



A-Level **Dance** 7237/W

Report on the examination

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General

As in previous years, the paper involved both short answer and extended response questions. Time management for most students was more effective than in previous years; however, a small number still struggled to complete all questions. As in similar years, the students that started with the extended questions tended to leave the short answer questions to the end, invariably not leaving themselves enough time to complete this area of the paper. It is important that students are reminded that there is an overall total of 25 marks available for the short answer questions and 25 marks are available for each of the three extended response questions. Therefore, the amount of time spent on each section should be approximately 25% of the time given.

Generally, the length of the responses to the short answer questions was appropriate in relation to the marks available. Some students misunderstood question 05, which asked for a discussion of choice of costumes in works by Bruce and a named practitioner, and discussed costumes in relation to two works by Bruce.

There were very few instances of students not attempting to answer questions but when this did happen it was usually within the short answer questions. There were also some instances when students provided a response to questions 01 - 04 which related to another dance in the set work *Rooster*, even though the dance was clearly named and numbered on the question paper.

It was evident that the number of scripts where handwriting was very difficult to read had decreased this year.

Section A – Short answer questions

Question 01 – 4 marks

This question required two examples of interaction between dancers in the final dance *Sympathy for the Devil*. Many students gave detailed descriptions, gaining the full four marks. The less successful responses showed limited detail and/or inaccuracy in the content.

Question 02 – 4 marks

This question required explanation of how the choreographic use of space in the second dance *Lady Jane* reflected features of the relationships between the dancers. The more successful responses focused on location in space, spatial design within the body, levels and facings/proximity to other dancers, whilst also identifying the features of the relationships between the dancers to inform their explanations. Clear and appropriate examples from the choreography were given to underpin the explanation. The less successful responses focused on movement vocabulary and identification of relationships rather than the choreographic use of space.

Question 03 – 5 marks

This question focused on an explanation of how the use of the aural setting in the third dance *Not Fade Away* enhanced the choreography. Responses could explore the aural setting in relation to sound, genre, style, structure, tempo, mood, lyrics and rhythm. The more successful responses were able to provide very clear and detailed examples of connections between features of the aural setting and features of the choreography. Some students also provided a detailed explanation of how the lyrics directly correlated to and enhanced the choreography. The less successful responses tended to describe some features of the choreography with tenuous links to mood and tempo without explaining how the use of aural setting enhanced the choreography.

Question 04 – 5 marks

This question required explanation of how the movement content of the male dancer in the fifth dance *Paint It Black* communicated his mood. The more successful responses revealed clear identification of features of the male dancer's mood and how this was communicated through movement content, specifically and accurately referencing action, spatial elements and dynamic elements. The less successful answers often identified the interaction between the male dancer and female dancers but focused on the female dancers' movement content. Students also found describing the mood of the male dancer challenging.

Question 05 – 6 marks

This short answer question involved both AO3 and AO4 marks indicated by the command word 'discuss'. It focused on the similarities and/or differences between the choice of costumes in *Rooster* by Christopher Bruce and in one work by a named practitioner from the Rambert Dance Company (formally Ballet Rambert) 1966 – 2002. Generally, the discussion relating to costumes in *Rooster* and one other work showed knowledge and understanding but the bias and detail towards the set work was more in evidence, therefore affecting the quality of discussion. Occasionally, the choice of another work by Christopher Bruce was used rather than a named practitioner which meant that the question was not being fully answered. Credit, however, was given to the ability to discuss in these responses.

The more successful responses made accurate reference to the choice of costumes in *Rooster* with a similar in-depth and accurate reference to the choice of costumes in one other work by a named practitioner. This then informed a detailed analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the choice of costumes in both works. The less successful responses could provide some description of costumes of the two works chosen but found making insightful connections between the two difficult.

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 work. 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
- Limited reference to context
- A lack of clarity in the line of argument
- Limited evidence of making judgements.

Question 6

This question focused on the examination of the stylistic features of the Rambert Dance Company (formerly Ballet Rambert) during the period 1966 to 2002. This required identification and details of the stylistic features relating to company policy, artistic directors, practitioners, genre, technique, subject matter, structure, and constituent features. Evaluation of how these features contributed to the style of the Rambert Dance Company (formerly Ballet Rambert) with appropriate evidence was also required.

Whilst an introductory paragraph providing relevant context would be appropriate, sufficient time should be allowed to respond to the focus of the question. Different approaches were used in response to this question, for example through the identification and examination of each of the stylistic features chosen or through an examination of the stylistic features within the periods of Artistic Directorship between 1966 – 2002, linked specifically to practitioners and their works.

The more successful responses provided detailed knowledge and understanding coupled with perceptive insight. Students were able to identify the stylistic features associated with the company with many focusing on technique (for example, Cunningham, Graham, jazz), subject matter and the choreographic/movement styles of the artistic directors. This was evidenced well through explanation of these features and examples from a range of works, often leading to how the features impacted and contributed to Rambert Dance Company (formally Ballet Rambert).

The less successful responses identified stylistic features with little further detail or relevance to the question. There was limited evidence of making judgements with statements often

being general or superficial. Content of these responses tended to be more descriptive about the company and its Artistic Directors.

Questions 07, 09, 11 and 13

These questions required analysis of specific roles within the optional set works, *Giselle*, *Appalachian Spring*, *Singin' in the Rain* and *Sutra*. Identification and details of the features of the specific roles were needed, as well as clear examples from the choreography of the chosen set work to support the students' answers.

The more successful responses were able to identify the specific role(s) within their chosen set works, providing answers with a very clear structure and demonstrating depth of knowledge. Clear examples were given from a range of sections within the chosen set works with details relating to, for example, character, themes of the work and symbolism. Interpretations of role(s) were valid if supported by relevant evidence from the choreography.

The less successful responses referred to the role(s) with little detail given. Evidence of analysis was limited. There were few supporting examples provided and some inaccuracy in the content was often seen. Other responses provided information on the set work at length but did not identify or analyse the specific role and how it was communicated through the choreography.

Questions 08, 10, 12 and 14

These questions focused on the discussion of the influences on the choreographic approach of the practitioners studied from the chosen area of study. Identification of relevant practitioners and the influences on them were needed, as was relevant details of the influences and evidence from the choreographic approach of the practitioner, all leading to a clear evaluation of the connections between the influences and choreographic approaches. The influences could relate to, for example, genre, style, technique, subject matter, structure, constituent features; political, social, economic, and cultural factors.

Students were generally able to identify relevant practitioners across all chosen areas of study. The more successful responses informed the required discussion by demonstrating very clear evidence of analysis with a breadth of examples from a range of works by the practitioners. These were detailed and supported a well-structured and coherent argument which was fully focused on the question.

The less successful responses struggled to discuss connections between the influences and the choreographic approach of the practitioners chosen, often stating a list of influences and only providing general/vague statements re how they affected either the choreographic approach or a specific work. Some responses did provide detailed knowledge and understanding of practitioners and works studied but connections to possible influences were missing, therefore not fully answering the question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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