



**A-level**  
**Dance**

7237/W 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. Time management for some students seemed less effective than last year. There were also more instances of questions not attempted, mainly linked to the short answer questions. However, this could relate to the fact that there was an increase in the number of students leaving the short answer questions to the end, which could result in insufficient time to answer all five questions. A very small number of students seemed to confuse the dances within the set work *Rooster*, even though the dance was clearly named and numbered in each of the first four questions. The responses to the short answer questions covered the range of marks. It was evident that some students had not studied the set work *Rooster* in detail.

Generally, the length of the responses to the short answer questions was appropriate in relation to the marks available. As mentioned last year, 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. Therefore, the amount of time spent on the short answer questions (25% of the paper) should be considered in relation to the three extended response questions (75% of the paper).

It was more evident this year that responses to the extended response questions often began with a paragraph which was not directly relevant to the question and appeared formulaic. This reduced the amount of time available for the student to refer to relevant content.

Some students located different parts of their responses in different parts of the script. However, as last year, it was sometimes the case that students did not indicate that the response was continued elsewhere on the paper, which was not helpful for the examiners.

It continues to be 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 01.1 – 2 marks

This question required a description of the group position at the end of the second dance *Lady Jane*. Many students gave detailed descriptions, gaining the full two marks. The less successful responses showed limited detail and/or inaccuracy in the content. Some responses did not refer to the correct dance.

### Question 01.2 – 2 marks

This question required a description of the transition from the group position at the end of the second dance *Lady Jane* into the third dance *Not Fade Away*. Some students lost time repeating their description of the group position. Many students described the transition in sufficient detail to gain two marks. Some students only referred to the beginning of the transition and therefore did not include sufficient content to gain one mark. There was inaccuracy in a fairly large number of responses.

**Question 02 – 5 marks**

This question required explanation of how the choreographic use of the dancers in the first dance *Little Red Rooster* communicated the themes of this dance. The more successful responses recognised the need to focus on the choreographic use of dancers, eg number, gender, role, physique. Clear examples from the choreography were given, showing connections to relevant themes. The less successful responses focused on interpretations linked to male chauvinism and misogyny with some reference to choreography. Examples varied in detail and accuracy.

**Question 03 – 5 marks**

This question focused on explanation of how the use of costume in the sixth dance *Ruby Tuesday* enhanced the choreographic presentation. The responses usually referred to the costume of the female dancer. Responses which also referred to the costume of the male dancers sometimes showed inaccuracy. The more successful responses recognised the need to provide details of the costume and evidence from the choreography to show the use of the costume in enhancing the choreographic presentation. The less successful responses tended to focus on details of the costume, which varied in accuracy. There was reference to possible interpretations but little evidence to show the use of the costume.

**Question 04 – 5 marks**

This question required explanation of how motif and motif development were used in the final dance *Sympathy for the Devil*. The responses showed different approaches to the question. Some students focused on a number of motifs with reference to intention and some development. The motifs usually related to the rooster strut, the courtly bow, devil's horns and grooming gestures. Other responses focused on motif and motif development linked to one motif and/or reference to the repetition of movement phrases from the previous seven sections. The degree to which the response was successful depended on the detail and accuracy in the supporting evidence and clear reference to development.

**Question 05 – 6 marks**

This short answer question involved both AO3 and AO4 marks indicated by the command word 'discuss'. It focused on the aural setting of *Rooster* and the aural setting of one other work by Christopher Bruce with reference to the similarities and/or differences between the aural settings of both works. Generally, the discussion relating to the aural setting of *Rooster* showed knowledge and understanding; however, this was not always evident for the second work chosen.

The more successful responses made accurate reference to features of the aural setting of both works and provided details which showed insight into the similarities and/or differences. The less successful responses showed some reference to *Rooster* regarding the Rolling Stones, song titles and/or lyrics. There was little reference to the aural setting of the second work with the focus on themes, which resulted in a limited discussion. There was frequently inaccuracy in the content. This could suggest that sections of the work had been studied rather than the whole work.

**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 showed:

- general statements focusing on identification and description
- limited evidence of analysis and unsubstantiated interpretations
- examples which lacked detail
- 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 collaboration contributed to the development of the repertoire of the Rambert Dance Company (formerly Ballet Rambert) during the period 1966 to 2002. This required identification and details of features of collaboration and analysis of their use in order to evaluate the contribution of collaboration to the development of the repertoire.

Some students spent a considerable amount of time writing about the origins and early development of the company with little reference, if any, to collaboration. Whilst an introductory paragraph showing relevance to the question would be appropriate, sufficient time should be allowed to respond to the focus of the question. Responses to this question showed different approaches depending on the student's interpretation of collaboration. The indicative content in the mark scheme allowed for flexibility.

The more successful responses recognised the focus of the question and showed a clear knowledge and understanding of features of collaboration. There was detailed evidence of analysis with supporting examples from the repertoire to show the use of collaboration.

The less successful responses identified some genres and/or influences linked to practitioners. There was limited reference to features of collaboration and some inaccuracy in the knowledge and understanding shown. General statements were made about some works from the repertoire. These statements often referred to themes rather than collaboration.

**Questions 07, 09, 11 and 13**

These questions required analysis of the use of the set and properties (props) in the optional set works *Giselle*, *Singin' in the Rain* and *Sutra*; analysis of the set and costume in the optional set work *Appalachian Spring*. Identification and details of features of the set and properties (props) (set and costume in *Appalachian Spring*) were needed, as well as clear examples from the choreography of the chosen set work to show their use.

The more successful responses identified and gave details of features of the set and properties (costume for *Appalachian Spring*). There was analysis of their use, supported by clear examples from the choreography of the chosen set work.

The less successful responses made some reference to set and properties (costume for *Appalachian Spring*) with little detail given. Evidence of analysis was limited. There were few examples and some inaccuracy in the content. The following points were also apparent in the different set works:

- *Giselle*: a tendency to tell the story and identify some props rather than analyse their use.
- *Appalachian Spring*: general statements about the set and description of costume with little evidence of their use
- *Singin' in the Rain*: a loss of focus on the question with irrelevant information about Gene Kelly's childhood and achievements. Interpretations linked to the use of the set and/or props lacked clarity.
- *Sutra*: a loss of focus on the question with irrelevant information about Cherkaoui's mental state and general themes of the work.

**Questions 08, 10, 12 and 14**

These questions focused on discussion of the movement styles of the practitioners studied from the chosen area of study. Identification and details of features of the movement styles were needed, as well as supporting examples from the works of the practitioners. The features could relate to genre, style, technique and movement content.

The more successful responses showed a detailed knowledge and understanding of features of the movement styles of relevant practitioners. There was clear evidence of analysis. Examples from the works of the practitioners were detailed and supported the points made.

The less successful responses identified some genres linked to practitioners. Statements were general with limited reference to features of the genres. There was some inaccuracy in the knowledge and understanding shown. Evidence from the works lacked detail and often a clear connection to the movement style.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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