



## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

As in previous years the examination questions were based on the key knowledge and skills specified for each of the outcomes examinable. The questions required students to demonstrate their understanding of dance as a medium of expression and specific aspects of theoretical dance studies, that is, the analysis of solo and ensemble dance works and the dance-making process which related to the student's own solo and learnt group dance work.

In contrast to the 2003 examination paper, this examination consisted of four, rather than five, questions. This structure provided students with the opportunity to include more detail in their responses, particularly for Questions 3 and 4 which required extended responses. All questions were compulsory and students could not gain high marks if they did not answer all parts of each question.

Students who gained high marks in all questions demonstrated consistent use of correct terminology as well as detailed knowledge and understanding of the key knowledge and skills relevant to the questions.

In Outcome 1 of Unit 3 and Unit 4, students are required to study dance works selected from the Prescribed List of Dance Works published annually in the *VCE Bulletin*. Questions 3 and 4 on the 2004 examination related to the Prescribed Dance Works in Units 3 and 4. Student responses to these questions demonstrated a generally good understanding of the Key Knowledge and/or Key Skills for these outcomes.

The marks awarded on the VCAA examination paper for each question are indicated at the end of that question. Students should use this information to plan the length and/or amount of detail required for each response. For example, a maximum of two marks was awarded for Question 1a and therefore a short response was required. On the other hand, a maximum of 14 marks was awarded for Question 3a, which required a more extended response. Students undertaking VCE Dance in 2005 can also use the 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 written examinations and other material on the VCAA website, [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au), to assist in their examination preparation.

Students should read each question carefully to ensure they understand what it is asking and that their response covers all aspects of the question. This means students will be less likely to miss out on marks they might otherwise be able to attain. For example, the first question on the 2004 examination paper tests students understanding of the Key Knowledge in Unit 3 Outcomes 2 and 3 relating to safe dance practices. The question asks students to either identify a common aspect across the range of dance-making processes used for both dances, **or** to discuss an aspect of one of the dance-making processes related to the learnt group work or the technique solo in Unit 3. The question provides flexibility for the students to select the most appropriate of the dance-making processes they used in Unit 3 when responding to this question. When writing about which process posed the most risk of injury, students needed to outline an experience they went through when composing, interpreting, rehearsing or performing their dance work. Part **b** of the question required students to explain why they selected this process and to outline a management program.

Question 4 contained two parts which required students to first describe then to explain. Part **a** encouraged students to weight their description in a way that best suited the dance work they chose to write about. In part **b** of the question, students needed to explain the ways in which groupings and interactions were used expressively to convey the choreographer's intention. Part **a** provided a context in which part **b** could be answered. Both parts of the question needed to be addressed comprehensively to achieve maximum marks.

Students need to be familiar with ways of correctly using dance terminology. For example, Question 2b asked students to discuss the spatial organisation involved in their Unit 4 solo dance. Some students made reference to the front or back of the space, but did not mention key terms such as direction, level, focus and/or dimension. Question 4b asked students to discuss the use of interactions involved in Unit 4 prescribed works; that is, the ways in which dancers interact in the space, for example, in unison, contrast or canon, not the ways in which people communicate with each other.

Explanations of the terms used in the Dance Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design and other associated terms are provided on pp 15-17 of the Arts VCE Dance Implementation Resource Kit, April 2001. This kit can be downloaded from the VCAA website. It is essential that students are familiar with these terms and use them consistently in all written tasks, including the examination.

Generally, weaker responses included those which provided insufficient detail, limited understanding of the concept involved and/or limited knowledge of the use of correct terminology.

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Diagrams were awarded marks only if they provided additional information to written responses.

## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

**Note: Student responses were produced under examination conditions and have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.**

### Question 1

This question focused on students' understanding of dance-making processes involved in the learnt group dance work in Unit 3 and/or their own solo dance work in Unit 3.

#### 1a

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	21	0	79	1.6

Responses which gained high marks demonstrated clear comprehension of the question, and focused on nominating an appropriate dance-making process involved in either learning, rehearsing, interpreting or performing the learnt group dance work and/or composing, rehearsing, performing the solo dance work.

Points to note:

- some students did not organise information succinctly in either dot points or prose
- answers should have included an example of a general process, for example:

*one process which posed the most risk of injury to me was the improvisation of movement during the composing phase of the Unit 3 solo work.*

#### 1b

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	22	1	5	7	10	11	11	12	9	3	10	4.8

Responses which gained high marks demonstrated clear comprehension of the question, focusing on the dance-making process nominated in part **a**.

Points to note:

- students were not awarded full marks if the response did not link to the dance-making process nominated in part **a** of the question
- students who explained the choice and management of the injury but did not identify the dance-making process in part **a** of the question could not be awarded full marks
- some students' responses did not address both part **a** and part **b**, which lowered their overall mark.

The following is an excerpt from a response where the student achieved a high mark:

*I selected improvisation as the process which posed the most risk of injury because I felt that a dancer is more experimental with her movement during this phase. Consequently, I felt that the dancer would be more experimental when exploring the movement vocabulary and would be unaware of the physical skills they are capable of executing. For example, I spontaneously executed a hyperextension of my leg, stretching it too far back and as a result I pulled a muscle... In order to best manage this issue and prevent future injury the dancer would need to have limits and control over their movements and stay within their own range of physical capabilities. It would also be necessary to participate in an extensive warm up focusing on all muscle groups as you would be unaware of which muscles you would be using during the improvisation process.*

### Question 2

This question focused on students' understanding of the expressive use of spatial organisation and dance-making processes involved in their own solo dance work in Unit 4.

#### 2a

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	0	3	6	1	2	1	86	5.5

Responses which gained high marks provided a succinct description of the expressive intention with references to the beginning, development and resolution sections of the dance.

Points to note:

- students should avoid providing too much information considering the weighting of the question

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- marks could not be awarded for discussing the origins of the expressive intention
- some students' responses lapsed into synopsis with little or no reference to the overall structure, which lowered their total mark.

## 2b

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	9	4	8	7	11	6	6	4	7	4	33	6.0

Responses which gained high marks:

- focused on the expressive use of spatial organisation
- demonstrated a clear understanding of ways in which spatial organisation was used to create thematically related phrases in the beginning, development and resolution of the solo dance work
- made coherent links between the use of spatial organisation and the expressive intention of the solo dance work.

Points to note:

- this question required students to use appropriate dance terminology when discussing any aspect of the use of spatial organisation. For example, 'I crouched down on my knees' does not include an appropriate degree of detail, whereas, 'in the beginning section I performed a series of elevated movements using a circular direction to convey the character's happiness' uses correct dance terminology and was awarded marks.

## Question 3

This question required students to demonstrate their understanding of cultural influences on solo dance works choreographed between 1900 and 1969.

## 3a

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average
%	1	5	6	7	11	11	10	10	9	8	9	3	2	2	7	6.7

Responses which gained high marks demonstrated:

- a clear explanation of the relationship between one cultural influence and the choice of movement vocabulary in one of the selected solo dance works
- the ability to identify/describe one cultural influence relevant to the period in which the solo dance work was choreographed
- a coherent explanation of the links between the identified cultural influence and the choreographer's selection of movement vocabulary.

Points to note:

- selection of the most appropriate influence and movement vocabulary dominant in the chosen work impacted on the quality of the answer
- students were only awarded full marks for the explanation of movement vocabulary used if it was linked to the cultural influence
- full marks could not be awarded if the cultural influence was not identified.

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

*Revelations:*

*For Alvin Ailey's solo dance work 'I Wanna be Ready' from Revelations, the most dominant cultural influence is that of religion. The movement vocabulary in the solo work is influenced by Ailey's strong religious beliefs and his connection with the Baptist church throughout his life. The solo is based on the emotional journey of a man who is about to be baptised. It is Ailey's personal experience of this which is being communicated through the movement vocabulary. In the beginning section the dancer performs a series of contractions – he appears to be rising and falling back to the floor expressing Ailey's uncertainty as to his decision to commit to God. This section also explores the motif of reaching, which is symbolic of reaching to God and asking for guidance. Strong, bound energy qualities are shown through the body actions of rolling and crawling to convey his introspection and uncertainty. This is because being baptized is the equivalent to being reborn – it is a serious decision not to be taken lightly.*

## 3b

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	4	10	5	7	14	12	13	9	9	4	13	5.3

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Responses which gained high marks demonstrated:

- a comprehensive, detailed discussion of the relationship between one cultural influence and the production aspects in one of the selected solo dance works
- the identification of one cultural influence relevant to the period in which the solo dance work was choreographed
- a coherent discussion of the connection between one cultural influence and the production aspects used.

Points to note:

- selection of the most appropriate cultural influence and movement vocabulary dominant in the chosen work impacted on the quality of the answer
- marks were awarded for the discussion of production aspects if linked to the cultural influence
- production aspects mentioned in the answer may have been all or some of the generally accepted production aspects specific to the selected work
- full marks were not awarded if the cultural influence was not identified.

The following is an excerpt from a response where the student achieved a high mark. The identified influence was technology. The work discussed is *Singin' in the Rain*:

*Advances in available technology impacted on the use of various production aspects used in film making in the 1950s, especially musicals such as 'Singin' in the Rain' (1952). In relation to the use of the sound track, the innovative use of a click track made it possible for the tap beats, which were performed in the rain, to be audible. The tap beats were recorded separately then introduced in the editing phase. The set was influenced by advances in engineering. To solve the problem of the amount of water needed to create a rainy night the set demanded complex engineering to deliver the right amount of water flow through a series of pipes for both the rain and the downspout. This was also achieved with sprinklers positioned above the set. It also allowed the scene to be shot many times.*

**Comment:** Helen: Cheryl says that 'cultural influences' are understood to include the impact of technology on culture. Apparently many students responded to the question using this example, reflecting the understanding of teachers re this definition. SEE ABOVE ADDITION TO ADDRESS THIS; HC APPROVED

## Question 4

This question required students to demonstrate their understanding of the expressive use of group structures in group dance works choreographed between 1970 and the present day.

### 4a

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	1	0	0	1	4	5	7	7	9	8	58	8.6

Responses which gained high marks demonstrated a comprehensive and detailed description of the selected dance work. Students' responses may have included an outline of the expressive intention; origins of the expressive intention; the structure of the work; details of the choreographer; and/or impact of the music choice.

Points to note:

- marks were not awarded for identifying group structures in this part of the question.

### 4b

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average
%	26	7	13	6	6	7	5	6	5	3	5	2	3	1	6	4.5

Responses which gained high marks demonstrated:

- a clear and detailed explanation of ways in which groupings and interactions were used to communicate the expressive intention of the choreographer in one of the group dance works
- a coherent explanation of ways in which groupings and interactions communicated the choreographer's expressive intention.

Points to note:

- marks were awarded for the explanation of the expressive use of groupings and interactions 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 *Ghost Dances*:

*Ghost Dances used symmetrical and asymmetrical groupings, as well as interactions in unison, contrast and canon to show Bruce's expressive intention. Unison is used in the beginning section when the Ghosts are connected shoulder to shoulder and perform the slow kneeling – slide phrase, including head turns and attitude balance. This is done to show the strength the Ghosts have and the common purpose they share. Contrast is used as the Ghosts compete for dominance within the pack as they roll and perform playful movements. Canon is used to show the Ghosts unity in their mutual goal as they step after one another.....In the octet or dance of*

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*pride and defiance, symmetrical groupings are used by the dancers. For example the large circle where the dancers are all linked helps portray the intention of a defiant, strong willed community that is bonding together despite their adversity and oppression..... Asymmetrical groupings are used when the souls are transformed back to their lifeless state and once again perform their walking steps as they are pushed and pulled to their tragic fate.*