
A-LEVEL DANCE

7237/W Component 2 – Critical Engagement
Report on the Examination

7237
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General

As in previous years, the paper involved both short answer and extended response questions. On the whole 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. It is possible that the information pre-released to centres re the specific dances of the compulsory set work *Rooster* helped to reduce the number of questions not attempted. However, a small number of students seemed to confuse the dances even though the dance was named and numbered in each of the first four questions.

Generally the length of the responses to the short answer questions was appropriate in relation to the marks available. However, it is important that students are reminded that the overall total for the short answer questions is 25 marks whereas 25 marks are available for each of the three extended response questions.

As in previous years, some students located different parts of their responses in different parts of the script. However, they usually indicated fairly clearly where these continuations of response could be found, which was very helpful for the examiners.

It is still a concern that in a number of scripts the handwriting was very difficult to read. Students should be aware that this could seriously affect the communication of the content.

Section A – Short answer questions

Question 01 – 4 marks

This question used the command word 'describe' and required two movement examples showing the theme of rejection from the fourth dance *As Tears Go By*. Many students gave detailed descriptions, gaining the full four marks. However, sometimes time was lost providing additional detail in the descriptions which did not relate to the theme of rejection. The less successful responses showed limited detail and/or inaccuracy in the content.

Question 02 – 5 marks

This question required explanation of how the character of Lady Jane was reflected in the choreography of the second dance *Lady Jane*. The responses to this question showed different approaches and the indicative content in the mark scheme allowed for flexibility. Some students focused on the features of her character while others viewed the character through her interaction with/manipulation by the male dancer(s). The more successful responses connected the features identified to relevant examples from the choreography. The less successful responses identified a couple of features but showed limited reference to the choreography and some inaccuracy in knowledge.

Question 03 – 5 marks

This question focused on explanation of how the choreographic use of dancers in the fifth dance *Paint It Black* reflected their identity as a group. Different approaches to this question were seen in the responses. Some students focused on the features of the identity as a group shown by the

female dancers linked mainly to the use of unison. Others focused on the role of the female dancers and features of this role linked to their interaction with the male dancer. The less successful responses showed a lack of detail in the supporting evidence and/or a focus on the male dancer rather than the female dancers.

Question 04 – 5 marks

This question required explanation of how the movement content of the male dancer in the seventh dance *Play With Fire* communicated features of his personality. Many students seemed to have a clear knowledge of this section of the set work. The more successful responses recognised the need to refer to movement content and provided clear examples to reflect the features of the male dancer's personality. The less successful responses were able to identify some features but reference to movement content lacked detail and/or accuracy. The connection between the feature and the evidence was sometimes unclear.

Question 05 – 6 marks

This short answer question involved both AO3 and AO4 marks indicated by the command word 'discuss'. It focused on the choreographic structure of *Rooster* and the choreographic structure of one other work by Christopher Bruce with reference to the similarities and/or differences between the two choreographic structures. Generally the discussion regarding *Rooster* showed knowledge and understanding; however, this was less evident for the other work chosen. The more successful responses made accurate reference to the structures of both works and provided details which showed insight into the similarities and differences. The less successful responses showed some reference to *Rooster* regarding its episodic structure and the sectional link to the songs. There was limited reference to structural features of the second work with the focus on themes.

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 demonstrated:

- 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 how the use of the physical setting enhanced the choreography of the Rambert Dance Company (formerly Ballet Rambert) during the period 1966 to 2002. This required identification and details of features of the physical setting and analysis of the use of these features in the repertoire of the company in order to evaluate the enhancement of the choreography. The features could relate to designers, costume, properties, set, lighting, performance environment and film.

Some students spent a considerable amount of time writing about the origins and early development of the company in the first few paragraphs of their responses. Whilst an introductory paragraph showing relevance to the focus of the question would be appropriate, the amount of time available in the examination should be spent answering the question rather than spending too much time writing about what is known of the company's background.

The more successful responses recognised the focus of the question and showed a clear knowledge and understanding of the different features of the physical setting used in the repertoire of the company. There was detailed evidence of analysis with supporting examples from dance works to show the use of the features in the choreography. Perceptive judgements were made based on the available evidence.

The less successful responses focused on identification of some works and description of some features of their physical settings. There was often inaccuracy in the content. General statements were made and there was limited reference to the use of the features in the choreography.

Questions 7, 9, 11 and 13

These questions required discussion of how features of the relationship between two specified characters were conveyed through the choreography of the set work from the chosen option. Identification and details of the features of the relationship were needed, as well as clear examples from the choreography of the set work to reflect these features.

The more successful responses provided details of a number of features, supported by reference to appropriate parts or sections of the set work. Clear examples from the choreography were provided, with appropriate interpretations linked to the features.

The less successful responses identified some features of the relationship with no detail given. There was limited evidence or examples from the choreography and interpretations did not always show a clear connection to the features. There was often some inaccuracy in the content. The following points were also apparent regarding the different set works:

- *Giselle*: a tendency to tell the story rather than focus on the relationship of the two characters
- *Appalachian Spring*: general statements about the choreography of the Followers and no clear examples
- *Singin' in the Rain*: a loss of focus on the question with irrelevant information about Gene Kelly the choreographer rather than Don Lockwood the character
- *Sutra*: a loss of focus on the question with irrelevant information about Cherkaoui's mental state and general themes of the work.

Questions 8, 10, 12 and 14

These questions required examination of the factors that contributed to the development of the area of study from the chosen option. Details of the factors and their connections to the area of study were needed in order to investigate and evaluate their contribution. The factors could relate to choreographers, composers, designers, dancers, subject matter, political, historical, social, economic and cultural aspects.

The more successful responses recognised the focus of the question. Factors were identified and clear details were provided, with supporting evidence. Connections were made between the factors and the evidence, which informed the evaluation of the contribution of the factors to the development of the area of study.

The less successful responses did not maintain focus on the question and used general statements about the practitioners they had studied and their works. This meant that there was often limited reference to specific factors and therefore little reference to the contribution of the factors to the development of the area of study.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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