



GENERAL COMMENTS

As in previous years, the 2006 examination questions were based on the key knowledge and skills specified for each of the examinable outcomes. Students were required to demonstrate their understanding of dance as a medium of expression and specific theoretical aspects of dance studies. Teachers and students should note that a new study design has been implemented in 2007. Exam specifications and advice for the Dance exam 2007–2010 and sample examination questions can be accessed at on the Exams and Assessment Reports page of the VCAA website <www.vcaa.vic.edu.au>.

The 2006 paper had five questions. All questions were compulsory and students could not attain high marks if they did not answer all parts of each question. Students who gained high marks in all questions demonstrated consistent and accurate use of appropriate terminology as well as detailed knowledge and understanding of the key knowledge and skills relevant to each question.

The marks awarded for each question are indicated on the examination paper at the end of the question. Students should use this information to plan the length and/or amount of detail required for each response. For example, a maximum of three marks was awarded for Question 1a.; therefore, only a short response was required. On the other hand, a maximum of 12 marks was available for Question 4b., which therefore required a more extended response.

Students should read each question carefully to ensure they understand what is being asked. They should identify the key words and phrases, and ensure that they cover all aspects of the question in their response.

Questions 4 and 5 related to dance works selected from the Prescribed List of Dance Works published annually in the VCAA Bulletin. Responses indicated that the students had studied appropriate works selected from the current prescribed list. Please note that the prescribed list has changed for 2007.

Some students were not familiar with the dance terminology used in the *Dance VCE Study Design*. It is essential that students become familiar with relevant terms early in the year and use them consistently in all written tasks, including the end-of-year examination. Note that the 2007–2010 study design has a glossary which includes explanations of relevant terminology.

Students who did not gain high marks for this examination generally provided insufficient detail, displayed a limited understanding of the concept involved, and/or showed limited knowledge of appropriate dance terminology. Diagrams were awarded marks only if they provided information that was additional to written responses.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Note: Student responses reproduced herein have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

Question 1

This question tested students' understanding of the dance-making processes involved in the learnt group dance work in Unit 3.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	5	9	24	62	2.5

Responses that gained high marks succinctly described three considerations relevant to the safe use of physical skills, body actions and/or qualities of movement.

Appropriate considerations included any of the following:

- safe environment, including suitable floor, clear space and ventilation
- safe use of physical skills, body actions and/or qualities of movement within the learning process
- use of safe dance techniques in the execution of all body actions; for example, spotting when turning, sequential bending through the joints of the body when falling, correct preparations and landings when elevating, etc.

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- use of safe dance practice in the development of physical skills such as warm up/warm down, safe stretching techniques with reference to specific muscle groups, and injury prevention through use of correct or appropriate dance technique
- use of safe dance attire, including appropriate choice of shoes and/or clothing
- understanding of anatomy in regard to movement possibility of joints and muscles
- understanding the use of first aid in the occurrence of an injury
- maintaining appropriate hydration levels.

The following response, which addressed three of these considerations, achieved a high mark.

Our group dance in Unit 3 required the physical skills of strength and flexibility shown through high extensions of the legs. It was important to consider one's spatial placement in relation to others in the room to ensure safety when learning the dance. We were also required to execute large elevated jumps. The dancers had to ensure correct take off and landing was executed as a safety precaution. Prior to learning the movements involved in the dance a warm up of the appropriate muscles was undertaken to prepare muscles for the demands of the choreography.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	15	8	25	13	39	2.6

Responses that gained high marks described ways that any **two** of the considerations stated in part a. of the question were incorporated in dance-making processes to ensure safe dance practice when learning the group dance work.

Two of the considerations stated in part a. had to be expanded into a short discussion by referring to accurate details and examples during the learning process of the dance.

The following is an excerpt from a response that achieved a high mark. This excerpt focuses on one consideration; the complete answer discussed **two** considerations.

Consideration: Warm Up

Before learning the group dance work we made sure our muscles were thoroughly warmed up. Our warm up involved gentle static stretching, swinging of both the left and right sides of the body, and some cardio work to increase the heart rate, blood flow and to transport oxygenated blood to the muscles. This ensured the major muscles of the body were appropriately warmed up to perform movements such as high elevations and flexible movements such as the splits.

Question 2

This question tested students' understanding of the dance-making processes associated with the solo dance work created in Unit 3 (the Technique Solo).

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	24	6	18	9	43	2.4

Responses that gained high marks described the body actions used in two contrasting phrases from the solo dance work the student had composed in Unit 3 (the Technique Solo).

The *Dance VCE Study Design* defines body actions as gesture, locomotion, elevation, falling, turning and stillness; better responses used these terms appropriately. The question required a description of specific body actions used in the selected phrase. Weaker responses consisted of generalised descriptions or lists; for example, 'My phrase used locomotion, turning and stillness.'

Better answers contained a detailed description for each phrase selected such as, 'My technique solo contained a movement phrase in which I elevated in the form of a split jump, followed by a series of triplets to demonstrate locomotion.'

Question 2b.

Movement phrase 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	11	9	15	18	18	15	16	3.3

Movement phrase 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	16	8	15	18	17	12	14	3.1

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Responses that gained high marks discussed the variations of the elements of movement (time, space, energy) related to the description of body actions described in the two contrasting phrases identified in part a. of the question.

A maximum of six marks was awarded for each phrase addressing time (two marks), space (two marks) and energy (two marks). Marks were only awarded when appropriate terminology was used accurately.

The following is an excerpt from a response that achieved a high mark:

In one phrase in my dance elevation (a split jump) was followed by locomotion (series of triplets). The tempo of the elevation and locomotion used in this phrase were fast to demonstrate the criteria of coordination and stamina. I also accented my triplets on the first beat of the bar to demonstrate an even rhythm. The elevation which was angular in body shape demonstrated strength and flexibility as my legs were in split position. The triplets travelled in a diagonal direction using a high level and large personal dimension. The movements were sustained in energy quality showing a light force and free flow.

Question 3

The three parts of this question tested students' understanding of the expressive use of spatial organisation and dance-making processes involved in their own composition of a solo dance work in Unit 4.

Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	6	5	5	85	2.7

Responses that gained high marks gave a succinct description of the expressive intention with clear references to the beginning, development(s) and resolution sections of the dance.

Considering the number of marks allocated to the question, some students gave too much information in their responses.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Average
%	5	10	13	16	18	13	11	5	2	7	4.0

Responses that gained high marks discussed how the student had arranged movement phrases in the process of composing their Unit 4 solo dance work to communicate the expressive intention stated in part a. of the question.

Marks were awarded for any identified processes the student had used that related to arranging movement phrases to convey the stated expressive intention throughout the parts (sections) of the unified composition during the composing process. Additional marks were awarded for further discussion of these processes. For example, having settled upon the expressive intention in part a., students could refer to:

- how the selected music was analysed for suitable use of phrases to convey the stated expressive intention throughout the parts (sections) of the unified composition
- how the selected movements phrases were organised or arranged into sections to convey the stated expressive intention throughout the parts (sections) of the unified composition
- how spatial organisation was used within various movement phrases to convey the stated expressive intention throughout the parts (sections) of the unified composition
- how movement motifs and/or phrases were manipulated through the use of various choreographic devices (for example, adding, subtracting, rearranging, etc.) to convey the stated expressive intention throughout the parts (sections) of the unified composition.

Question 4

Work chosen	0	1	2	3	4
%	1	2	6	56	35

This question tested students' understanding of the expressive use of phrases and sections in solo dance works choreographed between 1900 and 1969.

Responses to parts a. and b. of this question needed to address the same works to achieve maximum marks.

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Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	3	1	4	4	21	15	22	11	19	5.5

Responses that gained high marks identified two sections within **one** selected prescribed work by describing where they occur in the dance work, and analysed each section in terms of the relationship between the expressive intention and movement vocabulary.

When identifying the two sections within one selected prescribed work, students could refer to:

- where the section(s) started and finished
- where the section(s) fits in the formal or compositional structure of the dance
- the expressive intention of each section(s).

A maximum of one mark was awarded for each identified section.

Students were also asked to analyse the **two** sections in terms of the relationship between the expressive intention and movement vocabulary. Further marks were awarded for the discussion of movement vocabulary which related to the expressive intention. 'Movement vocabulary' refers to the style, physical skills, body actions and qualities of the movement.

The following is an excerpt from a response that achieved a high mark. The work discussed is *I Wanna be Ready* from Revelations.

I Wanna be Ready from Revelations is choreographed using a three part structure. The beginning section of the solo takes place on the floor where the soloist is questioning his readiness to commit to God. The movement vocabulary of this section contains a definite sense of restrained energy quality which is shown through the drawn out glides along the floor, and pressing quality while gesturing a hand up out of the ground. These movements relate to the expressive intention of the solo by communicating a sense of desperation shown through the weight behind the movement. The soloist is expressing the doubt of one man in the lead up to his baptism. The heavy glides on hands and knees, together with the struggling hand gestures off the floor, signify the intensity of his desire to be worthy in God's eyes...

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	18	4	10	10	14	8	11	5	6	3	4	1	7	4.6

Responses that gained high marks identified the choreographic devices used to arrange movement vocabulary within the two sections identified in part a. and explained how movement phrases within each section communicated the choreographer's intention.

The two movement sections discussed needed to reflect the answer given in part a. Marks were awarded for:

- identifying and providing a detailed discussion of the various choreographic devices used to arrange the movement vocabulary within each movement phrase/section, such as repetition, retrograde, rearranging, addition, subtraction, alteration of time, space and energy, use of motif and interaction with properties (for example, umbrella, lamp post, etc.)
- identifying the arrangement of movement vocabulary related to the use of various choreographic devices within each movement phrase/section.

The following is an excerpt from a response that achieved a high mark. The work discussed is *I Wanna be Ready* from Revelations.

In the beginning section of I Wanna be Ready choreographic devices have been used to arrange movement vocabulary. The phrases are developed by use of repetition. Within each phrase the body action is repeated three times which conveys the soloist self questioning and uncertainty. For example the first phrase consisted of a series of rising and falling repeated three times. The next phrase consisted of a series of crawling movements repeated three times. The final phrase showed a series of body rolls repeated three times. These movement phrases were arranged into a beginning section through the use of 'low level' which reinforced the expressive intention...

Question 5

This question tested students' understanding of cultural influences on, and the expressive use of group structures in, group dance works choreographed between 1970 and the present day.

Responses to parts a. and b. of this question needed to address different works to achieve maximum marks.

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Question 5a.

Work chosen	none	1	2	3	4
%	1	33	26	6	34

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	5	5	20	18	16	8	11	7	5	2	1	1	1	4.1

Responses that gained high marks focused on a description of the relationship between two cultural influences and the choice of movement vocabulary in one of the selected prescribed solo dance works.

The question required the identification and succinct discussion of two cultural influences relevant to the period in which the selected dance work was choreographed. A maximum of two marks were awarded for this part of the question.

A maximum of 10 marks was awarded for discussion of how each cultural influence affected the choreographer's choice of movement vocabulary in the selected work.

The following is an excerpt from a response that achieved a high mark. The work discussed is *Ghost Dances* by Christopher Bruce.

One of the predominant cultural influences on the selection of movement vocabulary was Martha Graham technique. The Graham technique incorporated curved body lines and deep lunges. (Example of identification of cultural influence)

This movement vocabulary was evident in the characterisation of the evil Ghosts who performed powerful lunges and deep bends. (Example of a link to the choreographer's choice of movement vocabulary)

Question 5b.

Work chosen	none	1	2	3	4
%	3	27	30	3	37

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	25	10	12	10	9	10	8	3	4	1	3	1	3	3.4

Responses that gained high marks discussed various ways in which groupings (symmetrical and asymmetrical) and group structures involving interactions (in unison, contrast and canon) were used to communicate the expressive intention of the choreographer in one of the prescribed group dance works.

Marks were awarded for the analysis of:

- symmetrical and asymmetrical groupings used, if linked to the expressive intention
- interactions in unison, contrast and canon used, if linked to the expressive intention.

The following is an excerpt from a response where the student achieved a high mark. The work analysed is from *Cats*.

In the beginning phrases of Cats interaction in unison and asymmetrical groupings are used as they scatter. As the cats re enter they introduce their personalities. This expressive intention is shown is conveyed by interaction in contrast and use of asymmetrical groupings to compliment their individuality. The development contrasts with this section and we see the cats calming down and starting to work together as a family. To convey this they form a symmetrical triangular shape in which the cats perform a series of movements in unison...