

Subject specific vocabulary

The following subject specific vocabulary provides definitions of key terms used in AQA's A-level Dance specification. Students should be familiar with and gain understanding of these terms.

Agility

The ability to move quickly with ease and efficiency.

Alignment of the body

The optimum placement of and balance between joints in order to allow the body to move with ease and efficiency, removing unnecessary muscular tension and effort.

Appreciation

The ability to understand the worth of a dance/choreography and value its qualities and importance within the context of the art form; a recognition of aesthetic values.

Artistic intention

Artistic intention includes a knowledge and awareness of the purposes, characteristics and principles of the art form and how these contribute to the structuring of individual choreographic intention.

Aural setting

The aural choices the choreographer decides upon in the creation of a work, ie music, the spoken word, sound effects, natural sound, found sound, the audible aspects of dancing, silence.

Balance

The ability to maintain equilibrium over the base of support.

Binary (in relation to sectional structures/form)

An AB sectional structure/form. Section B provides the contrast to the opening section A.

Call and response (in relation to the relationships between the dance and its aural setting)

Similar to a conversation the music or dance 'calls', the other 'responds'.

Cardiovascular endurance

The capacity to sustain continuous moderate-level exercise.

Constituent features

The elements which a choreographer selects in order to manipulate, develop and structure into a coherent whole, ie the three movement components (action, dynamic and spatial elements), dancers, aural setting and physical setting.

Critical engagement

An objective and informed enquiry into both content and context, enabling the student to develop and articulate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of dance through time and location in relation to features of a specific genre(s).

Disassociation (in relation to the relationships between the dance and its aural setting)

Dance and music are created independently of each other and when performed share only time and space.

Direct correlation (in relation to the relationships between the dance and its aural setting)

Dance and music work together, sharing the same time signature, tempo, phrasing and cadences.

Dynamics

The variations in the expenditure of energy in relation to the action/motion of the body.

Embodiment

A tangible or visible form of a dance/choreographic idea, quality or feeling.

Emphasis

The accents provided by the dancer at different moments throughout the dance. The accents may relate for example to energy, space and timing.

Episodic (in relation to sectional structures/form)

A series of sections presented by the choreographer. The sections can be self-contained but when put together will illuminate the overarching theme of the choreographed work.

Flexibility

There are different types of flexibility. For example the dancer may need to consider:

- static flexibility: the range of motion possible at a joint
- dynamic flexibility: the resistance of a joint to motion.

Focus

The intensity and direction of the dancer's eyeline, for example to a specific point in space, to a fellow performer or to the audience.

Genre

A broad classification of a dance type, for example Ballet, Modern dance, Jazz dance.

Holistic (in relation to the study of dance)

The parts of study (ie performance and choreography/practical and theory) which will only be understood by reference to the whole.

Kinaesthetic awareness

A developed perception of bodily movement by the dancer.

Enhancement of mood and atmosphere (in relation to the relationships between the dance and its aural setting)

This relationship aids in the communication of theme. The dancers may not be using the musical rhythm or phrasing but the aural setting is helping to evoke the mood and/or atmosphere.

Muscular endurance

The ability to produce force against a particular resistance repeatedly.

Music visualisation (in relation to the relationships between the dance and its aural setting)

Dance which aims to clarify the music, using the structure and content as its base. The dance follows the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic lines in the music.

Musicality

An interpretation of the music's structure, rhythm, mood and meaning by the dancer in performance.

Mutual coexistence (in relation to the relationships between the dance and its aural setting)

Dance and music are created independently of each other but may share the same tempo, theme or directive.

Narrative (in relation to the relationships between the dance and its aural setting)

The music and dance express an idea or tell a story.

Narrative (in relation to sectional structures/form)

A sequential structure/form which allows the story to unfold.

Neuromuscular coordination

The synchronous working of muscles during complex movements.

Physical skills

The skills required by a dancer to inform technique, for example strength, flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance.

Practitioner

A person actively engaged within the art form of dance, for example a performer or choreographer.

Projection

The engagement of dancer's whole self in the communication of the dance idea; a considered use of energy to attribute perceivable qualities to the movement content.

Rondo (in relation to sectional structures/form)

An ABACADA structure/form. The repetition of 'A' provides the recurring theme whilst the other sections provide the variety and contrast.

Strength

The maximum force generated by a muscle against resistance in a single effort.

Safe practice

A full understanding and awareness of procedures which need to be implemented in relation to the development of skills either in a class, rehearsal or performance environment.

Style

A word used in dance which has a variety of meanings, including:

- movement style: the specific choices and manipulation of the three movement components by a choreographer which when put together become a recurring and major element of the choreographic output
- choreographic style: the consistent choices a choreographer makes in relation to all elements of choreography, for example subject matter and its treatment, use of choreographic devices, structuring, dancers, aural setting and physical setting.

Subject matter

The theme(s), narrative and/or dance ideas associated with a specific piece of choreography.

Technical skills

The skills acquired by the dancer in training in order to present clear and precise movement in performance, utilising an awareness of control, alignment and physical articulation in relation to a specific genre and/or style.

Ternary (in relation to sectional structures/form)

An ABA structure/form which develops on from Binary by providing a return to and reiteration of the opening statement. This is thus cyclic in nature.

Theme and variation (in relation to sectional structures/form)

An A, A1, A2, A3, etc. structure/form. A theme is stated at the outset of the dance and the subsequent sections are all variations of this theme. The initial theme is not necessarily re-stated in its original form.