GCSE

WJEC GCSE Dance

Approved by Qualifications Wales

Delivery Guide

Teaching from 2026
For award from 2028



This Qualifications Wales regulated qualification is not available to centres in England.

Made for Wales.
Ready for the world.

WJEC would like to thank the students and teachers of Fitzalan High School, Cardiff and Llanwern High School, Newport for their participation in the creation of these covers.

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Aims of the Delivery Guide

The aim of the Delivery Guide is to give an overview of the qualification and to help teachers understand how we assess GCSE Dance. It will offer an introduction to the specification, an assessment overview, and will support teachers in better understanding how to prepare their learners for the assessment of the different units in each qualification. More information on each unit can be found in the separate unit guides.

Qualification Structure

WJEC GCSE Dance consists of three units:

	Unit title	Type of Assessment	Weighting
Unit 1	Choreography	Non-examination assessment	40%
Unit 2	Performance	Non-examination assessment	30%
Unit 3	Dance Appreciation	Digital examination	30%

All units are compulsory.

Unit 1

The purpose of this unit is to:

- develop an awareness of the choreographic process of creating dance
- develop learners' skills in self-evaluation, refinement and development of their own work
- develop a sense of choreographing for a specific purpose
- inspire learners to explore choreography from various styles/genres, periods/contexts and linked to different cultures in Wales and the world.

This unit will focus on:

- **exploring** – learners will have the opportunity to explore choreographic processes, movement material, styles and techniques used by others to develop their own choreography skills in dance. Learners should have the opportunity to explore diversity, including different perspectives, identity, culture, and contributions that span Wales and the world.
- **creating** – learners will create their own original dance in a style of their choosing. Learners will have the opportunity to develop creative skills through experimenting and investigating choreography. Learners will develop and refine their choreography using choreographic devices and structures to realise their artistic intentions.
- **responding and reflecting** – learners will respond to a stimulus specified by WJEC and refine their work through reflection to create a finished product.

Learners will have choice in the selection of the stimulus set by WJEC and can choose whether they perform in their own choreographed piece. Learners will work independently to choreograph a piece for a solo dancer or a group of dancers (2-5 dancers). The performance time is as follows:

- Solo: 1 minute 30 seconds – 2 minutes
- Group of 2-5 dancers: 2-4 minutes

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Unit 2

The purpose of this unit is to:

- inspire learners to explore a range of dance repertoire and provide opportunities to select pieces they wish to perform from various styles/genres, periods/contexts and linked to different cultures, perspectives and contributions in Wales and the world
- allow learners to develop their technical and performance skills by reflecting on their work in an ongoing cycle of practice and improvement
- provide opportunities for learners to perform individually and as part of a group, and develop the skills required to become proficient
- provide an opportunity for learners to develop personal skills of self-evaluation, resilience, determination and confidence.

This unit will focus on:

- **exploring** – learners will have the opportunity to explore dance created and performed by other people and develop their own skills in dance
- **creating** – learners will develop physical, technical, and expressive skills to interpret and communicate choreographic intention and demonstrate control.

Learners will perform **two** pieces of repertoire. The pieces must be choreographed by a professional practitioner. A professional practitioner can be a professional dancer, dance teacher or choreographer. These pieces must be from different styles/genres. Learners will have choice and flexibility in the selection of their performance pieces for this unit, however learners must not perform an extract from the set works for Unit 3. One performance **must** be a solo and the second performance can be solo **or** group. The performance time is as follows:

- Solo: 1 minute 30 seconds – 2 minutes (the learner must actively perform in front of a live audience for a minimum of 1 minute 30 seconds)
- Group of 2-5 dancers: 2-4 minutes (when performing in a group, each dancer must actively perform for a minimum of 1 minute 30 seconds)

Please note, *actively performing* is being directly involved and contributing to the performance.

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Unit 3

The purpose of this unit is to:

- demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of how dance is developed, choreographed and performed through the context of set works and unseen work
- explore professional dance from various style/genres, periods/contexts and linked to different cultures in Wales and the world
- develop the language of describing and analysing dance
- develop an understanding and appreciation of how meaning is communicated through dance.

This unit will focus on:

- **exploring** – learners will have the opportunity to explore and appreciate dance developed and performed in a selection of styles, presented in various contexts, and with a range of intentions and purposes. These explorations will be linked to their chosen set dance works and unseen works including a range of dance pieces of contrasting styles/genres, contrasting periods/contexts, works created in or inspired by Wales and works written by a diverse range of choreographers and companies, including those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- **responding to and reflecting** – learners will be able to make connections between the constituent features of dance, how they were developed and created, and evaluate the effectiveness of ideas and techniques used to communicate meaning for both the set dance works and the unseen dance works.

Learners will study **three** set works for Unit 3. Learners will study the set work in Column 1, select **one** set work from Column 2 and **one** set work from Column 3. There will also be an unseen work included in the digital examination.

Column 1 – Compulsory	Column 2 – Longer works (over an hour in length)	Column 3 – Shorter works (20-40 minutes)
All learners must study **"*Rygbi: Annwyl (Dear*)"** by Fearghus Ó Conchúir and performers of National Dance Company Wales	Centres must select **one** of the following: 1. **Mad Hatter's Tea Party** by ZooNation the Kate Prince Company (Chr Kate and the Company) 2. **Fagin's Twist** by Avant Garde Dance (Chor Tony Adigun) 3. **Pinocchio** by Jasmin Vardimon	Centres must select **one** of the following: 1. **Dust** by Akram Khan for English National Ballet 2. **Ripple** by Xie Xin for The Ballet Boyz 3. **Henge** by Motionhouse

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Summary of Assessment

Unit 1: Choreography
Non-examination assessment
40% of qualification
Marked by centre and moderated by WJEC
96 marks

Summary of Assessment
Response to a stimuli set by WJEC, assessed by the centre and moderated by WJEC. The stimuli will be available on the WJEC Portal during the September of the first year of study. The stimuli will be changed annually.

Learners will create, develop and refine a piece of choreography. Learners will also produce a Reflective Log of the process in a non-prescribed format. Learners can choose whether they perform in their own choreographed piece. Learners can choreograph a piece for a solo or a group of dancers (2-5 dancers).

Unit 2: Performance
Non-examination assessment
30% of qualification
Marked by centre and moderated by WJEC
72 marks

Summary of Assessment
Learners will perform **two** pieces of repertoire. These pieces must be from different styles/genres. Learners will have choice and flexibility in the selection of their performance pieces for this unit, however learners must not perform an extract from the set works chosen by the centre for Unit 3. One performance must be a solo and the second performance can be solo or group (2-5 dancers).

Unit 3: Dance Appreciation
30% of qualification
Digital only examination 1 hour 45 minutes
72 marks

Summary of Assessment
Questions requiring objective responses, short and extended answers, in response to set works and unseen works.

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Assessment Objectives

AO1
Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of performances and choreographic processes.

AO2
Develop and apply technical and performance skills.

AO3
Reflect on, analyse, and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

AO4
Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning in choreography.

The tables below show the weighting of each assessment objective for each unit and for the qualification as a whole.

Unit 1

The distribution of the assessment objectives for this unit is:

AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	Total
-	-	5%	35%	40%

Unit 2

The distribution of the assessment objectives for this unit is:

AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	Total
-	30%	-	-	30%

Unit 3

The distribution of the assessment objectives for this unit is:

AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	Total
20%	-	10%	-	30%

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Specification and Assessment Pack

When we develop new qualifications, we produce the following documents:

- Specification – this covers all the information and skills that learners are expected to know by the end of their course.
- Assessment Pack – this contains the Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs) i.e. sample exam papers and sample non-examination assessment (NEA) tasks, relevant controls for the NEA and mark schemes.

This guide builds upon the information in the specification and assessment pack to help further your understanding of said documents.

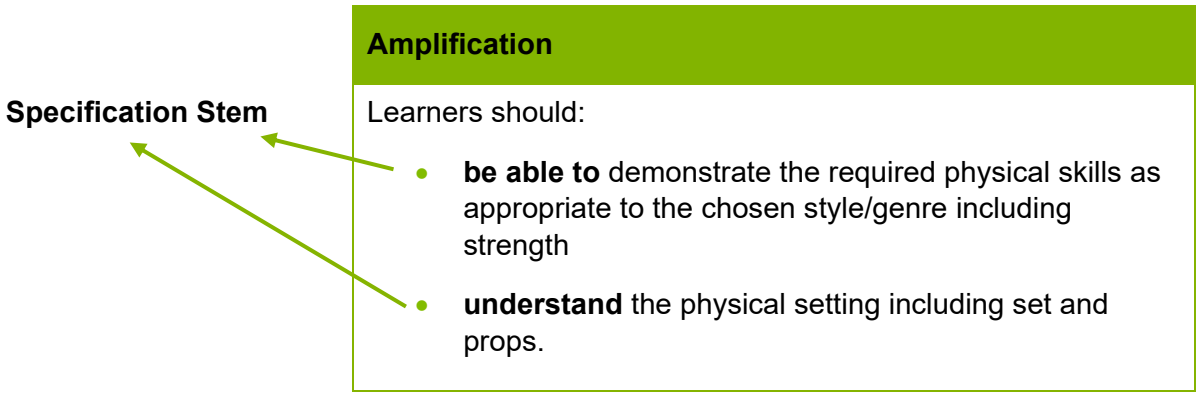
Understanding the specification amplification

Learners should be made aware of:

- the specification stems
- what the specification stems mean.

Specification Stems

When you look through the specification you will notice in the amplification column, we use a variety of wording before the list of content learners need to know; we call this a stem:



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Each stem is used for a slightly different reason:

Specification Stem	When it is used
Learners should know	When learners are required to demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding.
Learners should be able to	When learners need to apply their knowledge and understanding to a practical situation or demonstrate application of practical skills and techniques.
Learners should understand	When learners are required to demonstrate greater depth of knowledge and understanding, application of knowledge to familiar or unfamiliar contexts and analysis and evaluation of information for a given purpose.
Learners are required to	This is used to show the requirements of individual units.

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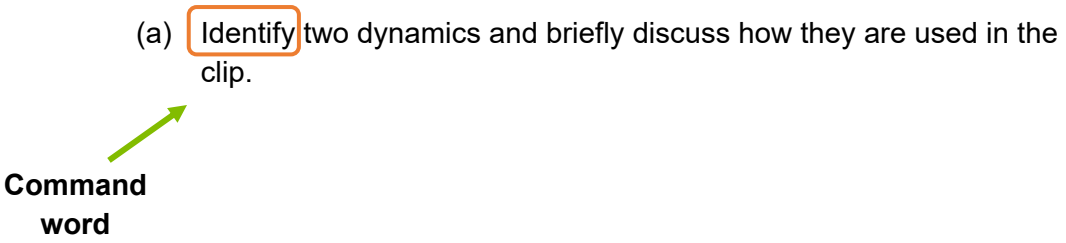
Command words

Learners should be made aware of:

- what command words are
- what each command word means
- what each command word assesses.

Command words are the words and phrases used in assessments that tell learners how they should answer the question or complete the task. Command words direct the learner through the question or task and indicate the nature of the response required.



The following tables are not exhaustive, but will give you a good idea of the command words we typically use:

Command words for direct recall	
Command Word	**Requirements of Response**
Describe	Identify distinctive features and give descriptive, factual detail. *This is one of the most widely used command words. If an explanation is required then use two command words: 'describe and explain'.*
Drag and drop	Move to another part of a screen using a mouse or similar device.
Give	Produce an answer from recall.
Identify/ Tick/ Click/ Circle	Point out and name from a number of possibilities.
List	State the factors (with no explanation or elaboration).
Match/ Link	To choose something that has the same quality as something.
Name	Identify or make a list.
Outline	Set out the main characteristics.
Sort/ Order	Arrange systematically.
State	Express in clear terms.

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Command words for application/ demonstration of skills	
Command Word	**Requirements of Response**
Complete	Add necessary items/information.
Demonstrate	Exemplify, describe with reference to examples.
Discuss	Present key points.
Explain	Give reasons or causes. Show an understanding of how or why something has occurred.
Make/ Produce/ Create	To create/make/manufacture.
Participate	Play a role in.
Perform	To carry out or execute a task, action, or activity.
Present	Communicate in a way that can be clearly followed and understood.
Record	Obtain and store data and information.
Review	Survey information.
Select/ Choose	Make an appropriate choice from a range of options.
Suggest	Put forward an idea, reason or course of action.
Summarise	Give a shortened version of something, stating its main points without detail.
Use	Apply the information provided to a particular theory or concept. Employ, take or hold something for a purpose.
Write	Formulate and write down (for example an algorithm).

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Command words for synthesis and evaluation	
Command Word	**Requirements of Response**
Analyse	Separate information into components and identify their characteristics.
Assess	This is an evaluative question, meaning that there are a number of possible explanations/arguments/outcomes. Make an informed judgement. Make a judgement about the quality or value of something.
Comment	Present an informed opinion.
Compare	Identify **similarities**.
Consider	Review and respond to given info.
Develop	To extend, advance, or elaborate.
Discuss	Examine an issue in detail in a structured way, taking into account different ideas.
Evaluate	Judge from available evidence.
Justify	Support case with evidence.
Recommend/ Improve	To suggest as appropriate.
Reflect	To consider thoughts, experiences, situation or issue.
Review	To consider something with the intention of making changes if necessary.
Suggest	State a possible reason or course of action.
Support	To maintain or advocate.

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Mark Schemes

Mark schemes and/or assessment criteria test the intended learning outcomes for a component. They describe the knowledge and skills (and possibly attitude) that a candidate is expected to demonstrate in their responses and are then used in marking the work.

Objective based mark scheme:
For very short answer questions requiring one correct response.

Question	Answer		AO1	AO3	Total Mark
1.	***The Mad Hatter's Tea Party*** – ZooNation The Kate Prince Company				
	(a)	Select the dance style of **The Mad Hatter's Tea Party** *Drop down box* Contemporary Dance Dance Circus Hip Hop	1		1
		Award **one** mark for Hip Hop			

Points based mark scheme:
For short answer questions with a range of possible responses.

In the section noted above, identify a dance movement and briefly describe **how** it is inspired by the game of rugby.	2 marks
*Award **1 mark** for identification and **1 mark** for brief description (maximum of two marks) for example:* • running, in straight lines (1 mark) as if training for a match (1 mark) • stretching (1 mark) as if preparing to play a game of rugby (1 mark) • kicking with a flexed foot (1 mark) as if kicking the ball (1 mark) • falling into the ground/floor (1 mark) as if being tackled in rugby (1 mark) • changing direction quickly (1 mark) as if chasing the ball/players around the pitch (1 mark) • reaching up with both arms (1 mark) as if catching a ball (1 mark) • making contact with another dancer (1 mark) as if tackling during the game (1 mark). *These are examples only and all valid alternatives should be considered and marked appropriately.* **N.B. The whole group scrum and line up does not appear in this section.**	

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Levels based mark schemes:
For questions requiring extended responses.

Question	Answer	AO1	AO3	Total Mark
	Describe how **actions/movements** and **dynamics** are used to communicate the meaning and intention of this solo.	6		6

Indicative Content

Candidates must describe actions/movements and dynamic from the **Queen of Hearts** and how these movements are used to communicate meaning.

For the **Queen of Hearts,** learners could choose actions/movements and dynamic for example:

- strong, fast moments
- fast gestural waaking style movements with her arms
- she uses stomps
- she uses strong gestures, circling her arms and using her fists
- she performs lots of spins and turns on one leg that then abruptly stops
- downward grounded movements.

How the movements communicate meaning for the **Queen of Hearts** for example:

- emphasises her anger
- there are moments when she is elegant but these turn into where she can look like an angry bully
- she comes across as feisty
- she has intense and anger
- demonstrate that she has sass and control
- shows that she focuses her attention on Ernest.

AO1

5-6 marks

- Very good description of how the actions/movements and dynamics are used to communicate the meaning and intention of this solo.
- Relevant knowledge, understanding and use of dance terminology.

3-4 marks

- Good description of how the actions/movements and dynamics are used to communicate the meaning and intention of this solo.
- Some relevant knowledge, understanding and use of dance terminology.

1-2 marks

- Basic description of how the actions/movements or dynamics are used to communicate the meaning and intention of this solo.
- Basic knowledge, understanding and use of dance terminology.

0 marks

- Response not credit worthy/not attempted.

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Important Dates

First teaching of WJEC GCSE Dance	September 2026
First assessment for Unit 3	Summer 2028
First release of Unit 1	September 2026
First submission of Unit 1	Summer 2028
First submission of Unit 2	Summer 2028
First certification	Summer 2028

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