
A-LEVEL DANCE

Component 2 – Critical Engagement
Report on the Examination

7237/W
June 2018

Version: 1.0

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General

The paper involved both short answer and extended response questions. Generally, the students seemed to manage their time well and there were very few instances of questions not attempted. If a student did not attempt a question, this usually applied to one of the short answer questions. Some responses to the short answer questions were very long in relation to the marks available which meant that there was less time available for the extended response questions. It is important that students are aware that the short answer questions total 25 marks whereas there are 25 marks for each extended response question. The majority of students used additional answer booklets. Sometimes, parts of the response to a question were located in different parts of the script. It is helpful to examiners if students can briefly indicate where continuations of responses can be found. There were some scripts where the handwriting was very difficult to read, which could affect the communication of the content.

Section A – Short answer questions

Question 01 – 4 marks

This was an accessible question using the command word 'describe' and requiring two examples of the choreographic use of the dancers in the second dance 'Lady Jane'. The students were able to gain marks through reference to a variety of ways of using the dancers e.g. spatial patterns and formations, a choreographic device, relationships between dancers, court style of dancing, 'backing' dancers and duets linked to the lyrics. However, some students gave examples which showed no obvious use of the dancers.

Question 02 – 5 marks

This question required explanation of how the choreography of the fourth dance 'As Tears Go By' showed the themes of rejection and isolation. Generally, the students seemed to have a clear knowledge and understanding of this section of the set work. Responses referred to the lone female dancer and the female trio, and sometimes to the isolated male dancer and his interaction with other dancers. The more successful responses provided clear explanation and examples which related to the themes of rejection or isolation. The less successful responses referred to examples which did not show a clear connection to the themes. At times, statements were inaccurate with regard to entrances and exits, positions on stage and use of focus.

Question 03 – 5 marks

This question focused on explanation of how the movement content communicated features of the personality of the female dancer in the sixth dance 'Ruby Tuesday'. The relevance of the responses to this question was varied. Some students made clear connections between aspects of personality and examples of movement content, often referencing the use of gestures, travelling phrases and contact with the male dancers. The less successful responses were able to identify some features of the female dancer's personality but provided little evidence of relevant movement content. There was often inaccuracy in the content and sometimes a loss of focus with general reference to social issues of the 1960s.

Question 04 – 5 marks

This question required explanation of how the movement material of the final dance ‘Sympathy for the Devil’ was structured. A variety of approaches was seen relating to either breadth or depth. The more successful responses showed a clear knowledge and understanding of the structure with reference to exits and entrances, formations of dancers, repetition of motifs, solo, duet and unison work. Many students referred to repetition of movement phrases from earlier sections and the beginning and ending motifs. The less successful responses frequently contained inaccuracy in the content.

Question 05 – 6 marks

This short answer question involved both AO3 and AO4 marks indicated by the command word ‘discuss’. The focus was on one feature of the movement style of Christopher Bruce and another named practitioner from the Rambert Dance Company (formerly ballet Rambert) 1966 – 2002 with reference to the similarities and differences between the two features. The most frequently named practitioner was Richard Alston, followed by Robert North and Glen Tetley. The more successful responses made accurate reference to a feature of the movement style for each practitioner and provided details which showed insight into the similarities and differences. Often, students could identify a feature but were unable to expand on that knowledge, providing some details with an attempt at comparison. The less successful responses provided limited detail of the features and were often inaccurate in some of the content. Some responses did not focus on one feature but referred, in general statements, to several features for each practitioner.

Section A and Section B – Extended response questions**Each question 25 marks - AO3: 10 AO4: 15**

The more successful responses showed a relevant response to the question and a clear understanding of the command word. They demonstrated:

- detailed knowledge and understanding
- detailed analysis and interpretation
- clear supporting evidence
- detailed connections between content and context where appropriate
- a well-structured argument
- judgements based on the available evidence.

The less successful responses did not maintain focus on the question. They showed:

- general statements focusing on identification and description
- limited evidence of analysis and unsubstantiated interpretations
- examples which lacked detail
- inaccuracies in the content
- limited reference to context
- a lack of clarity in the line of argument.
- limited evidence of making judgements.

Question 06

This question focused on discussion of the variety of the dance works in the repertoire of the Rambert Dance Company (formerly Ballet Rambert) from 1966 to 2002. This required identification of features and analysis of the dance works in order to evaluate the contribution of the features to variety in the repertoire. The features could relate to choreographers, genre, style, form, dance structure, subject matter, movement content, dancers, physical setting and aural setting.

There were differing approaches to this question. Some responses focused the discussion on the variety of works linked to the artistic directorships of John Chesworth, Robert North, Richard Alston and Christopher Bruce. Other responses commented on particular practitioners and compared their approaches with regard to variety. Occasionally there was reference to works which were not in the repertoire of the company.

The more successful responses showed a clear knowledge and understanding of different features of the dance works and detailed evidence/examples from the works to support the discussion.. There were connections between content and context and perceptive judgements were made based on the available evidence.

The less successful responses focused on one or two features of the dance works with general statements and limited supporting evidence. There was often inaccuracy in the content and a loss of focus on the question with the response focusing on the development of the company rather than a discussion on the variety in the repertoire.

Questions 07, 09, 11 and 13

These questions required analysis of the use of the physical setting in the set work from the chosen option. Details of the aspects of the physical setting were needed, as well as clear examples from the set work, to show how the use of the aspects enhanced the choreographic presentation and intention.

The more successful responses gave details of the aspects of the physical setting from appropriate parts or sections of the set works and analysed their use. The aspects usually related to set, props, costume and lighting. Clear examples of their use in the choreography were provided, with appropriate interpretations.

The less successful responses focused on description of the aspects of the physical setting. There was limited evidence of analysis of the use of the aspects, and interpretations did not always show a clear connection to what was described. There were few supporting examples and some inaccuracy in the content.

Questions 08 and 10

These questions focused on discussion of the relevance of a statement to the choreography of the practitioners studied from the chosen option: the Romantic Ballet period or the American modern dance period 1900 to 1945. Details of the features of the choreography of the practitioners and analysis were required in order to make an evaluation in relation to the statement. These choreographic features could relate to genre, style, technique, form, subject matter, movement content, dancers, physical setting and aural setting.

The more successful responses identified and gave details of the features of the choreography of the practitioners. Clear examples from a number of works of the practitioners supported the analysis. There was evaluation of the evidence in relation to the statement.

The less successful responses made general statements about some features of the choreography of the practitioners. Evidence of analysis was limited, and examples often lacked sufficient clarity to inform the evaluation. Some works were identified but little reference was made to relevant content.

Questions 12 and 14

These questions required discussion of the contribution of the practitioners studied to the development of a variety of styles in the choreography of the chosen option: American jazz dance 1940 to 1975 or the independent contemporary dance scene in Britain from 2000 to the current time. In the case of the latter option, students could also refer to cultural features. Details of the features of the contribution of the practitioners and analysis were required in order to make an evaluation in relation to the question. The features could relate to genre, style, technique, form, subject matter, movement content, dancers, physical setting and aural setting.

The more successful identified and gave relevant details of the contribution made by their selected practitioners. Contextual links were made and clear examples from the works of the practitioners were provided. Clear connections were made between the evidence and the development of a variety of styles (and cultural features: Q14).

The less successful responses did not maintain focus on the question and referred to a number of facts about the background, life and interests of the practitioners with no clear connections made to the focus of the question. Works were identified but there was limited evidence from the works to establish connections to the development of a variety of styles (and cultural features: Q14). There was frequently inaccuracy in the content.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.