

This document should be read in conjunction with Faculty syllabus outlines as a further explanation of the references within them to Levels, and to understand the descriptors for each Level, against which candidates work is being assessed.



QUALIFICATIONS AND CREDIT FRAMEWORK (QCF)

The ISTD Graded and Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance are regulated on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Qualifications that use the QCF rules are made up of units. This provides flexible ways to get a qualification. Each unit has a credit value which tells how many credits are awarded when a unit is completed. The credit value also gives an indication of how long it will normally take to prepare for a unit or qualification. One credit will usually take 10 hours of learning.

Units build up to qualifications. There are three different types of qualification in the QCF: Award, Certificate and Diploma. An Award is 1 to 12 credits; a Certificate is 13 – 36 credits and a Diploma is at least 37 credits. Units and qualifications are each given a level according to their difficulty, from entry level to level 8. The title of a qualification tells its size and level.

If a qualification includes a unit already awarded to a learner in another qualification, it can be used towards that qualification. Units awarded by different awarding organisations can be combined to build up qualifications.

These are the levels of the QCF, and the position and credits for each ISTD regulated qualification:

Level	QCF Qualifications examples		ISTD Grade	ISTD Credits	Framework for Higher Education examples
Entry	Entry level awards, certificates and diplomas Foundation Learning Tier pathways Functional Skills at Entry level. Entry Level is sub divided into E1, E2 and E3				
1	BTEC awards, certificates and diplomas at level 1 Functional Skills level 1 OCR Nationals Foundation Learning Tier pathways		1, 2 3	7 each	
2	BTEC awards, certificates and diplomas at level 2 Functional Skills level 2		4, 5 Intermediate Foundation	10 each 28	
3	BTEC awards, certificates and diplomas at level 3 BTEC Nationals OCR Nationals		6 Intermediate Diploma in Dance Instruction	13 28 68	
4	Original NQF Level	BTEC Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards	Advanced 1	33	Certificates of higher education

Level	QCF Qualifications examples		ISTD Grade	ISTD Credits	Framework for Higher Education examples
4	4*		Advanced 2	38	
			Diploma in Dance Education	92	
5		HNCs and HNDs BTEC Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards			Diplomas of higher education and further education, foundation degrees and higher national diplomas
6		BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards	Diploma in Dance Pedagogy	213	Bachelor degrees, graduate certificates and diplomas
7	Original NQF Level 5*	Advanced professional awards, certificates and diplomas			Masters degrees, postgraduate certificates and diplomas
8		Award, certificate and diploma in strategic direction			Doctorates

QCF LEVEL DESCRIPTORS – GRADED EXAMINATIONS IN DANCE

The following level descriptors explain what is required of candidates at each level of this framework for Graded Examinations in Dance. They have been agreed by all the dance awarding organisation which are members of the Council for Dance Education and Training and whose qualifications are regulated by Ofqual on the QCF, and accepted by Ofqual as meeting the overarching QCF descriptors.

All performances should demonstrate compliance with the principles of safe dance practice and candidates should demonstrate an appropriate approach to the examination in relation to their conduct and overall presentation.

QCF LEVEL 1 (GRADES 1, 2 AND 3)

Achievement at level 1 reflects the ability to understand and use and apply relevant knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to an increasing vocabulary of movement and artistic awareness.

Knowledge and understanding

Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of technique, music and performance which is reflected in the ability to co-ordinate simple movements to produce combinations of steps with appropriate precision and control.

Application and action

Candidates demonstrate basic techniques through using an increasing vocabulary of movement in their chosen dance discipline/genre.

Candidates demonstrate the ability to interpret music with a sense of appropriate timing and rhythm for their chosen dance discipline/genre.

Candidates demonstrate performance with an increasing confidence and responsiveness to an audience.

Autonomy and accountability

Candidates demonstrate an awareness of their own health and safety and safe dance practice.

QCF LEVEL 2 (GRADES 4 AND 5)

Achievement at level 2 reflects the ability to build upon skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to an increasing vocabulary of movement and artistic understanding showing an increased confidence and assurance in application.

Knowledge and understanding

Candidates demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of technique, music and performance which is reflected in the ability to co-ordinate more complex movements to produce combinations of steps with increasing precision and control.

Application and action

Candidates demonstrate an increasing consolidation of technical skills in their chosen dance discipline/genre.

Candidates demonstrate an increased ability to interpret music and display sensitivity to musical content and style appropriate to the dance discipline/genre. Candidates demonstrate an increased range of movements in sequences of greater length and complexity and the ability to sustain an appropriate sense of style of the dance discipline/genre. They demonstrate confidence in performing the movement.

Autonomy and accountability

Candidates demonstrate an understanding of and responsibility for their own health and safety and safe dance practice.

QCF LEVEL 3 (GRADE 6)

Achievement at Level 3 reflects the ability to build upon a range of skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to an increasingly refined vocabulary of movement and artistic interpretation showing an increased confidence, assurance and sensitivity in application.

Knowledge and understanding

Candidates demonstrate a sound and established knowledge and understanding of the technique and music of a particular dance discipline/genre.

They demonstrate an increased awareness of performance and an increased understanding of the relationship between performer and audience.

Application and action

Candidates demonstrate a wide range of movements performed consistently and confidently with technical accuracy and control.

Candidates demonstrate an increased sensitivity to a range of musical content and style appropriate to the dance discipline/genre.

Candidates demonstrate dynamics and fluidity of movement incorporating the use of space and a maturity and individuality in interpretation and expression.

Autonomy and accountability

Candidates demonstrate a clear understanding of and responsibility for their own health and safety and safe dance practice.

QCF LEVEL DESCRIPTORS - VOCATIONAL GRADED EXAMINATIONS IN DANCE

The following descriptors explain what is required of candidates at each level of this framework for Vocational Graded Examinations in Dance. They have been agreed by all the dance awarding organisation which are members of the Council for Dance Education and Training and whose qualifications are regulated by Ofqual on the QCF, and accepted by Ofqual as meeting the overarching QCF descriptors.

This should be read positively with regard to safe dance practice, with an increasing personal responsibility on the candidate. Candidates' ability to respond in an examination situation will also be noted.

QCF LEVEL 2 (INTERMEDIATE FOUNDATION)

Achievement at Level 2 reflects the ways in which candidates will begin to make the transition from expressive and personal motivation for dance to a disciplined attitude necessary for a dance professional. Candidates will build upon skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to an increasing vocabulary of movement and artistic understanding showing increased confidence and assurance.

Knowledge and understanding

Candidates will demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of technique, music and performance within the chosen discipline/genre in relation to mood, dynamics and rhythm and the mechanics and purposes of the required vocabulary.

Candidates show a developing awareness of the professional context of dance.

Application and action

Candidates demonstrate technical accuracy through:

- the appropriate physicality, core stability and flexibility required to execute the work.
- a clear sense of line and style.
- the execution of appropriately demanding pre-set steps, movements and sequences.
- the use of appropriate technical and artistic language.

Candidates demonstrate an increased sensitivity to varying musical qualities with technical facility.

Candidates demonstrate an increased assuredness of presentation and performance through:

- the use of developing musical and artistic skills.
- improved spatial awareness.
- an ability to communicate directly with an audience.
- underpinning interpretation with reference to key aspects of the genre.
- the confidence and ability to follow directions within their chosen dance discipline/genre.

Autonomy and accountability

Candidates will demonstrate an awareness of their individual physicality in relation to safe dance practice.

Candidates will demonstrate the ability to work with others within a discipline/genre framework and to take responsibility for themselves.

QCF LEVEL 3 (INTERMEDIATE)

Achievement at Level 3 reflects the ways in which candidates make the transition from expressive and personal motivation for dance to a disciplined attitude necessary for a dance professional. Candidates build upon a range of skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to an increasingly refined vocabulary of movement and artistic interpretation showing an increased confidence, assurance and sensitivity.

In addition, an increasing understanding of professional contexts will be demonstrated and applied in performance and practice.

Knowledge and understanding

Candidates will demonstrate a sound and established knowledge and understanding of the technique and vocabulary required within the chosen dance genre. They will be able to apply a broad knowledge and understanding of their genre to their own work and demonstrate knowledge of the role of a dance professional and the need for safe and healthy working practices and the professional context for dance.

Application and action

Candidates will demonstrate consolidated technical skills through:

- The fluent use of the dance movement vocabulary.
- the acquisition of an increased range of movements in sequences of increased length and complexity.
- an ability to sustain an appropriate sense of style throughout more complex sequences.
- those additional elements of movement vocabulary and/or technique required for progression to professional work.

Candidates will demonstrate enhanced musical and artistic qualities through:

- greater understanding of mood, dynamics and rhythm.
- a sensitive personal interpretation of musical mood.

Candidates will demonstrate performance through:

- the execution of appropriately demanding pre-set steps, movements and sequences.
- expression and fluidity of movement involving dynamics and use of space.
- the confidence and ability to individually interpret directions within their chosen dance discipline/genre and use the performance skills necessary to engage an audience.

Autonomy and accountability

Candidates will demonstrate the ability to accept the feedback and direction required for professional development. They will demonstrate an awareness of own abilities and aptitudes in relation to their professional aspirations.

QCF LEVEL 4 (ADVANCED 1 AND ADVANCED 2)

Achievement at Level 4 reflects the ways in which candidates build upon a range of skills, knowledge and understanding to demonstrate the disciplined attitude necessary for a dance professional. Candidates will demonstrate an increasingly sophisticated vocabulary of movement and artistry showing confidence, assurance and professional awareness in application. In addition, a thorough understanding of professional contexts will be demonstrated and applied in performance and practice.

Knowledge and understanding

Candidates will demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of the repertoire and vocabulary of their chosen dance genre. They will demonstrate the ability to comment critically on others' work with reference to the broader context of dance provision. They will demonstrate knowledge of the world of dance and its relationship to the aspects of choreography and direction that underpin professional development as a dancer and the ability to relate this to working in professional contexts.

Application and action

Candidates will demonstrate evidence of personal style and technical mastery through:

- a wide range of movements performed with stamina and safely developed technical strength.
- the use of an extensive dance movement vocabulary.

Candidates will demonstrate assured musicality and artistry through:

- a highly developed understanding of mood, dynamics and rhythm.
- an increasingly mature interpretation of the music.

Candidates will demonstrate a performance as a coherent entity in a confident and assured manner through:

- the ability to integrate personal knowledge and experience with the repertoire required in their chosen dance discipline/genre, using this as the basis for improvisation in their work.
- subtleties of performance.
- evidence of more varied and challenging work being undertaken.
- the ability to communicate subtleties of interpretation effectively (both solo and/or ensemble).
- the ability to interpret the repertoire for their chosen dance discipline/genre with a developing sense of individuality and style.
- an adaptable, self-confident approach to performance skills.

Autonomy and accountability

Candidates will demonstrate insight into the demands and opportunities of professional production and employment, and the ability to confidently and imaginatively interpret the demands posed by different situations and to create responses that are appropriate to both audience and context.

They will be able to demonstrate accepting, reflecting on and taking responsibility for acting appropriately on feedback and take the initiative to improve their own performance.

Achievement at Level 4 reflects the ways in which candidates build upon a range of skills, knowledge and understanding to demonstrate the disciplined attitude necessary for a dance

professional. Candidates will demonstrate an increasingly sophisticated vocabulary of movement and artistry showing confidence, assurance and professional awareness in application.

QCF LEVEL DESCRIPTORS – COVERING PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

LEVEL 3 - DIPLOMA IN DANCE INSTRUCTION

SUMMARY

Level 3 Achievement at level 3 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to complete tasks and address problems that, while well defined, have a measure of complexity. It includes taking responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within limited parameters. It also reflects awareness of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work.

Knowledge and Understanding

Use factual, procedural and theoretical understanding to complete tasks and address problems that, while well defined, may be complex and non-routine Interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.

Be aware of the nature of the area of study or work.

Have awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.

Application and Action

Address problems that, while well defined, may be complex and non-routine.

Identify, select and use appropriate skills, methods and procedures.

Use appropriate investigation to inform actions.

Review how effective methods and actions have been.

Autonomy and Accountability

Take responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures, including, where relevant, responsibility for supervising or guiding others.

Exercise autonomy and judgement within limited parameters.

LEVEL 4 – DIPLOMA IN DANCE EDUCATION

SUMMARY

Achievement at level 4 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine. It includes taking responsibility for overall courses of action as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within fairly broad parameters. It also reflects understanding of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work.

Knowledge and Understanding

Use practical, theoretical or technical understanding to address problems that are well defined but complex and non routine.

Analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas Be aware of the nature and approximate scope of the area of study or work.
Have an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.

Application and Action

Address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well defined.
Identify, adapt and use appropriate methods and skills.
Initiate and use appropriate investigation to inform actions.
Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions and results.

Autonomy and Accountability

Take responsibility for courses of action, including, where relevant, responsibility for the work of others.
Exercise autonomy and judgement within broad but generally well-defined parameters.

LEVEL 6 – DIPLOMA IN DANCE PEDAGOGY

SUMMARY

Achievement at level 6 reflects the ability to refine and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to address complex problems that have limited definition. It includes taking responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that are able to underpin substantial change or development, as well as exercising broad autonomy and judgement. It also reflects an understanding of different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them.

Knowledge and Understanding

Refine and use practical, conceptual or technological understanding to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors.
Critically analyse, interpret and evaluate complex information, concepts and ideas.
Understand the context in which the area of study or work is located.
Be aware of current developments in the area of study or work.
Understand different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them.

Application and Action

Address problems that have limited definition and involve many interacting factors.
Determine, refine, adapt and use appropriate methods and skills.
Use and, where appropriate, design relevant research and development to inform actions.
Evaluate actions, methods and results and their implications.

Application and Action

Take responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that are capable of underpinning substantial changes or developments.
Initiate and lead tasks and processes, taking responsibility, where relevant, for the work and roles of others.
Exercise broad autonomy and judgement.

EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (EQF)

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is an overarching qualifications framework that links the qualifications of different countries together. It acts as a translation device to make qualifications easier to understand across different countries and systems in Europe. This will help learners and workers who are moving between countries, from job to job and from one education or training institution to another.

The aims of the EQF are to help develop a European-wide workforce that is mobile and flexible, and to aid lifelong learning.

The EQF will relate different countries' national qualifications systems to a common European reference framework. Individuals and employers will be able to use the EQF to better understand and compare the qualifications levels of different countries and different education and training systems. This will support labour market mobility both between and within countries and sectors. It will also enable a much better match between supply and demand for knowledge, skills and competence.

The EQF uses eight levels that are based on the knowledge, skills and competence required to achieve the qualification. The eight levels cover the entire span of qualifications.

Each level should be achievable through a variety of education and career paths. The focus is on learning outcomes – what a person holding or studying a particular qualification actually knows and is able to do – rather than on inputs such as the length of study.

Levels Correspondences

The work to reference the UK Frameworks to the EQF has been completed. The referencing of the levels in the UK frameworks to EQF is illustrated in the following table:

EQF Level	QCF Level	CQFW Level (Wales)	SCQF Level (Scotland)
8	8	8	12
7	7	7	11
6	6	6	10/9
5	5/4	5/4	8/7
4	3	3	6
3	2	2	5
2	1	1	4
1	E3	E3	3
	E2	E2	2
	E1	E1	1

The EQF will relate different countries' national qualifications systems to a common European reference framework. Individuals and employers will be able to use the EQF to better understand and compare the qualifications levels of different countries and different education and training systems.

The EQF will not:

- replace existing national qualifications systems or require them to be adjusted in any way
- include specific qualifications, describe specific qualifications or an individual's competence
- reference individual qualifications – the levels of a country's qualifications framework are referenced to the EQF's levels
- have any regulatory function.

Countries will not be required to sign up to the EQF – it is voluntary.