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# A-LEVEL DANCE

7237/W Critical Engagement  
Report on the Examination

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7237/W  
June 2023

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Version: 1.0

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## General

As in previous years, the paper involved both short answer and extended response questions. The students seemed to manage their time well and there were very few instances of questions not attempted. As last year, if a student did not attempt a question, this usually applied to one of the short answer questions. A very small number of students seemed to confuse the dances even though the dance was clearly named and numbered in each of the first five questions.

Generally, the length of the responses to the short answer questions was appropriate in relation to the marks available. 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).

Some students located different parts of their responses in different parts of the script. However, this year it was often 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 – 4 marks

This question used the command word 'describe' and required two examples of the use of the feather boa in the seventh dance *Play With Fire*. Many students gave detailed descriptions, gaining the full four marks. However, in some responses time was spent providing additional detail in the descriptions which did not relate to the use of the feather boa. Some students approached the question through reference to the significance of the feather boa and some details of its use. The less successful responses showed limited detail and/or inaccuracy in the content.

### Question 02 – 5 marks

This question required explanation of how the choreographic use of the dancers in the fourth dance *As Tears Go By* communicated the themes of this dance. The more successful responses recognised the need to focus on the choreographic use of the dancers eg number, gender, role, physique. Relevant examples from the choreography were given, showing connections to themes. The less successful responses focused on the themes of rejection and isolation with some reference to the choreography. Examples varied in detail and accuracy.

### Question 03 – 5 marks

This question focused on explanation of how motif and motif development were used in the first dance *Little Red Rooster*. Different approaches to the question were seen in the responses. Some students focused on motifs with reference to development and intention and usually referred to the

rooster strut and/or the grooming gestures. Other responses focused on motif and motif development through reference to the use of dancers and/or the aural setting. The indicative content in the mark scheme allowed for flexibility. The degree to which the response was successful depended on the detail and accuracy in the supporting evidence and clear reference to development.

#### **Question 04 – 5 marks**

This question required a comparison of the structure of the fifth dance *Paint It Black* with the structure of the sixth dance *Ruby Tuesday*. The more successful responses recognised the need to refer to the structure of each dance and provided clear evidence to support the points made. The less successful responses tended to focus on the themes of each dance. There was limited reference to structure and inaccuracy in the content. There was often an imbalance in the response with the focus on *Paint It Black*.

#### **Question 05 – 6 marks**

This short answer question involved both AO3 and AO4 marks indicated by the command word 'discuss'. It focused on the importance of the final dance *Sympathy For The Devil* within the context of the set work *Rooster*. Generally, the discussion showed knowledge and understanding of this section of the work. The more successful responses made accurate reference to features of the final dance and provided details and supporting evidence. Insight into the connections between the final dance and the context of the set work *Rooster* was shown. The less successful responses contained general statements about the repetition of movement phrases from earlier sections and focused on the general themes of the set work. There was limited discussion.

#### **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.
- 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 required discussion of the movement styles of the practitioners studied from the Rambert Dance Company (formerly Ballet Rambert) 1966-2002. Identification and details of features of the movement styles were needed, as well as supporting examples from the repertoire of the company. The features could relate to genre, style, technique and movement content.

As last year, some students spent a considerable amount of time writing about the origins and early development of the company with little reference, if any, to movement styles. 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.

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

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

### **Questions 7, 9, 11 and 13**

These questions required analysis of the use of the sources in the choreography of the set work from the chosen option. Identification and details of the sources were needed, as well as examples from the set work to show the use of the sources. The sources could relate to origins, genre, style, subject matter, structure, movement content, use of dancers, aural setting and physical setting.

The more successful responses identified and gave details of relevant sources and analysed their use. There was reference to clear evidence and/or examples from the choreography of the set work to support the analysis.

The less successful responses identified some sources. However, details of the sources and evidence of analysis were limited. There were few supporting examples and some inaccuracy in the content.

Note: Unfortunately, after the exam we found that there was an issue with the term 'sources' in questions 7, 9, 11 or 13, which may have misled some students. To make sure that no students were disadvantaged by this, we analysed all students' marks and generated an estimated mark for questions 7, 9, 11 and 13 based on students' performance on the rest of the paper. Where the estimate is higher than the actual mark achieved for questions 7, 9, 11 and 13, we have applied the estimate. No marks have gone down as a result of this process.

### **Questions 8, 10, 12 and 14**

These questions focused on discussion of the subject matter used in the choreography of the practitioners studied from the chosen area of study. Details of the subject matter were required, as well as clear examples from the works of the practitioners to show how the subject matter was communicated.

The more successful responses showed knowledge and understanding of features of the subject matter used by the practitioners. Details of the features were given and clear examples from the works of the practitioners supported the analysis.

The less successful responses made general statements about some themes. Evidence of analysis was limited and the examples often needed more clarity and/or accuracy. Some responses lost focus on the question and included irrelevant information about the works with the focus on movement styles rather than subject matter.

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

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