricted within a snow globe that signifies these ideas • Characters find a resolution by coming together • Surrender to the fact that we all have to live with individual regrets • Memories and the past living with you as you move forward.	
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Mark	AO	Descriptor	How to arrive at a mark
Level 4 10–12 marks	4	Discussion is excellent: convincing analysis, interpretation and evaluation of how the use of staging/set and choreographic content contribute to the choreographic intent of Artificial Things	At the top of the level, a student's response is likely to be well structured and will include convincing analytical, interpretive and evaluative commentary that references both production features. Subject terminology is used throughout with accuracy and effect. At the bottom of the level, a student's response will include level 3 and is developing into a structured piece of writing. The response will include analytical, interpretive and evaluative commentary that references production features in some detail or details of one of the production features in more detail than the other. Subject terminology is used throughout with accuracy.
Level 3 7–9 marks		Discussion is highly developed: coherent analysis, interpretation and evaluation of how the use of staging/set and choreographic content contribute to the choreographic intent of Artificial Things	At the top of the level, a student's response will include coherent analytical, interpretive and evaluative responses specific to both production features. There will be specific references to particular aspects of both production features. Subject terminology is used well and is almost always accurate. At the bottom of the level, a student's response will include level 2 and include some detailed analytical, interpretive and evaluative responses specific to both production features. There may be some specific references to particular aspects of one production feature more than the other. Subject terminology is used well but is not always accurate.

Mark	AO	Descriptor	How to arrive at a mark
Level 2 4–6 marks		Discussion is sound: moderately detailed analysis and interpretation with limited evaluation of how the use of staging/set and choreographic content contribute to the choreographic intent of Artificial Things	At the top of the level, a student's response will include more analytical, interpretive and evaluative details of both production features. Responses are supported by some evaluative explanation but may be very general. Subject terminology is used with some accuracy. At the bottom of the level, a student's response will include level 1 and have some analytical and interpretive and evaluative responses to the work. One production feature may have more analytical/interpretive and evaluative detail than the other or both production features may have a limited analytical/interpretive and evaluative detail. There may be limited use of subject terminology or it may be inaccurate.
Level 1 1–3 marks		Discussion is limited: simple descriptions of how the use of staging/set and choreographic content contribute to the choreographic intent of Artificial Things	At the top of the level, a student's response is likely to be descriptive in its approach. There may be no use of subject terminology. At the bottom of the level, a student's response will be a simple description of one production feature with some detail.
0 marks		Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written	

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
20		Using your knowledge of the similarities and differences in the use of lighting in Infra and Shadows, discuss how the use of lighting enhances our appreciation of these two works. Responses can include references to: Infra: • Lights the width of the stage • Often focuses downstage • Dancers are lit by shafts of light • 6 rectangles of light frame 6 duets • Colours are used to highlight different sections • Low lighting with patches of white light • Lighting fades to blackout at the end of some sections • Side light upstage right • Green light across the floor upstage whilst downstage is dark • Warm yellow pool of light downstage • Deep blue floor lights from downstage right and downstage left • White followspot in the last section. Shadows: • Lights being obscured for a moment • Side lighting • Dim/low lighting • Areas lit for dancers eg around the table when action takes place here • Table lit from above when mother is on the table • Shaft of light from downstage right for boy's solo • Central pool of light towards the end which fades to blackout. Enhances Appreciation: • Should be a personal response.	12

Mark	AO	Descriptor	How to arrive at a mark
Level 4 10–12 marks	4	Discussion is excellent: convincing analysis, interpretation and evaluation of the similarities and differences in use of lighting in both works to enhance our appreciation	At the top of the level, a student's response is likely to be well structured and will include convincing analytical, interpretive and evaluative commentary that references appreciation of both works. Subject terminology is used throughout with accuracy and effect. At the bottom of the level, a student's response will include level 3 and is developing into a structured piece of writing. The response will include analytical, interpretive and evaluative commentary that references in some detail appreciation of one work in more detail than the other or both works in some detail. Subject terminology is used throughout with accuracy.
Level 3 7–9 marks		Discussion is highly developed: coherent analysis, interpretation and evaluation of the similarities and differences in use of lighting in both works to enhance our appreciation	At the top of the level, a student's response will include coherent analytical, interpretive and evaluative responses specific to both works. There will be specific references to particular aspects of both works. Subject terminology is used well and is almost always accurate. At the bottom of the level, a student's response will include level 2 and include some detailed analytical, interpretive and evaluative responses specific to both works. There may be some specific references to particular aspects of one work more than the other. Subject terminology is used well but is not always accurate.

Mark	AO	Descriptor	How to arrive at a mark
Level 2 4–6 marks		Discussion is sound: moderately detailed analysis and interpretation with limited evaluation of the similarities and differences in use of lighting in both works to enhance our appreciation	At the top of the level, a student's response will include more analytical, interpretive and evaluative detail of both works. Responses are supported by some evaluative explanation but may be very general. Subject terminology is used with some accuracy. At the bottom of the level, a student's response will include level 1 and have some analytical and interpretive and evaluative responses to the works. One work may have more analytical/interpretive and evaluative detail than the other or both works may have a limited analytical/interpretive and evaluative detail. There may be limited use of subject terminology or it may be inaccurate.
Level 1 1–3 marks		Discussion is limited: simple descriptions of the similarities and differences in use of lighting in both works to enhance appreciation	At the top of the level, a student's response is likely to be descriptive in its approach. There may be no use of subject terminology. At the bottom of the level, a student's response will be a simple description of one lighting state or effect with some detail.
0 marks		Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written	