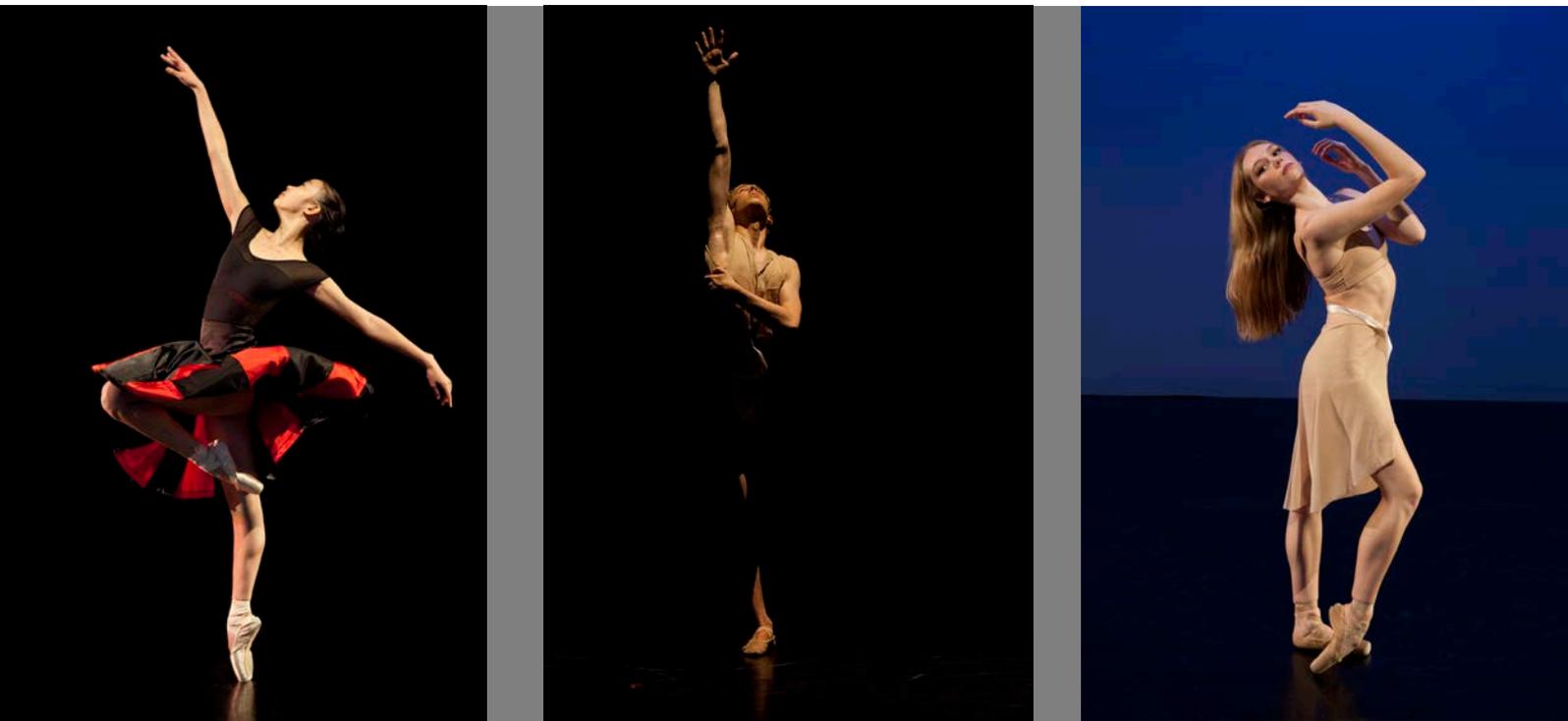


VCASS

DANCE CURRICULUM HANDBOOK



VCASS Dancers images L-R: Milei Lee, Year 10 2019 - Joshua Hunt, Year 10 2018 – Zara Bailey, Year 11 2019; photography by Belinda Strodder

Victoria's Premier School for the Training and Education of Talented
Young Dancers, Musicians, Theatre and Visual Artists

2020

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VCASS

PURPOSE & PHILOSOPHY



PURPOSE

The purpose of the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School is to provide excellence in education and training programs that prepare talented young people for performance careers in the arts industry.

PHILOSOPHY

The Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School recognises that performing artists are an essential part of any culture, as they reflect, entertain and comment upon that society in the most fundamental and significant ways. Toward that end, the school understands that vocational training must begin at an early age and stage of physiological development to facilitate adequate proficiency for a successful performing arts career.

VCASS believes that the option of pursuing a performing arts career should be available to all students with talent and potential, regardless of socio-economic circumstances. The school seeks to recognise the unique potential of each student and to develop and foster these skills towards career and post school pathways specific to each student's needs.

This training is delivered alongside a comprehensive educational program, and together they provide students with the knowledge and attributes to enable them to participate effectively in a rapidly changing and interdependent world.

VCASS

DANCE TRAINING



RATIONALE

The performing career of a dancer normally commences around the age of twenty and tapers off towards the age of forty. Therefore, they must accomplish the bulk of their professional studies during childhood and adolescence.

Such students require a strong general education and because it is important to guide and support them in ways appropriate to their age levels, it is desirable to offer such studies and support in the environment of a special school program.

Serious study of dance requires daily classes and many hours of practice. The VCA Secondary School accommodates those needs through appropriate curriculum and timetabling and a program staffed by highly skilled and experienced teachers. VCASS provides an environment in which talent is challenged by equal or greater talent, and artistic aspirations are regarded as normal.

Entry to the School is by audition and is such that suitable students can be drawn from any geographical or socio-economic background and to ensure that those involved have genuine prospects of successful employment as dancers.

Aptitude, dedication and certain physical attributes are pre-requisites for successful development throughout the course and entry into the VCA Secondary School constitutes a preliminary induction into the dance profession. Consequently, the program operates as part of a continuous process of specialised education, progressing students into tertiary qualifications and professional engagement.

GOALS

- To provide excellence in education and vocational dance training in preparation for performance careers.
- To encourage confident exploration and creativity, analysis and appreciation of the art form.
- To provide tuition and training by practitioners of excellence, in conjunction with quality academic education.
- To provide opportunities for developing performance skills through regular presentation of performance works.
- To provide a supportive, safe and purposeful environment in which students are able to balance wellbeing and training needs.
- To foster and develop the potential of individual needs and differences towards a career in the dance industry.



ARTISTIC VISION

The Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School is one of the world's foremost dance schools; our alumni are significant players in the artistic life of this country and overseas. The dance program offers a comprehensive and intensive specialist dance course that consistently provides students with entry to Classical Ballet, Contemporary Dance, Music Theatre and Academic pathways.

Our course is designed to train students to achieve excellence in the dance genre of their choice, as well as developing exceptional adaptability in the range of dance styles in the industry today. Training is provided by staff who have had professional careers in those genres to provide mentoring and modelling of training, industry expectations and culture to the students.

Our training is focused on the individual student and their unique physiology. We utilise evidence-based research to maximise the physical potential within the anatomical structure of any given physique. Principles of functional alignment underpin the aesthetic goals within each genre and in particular guide the students to achieve maximum range of control and motion with minimum strain in the body.

We understand the industry is competitive, and students develop confidence and resilience through choreography, body conditioning, dance analysis, and collaborative approaches to their work. These skills are embedded in the profession, we take pride in offering similar opportunities to our students to develop the character traits, and abilities expected of young professional artists.

Steven McTaggart, Head of Dance



VCASS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION



CLASSICAL BALLET STUDIES

RATIONALE

The development of facility in all areas of dance is engendered through a concentration upon Classical Ballet Technique. Classical Ballet has evolved over more than 300 years and is acknowledged as offering anatomically informed and aesthetic manner of training to the highest degree of dance facility. Students beginning their course at the VCASS usually have some background in Classical Ballet.

AIMS

At the completion of this course, students should demonstrate comprehensive understanding and correct execution of the framework incorporating strength, coordination, control and precision in addition to an understanding of style, presentation, artistry and musicality.

This framework leads students from a basic level of understanding and facility over the six years to the level demanded for advanced Tertiary training, or towards entry into the dance profession.

The **Years 7 - 12** progressions are documented in the following pages and include the following:

- The instigation and development of a pure classical style which is free from 'mannerisms', based upon physiological and anatomical truth and drawing upon the strengths of a variety of traditions;
- Emphasis upon the aesthetic quality of technique alongside the development of virtuosity;
- A pure technique adaptable to any choreographic demand; giving facility adaptable to any major theatrical twenty-first century dance form;
- The recognition of individual differences of physique and technical proficiency in addition to career goals and pathways, encouraging each student to reach their highest potential through inquiry and positivity in meeting challenges.

YEAR 7

The first year of training can be challenging due to the diversity of students previous experience, and their style and standards upon entering VCASS. The use of imagery, especially in the junior years, is a valuable tool to aid the understanding of the concepts of posture and alignment.

TRAINING EMPHASIS

- Posture/placing of the spine.
- The use of turnout and rotation of the leg from the hip socket without force or pronation of the ankles or knees.
- Introduction/revision of basic terminology and positions and practise of basic technique to develop an understanding of why exercises are undertaken, as well as how they are executed. Simple enchainment.
- Co-ordination of arms and head in all exercises.
- The development of musicality through practise in the recognition of different time signatures and rhythms. Collaboration with the class pianist is essential in order to assist with the students' musical understanding.
- Learning to work in a group situation; understanding of spatial awareness in relation to use of space as well as in relation to other members of the group.
- Classroom etiquette including grooming, work ethic, learning to respect, and show consideration for others in the group.
- Encouragement of a positive attitude to learning with an eagerness to accept challenge.

YEAR 7 THEORY

Dance Theory is offered as a separate class at Year 7 level only. Periodic assessment is held throughout the year and an end of year grade given. This subject is a component of Classical Ballet and is reported on as such.

CONTENT

- Positions of the Feet, Head and Arms
- Small & Large Poses
- Classical Ballet Terminology
- The Purpose of Barre Work
- The Skeleton
- The Respiratory System
- The Spine - Posture / Stance
- The Hip Joint - Turn out
- The Knee
- The Foot
- The Muscular System
- Treatment of Injuries
- Theatre Terminology and Etiquette
- Make Up

(Refer also to Theoretical Dance Studies – Page 14)



YEARS 8 & 9

Years 8 & 9 are composite classes consisting of Year 8/9 Boys and Year 8/9 Girls. Composite classes for ballet allow for the teaching of single sex classes encouraging greater focus, modeling and challenge.

TRAINING EMPHASIS

- Consolidation of Year 7.
- Greater challenge of technique and complexity of enchainment.
- A balance of strength and increased flexibility combined with core control.
- Fluidity of ports de bras with mobility of the shoulder girdle and upper back.
- Freedom and breadth of movement avoiding undue tension and strain.

DANCE PERSPECTIVES

(As included under Theoretical Dance Studies - Page 14)

YEARS 10 & 11

TRAINING EMPHASIS

- Consolidation of the previous years with increasing technical challenge and complexity of enchainment.
- Demonstrated awareness and understanding of correct posture and alignment with the ability to apply and maintain corrections intelligently when directed.
- A consistent and conscientious attitude to work with a demonstrated willingness to focus and persevere in order to meet challenges.
- The ability to identify and work towards relating appropriate movement quality to technique.
- The demonstration of improvement in levels of strength, flexibility and co-ordination with effective and efficient use of technique.
- The development of musicality. The ability to recognise time signatures and tempi and to produce the appropriate movement style.

YEAR 12

TRAINING EMPHASIS

- Consolidation of the previous years with increasing technical challenge and complexity of enchainment.
- Demonstrated awareness and understanding of the principles of posture and alignment with an ability to maintain this throughout all sections of class. The student should now endeavour to analyse posture/stance independently.
- A sense of responsibility for one's actions - self-discipline. A mature and realistic approach to work and goal setting with the ability to apply corrections and self-motivate.
- The ability to identify and demonstrate appropriate movement quality, dynamic awareness and musical phrasing during extended movement sequences.
- The demonstration of endurance (stamina), flexibility with strength to maintain extensions and total co-ordination.
- The ability to reproduce a movement sequence with speed of comprehension and correct technical detail.
- The obvious development of an individual style with a confident approach to characterisation/interpretation. The development of Performance Skills.
- The understanding, and practise, of a professional code of conduct in preparation for auditions and eventual employment.



POINTE WORK AND BOYS' COACHING

All female students and all senior boys are offered separate classes for the development of pointe work and male virtuoso technique respectively. Pointe work is assessed and reported as a section of the Classical Ballet report.

The following serves as a guide only. The Pointe work progressions are introduced at the teacher's discretion according to the physiological and technical development of the student.

POINTE WORK PROGRESSIONS – YEAR 7

Rises and releves in 1st, 2nd 4th and 5th
Echappes to 2nd and 4th in 2 and 4 beats
Releves from 2 – 1 foot
Devante, Derriere, Passé
Demi – detournes
Pas de bourrees
Devante, derriere, over, under
Poses en Avant, en arriere and de cote to coup de pied or retire positions only
Pas de bourree suivi (couuru)
Temps Lie to 2 feet only

POINTE WORK PROGRESSIONS – YEARS 8 & 9

Continue with steps from previous levels
Releves from 1 – 1 foot
In series at barre only
Pose to attitude or arabesque
Assembles
Battement Glisses Releves (at barre)
Sissonnes Fermes Releves (at barre)
Over, Under, En Avant, En arriere
Pas de bourrees piques
Assemble soutenue en tournant
Emboitees
Petit soutenue en diagonal
Pose pirouette en dedans
Single pirouettes en dehors and en dedans. Progress to doubles
Temps Lie to 45 degrees finished on 2 feet
Single pirouette to open positions
Single pirouettes in attitude and arabesque
Emboitees releves en tournant
Chainees
Pirouettes from 5th to 5th in series
Pose pirouettes en dehors
Introduce fouette ronds de jambe en tournant
Temps Lie to 45 degrees finishing in demi plie



POINTE WORK PROGRESSIONS – YEARS 10 & 11

Continue with steps from previous levels
Double pirouettes en dehors and en dedans to 4th and 5th positions.
Sissonnes Fermes over and under
Sautes en pointe on 2 feet (initially at barre)
Temps leve on 1 foot (at barre only)
Relevés en tournant in attitude and arabesque
Temps lie to 90 degrees
Sissonnes ferme relevés en avant and en arriere
Renversés
Rotation developpe
Doubles pirouettes en dedans in attitude and arabesque
Single pirouettes en dehors in attitude and arabesque
Double pirouettes to open positions
Pirouettes en manège
Petit pas de basque en tournant
Fouettes ronds de jambe en tournant (16)

POINTE WORK PROGRESSIONS – YEAR 12

Continue with steps from previous levels
Grands fouettes relevés eventually in series
Doubles pirouettes en dedans in 2nd
Doubles pirouettes en dehors in attitude
Combinations of pirouettes en diagonal and en manège
Fouettes ronds de jambs en tournant (32) Sautes en pointe on 2 and 1 foot e.g. with ballonne or ronds de jambe
Series of ballonne with releve 1 to 1 foot.
Relevés in arabesque traveling en arriere and en avant
Adage enchainment to encourage control



PAS DE DEUX

YEARS 11 & 12

(Note: Year 10 Students may participate at the discretion of the Head of Dance)

RATIONALE

Only at the highest technical level is it possible to approach the difficulties of Classical Pas de Deux. At this stage of their development, students use the skills developed over many years of training to begin a new aspect of ballet training.

AIMS

- To develop the ability to coordinate and work in unison with a partner
- To develop skills in partnering with emphasis on balance and counter balance
- To develop the strength necessary for lifting and support work
- To develop the dynamics necessary in partnering to establish relationships with a partner in an abstract or dramatic context

CONTENT

- Basic classical vocabulary exercises
- Promenades
- Lifting techniques
- Supported adage and pirouettes
- Repertoire from the Romantic and Classical eras for example, Ivanov, Petipa, Boumouville, Fokine, through to the works of 20th and 21st century choreographers

At year 10 level, only those male students with appropriate development of the musculature participate in Pas de Deux (others may be offered coaching classes). It is generally expected that all year 11 & 12 male students will participate in Pas de Deux.

At year 10 level, only those female students with the appropriate development of advanced technical skills required for this discipline will be invited to participate. Year 10 female students will generally participate in two pointe technique classes.

The majority of year 11 & 12 female students are expected to participate in Pas de Deux classes. However, those students without the appropriate technical skill development, students newly arrived in the course, or students recovering from injury or illness will be advised to participate in pointe class until the appropriate time.

Pas de Deux is not formally examined. It is reported as a component of Classical Ballet.



CLASSICAL BALLET REPERTOIRE SOLO AND GROUP

Years 10 - 12

RATIONALE

To enable students to develop the work of a variety of choreographers, acquiring knowledge of the traditions of Classical Ballet

AIMS

For students to develop technical and interpretive skills, stamina and confidence associated with the performance of solo variations and group works.

CONTENT

- Solo and group repertoire from the Romantic and Classical eras through to the works of 20th and 21st century choreographers
- Interpretation of role
- Musicality
- Projection of appropriate style
- Performance skills
- Technical skills



THEORETICAL DANCE STUDIES

CLASSICAL BALLET THEORY

YEAR 7

(Formal Classes)

YEARS 8 - 12

(As a component of Classical Ballet Class)

RATIONALE

To complement physical training, Classical Ballet must be understood intellectually in order to obtain results in classical training. The analysis of the execution and purpose of exercises helps students to perform with understanding of the genesis and development of their art form.

AIMS

- To instruct students in the theoretical analysis of the steps they execute and to provide a solid foundation of logic upon which to base their training.
- To familiarise students with the purpose and meaning of the terminology used in Classical Ballet.

CONTENT

- Basic Classical Terminology
- Deportment/stance/posture
- Basic anatomical information
- Care and prevention of injury
- Causes and Correction of faults
- Analysis of Barre, Centre Practice, Adage, Pirouettes, Allegro, Pointe (Girls)
- History of Ballet through to present day



DANCE PERSPECTIVES

YEARS 7 - 12

(Taught formally to years 10, 11 & 12 only as part of VCE)

RATIONALE

It is essential for students to develop a personal view of dance in both a local and world context.

AIMS

- To develop and expand understanding and critical awareness of dance in the students' own lives and culture through discussion.
- Attending and appreciating dance performances; and critically analysing the process of dance creation.
- To appreciate stylistic differences and the close reciprocal influences of dance, music, art & theatre throughout history.

CONTENT

- A written record or log of work undertaken by the students in subject areas specified by the teacher as appropriate to each year level.
Various written assignments are submitted, covering theories of training, anatomy, history of dance, performance reviews and self-reflections, dance analysis, art and culture.



CONTEMPORARY DANCE

RATIONALE

Contemporary dance practice upholds the view that dance is an art form through which we realise the body's potential as an instrument of expression. Contemporary classes reflect the approach of current practice in dance, and incorporate many contemporary dance techniques in order to develop dancers as versatile and highly technical performers that can adapt to the demands of varied choreographic styles. Classes develop a broad range of physical skills required of professional dancers but also the creative abilities, vocabulary and knowledge to analyse and discuss dance.

The students develop and challenge their physical skills and abilities through preparatory and developmental exercises in relation to current contemporary dance techniques, drawing on exercises derived from Cunningham and Limon techniques and the teachers' individual styles, with a focus on release and momentum. The students develop their creative practice, personal movement vocabulary, and application of choreographic and analytical principles through improvisation, composition and performances. The students discuss and learn about the craft of dance in the studio and in the later years through the VCE Dance Course. Students consider influences on the intention, movement vocabulary and form of their own and others' dances across a range of styles and traditions. Students make their own work, as well as rehearsing and performing learnt works to study ways in which ideas are communicated choreographically using different dance-making processes.

AIMS

Upon completing this course students should be able to demonstrate high level skills including balance, alignment, coordination, control, strength, stamina, flexibility and transference of weight, as well as attention to detail, musicality, a sense of artistry and performance qualities.

Students will have developed an understanding of differences in their individual physiques and begun to work toward professional levels of skill and vocabulary of movement. The emphasis is on an articulate and released technique adaptable to choreographic demands of current theatrical dance forms.

In composition, the students are encouraged to develop their individual movement vocabulary and to explore compositional tools and processes in response to their own or given brief. Students will develop the ability to improvise, to acquire and develop given material through structured choreographic tasks, rehearsal and performance processes. In later years, they will create solo and groups works on themselves and others.

Progression through this course develops a physically versatile and dynamic contemporary dancer, one who is equipped with essential experience in composition and performance, and who is prepared for entry into vocational tertiary courses or the profession.



YEAR 7

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course serves as an introduction to the theory and practice of Contemporary Dance as students come to this course with a diverse range of experiences. The groundwork for this study is kinetic studies, essential core strength, flexibility, coordination, control and alignment work, improvisation and imagery as well as the basic technical skills required of contemporary dance techniques.

CONTACT

The class is offered once per week and is a coeducational class of one-hour duration.

CONTENT - TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Progressive development of core and overall strength and control.
- Flexibility and mobility of the spine and limbs.
- Spinal alignment and posture.
- Kinaesthetic awareness and coordination.
- Use of parallel and turned out leg alignment.
- Introduction to the vocabulary of contemporary dance.
- Introduction to the elements of movement – space, time and energy.
- Introduction and manipulation of movement qualities.
- Development of musicality through various rhythmic patterns and phrasing.
- Introduction to the concepts of composition – improvisation and manipulation of movement.
- Learning to create and work in-group situations.
- Developing studio etiquette, punctuality, grooming, and respect for others.
- Learning to receive, respond to and maintain feedback.
- Creative mobilisation of the body based on improvisational tasks directed toward discovery of movement possibilities – time, space, energy, relationships and movement imagery.



CLASS CONTENT RECOMMENDED FOR THIS YEAR LEVEL:

- Standing in parallel with spinal alignment.
- Spinal rolls, arches, tilts, twists.
- Upper body curves, lower back curves.
- Introduction to floor work – prone rolls, seated rolls.
- Locomotion actions that change levels using leaning, falling, and sliding actions.
- Locomotion and weight bearing actions at floor level on at least three body parts e.g. selected from the hands, forearms, shins.
- Triplets, forwards, backwards and sideways with simple body and arm actions.
- Jumps with inverted body shapes and swinging actions, and simple changes of level.
- Basic terminology.
- Demonstration of development of basic principles of body awareness, skeletal alignment and mechanical efficiency in moving.
- Demonstration of development of flexibility and release in actions and stretching poses.
- Demonstration of development of use of weight and swing qualities in different body parts.
- Demonstration of development of an understanding of the body as a creative instrument through improvisational tasks.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for this subject is formative throughout the year with feedback from staff at each class and progress and semester reports twice each year.

The assessment process culminates with a graded examination of contemporary dance techniques in an open class situation, in front of a panel of internal and external dance experts.



YEAR 8

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course builds on the essential contemporary dance skills of Year 7 with an emphasis on developing the use of weight and dynamic qualities in body actions and exploring more transitions that are complex between shifts of weight and levels, and more challenging floor work. Combined actions of the spine are introduced, and locomotion using fall and recovery. Essential components of the course will include the demonstration of alignment in relation to safe dance practice, maximum range of motion, and the development of strength and flexibility, particularly in the spine and upper body. Vocabulary expands to include greater complexity of body actions in relation to varied dynamic qualities and the use of weight, swing and momentum.

The students build group communication, learning skills and creative processes such as improvisation, selection, arrangement refinement and evaluation by working on given tasks to create performance works. Students begin to examine various stimuli for dance making and engage in basic analysis of their own dance works

CONTACT

The class is offered once per week and is a coeducational class of one-hour duration.

CONTENT - CLASS CONTENT RECOMMENDED FOR THIS YEAR LEVEL:

- Consolidation and extension of the vocabulary of contemporary dance from Year 7.
- Development of the execution and manipulation of a variety of movement qualities within phrases and actions.
- Development of musicality through various rhythmic patterns and phrasing.
- Use of alignment and momentum in transitions between actions and levels.
- Increased strength and flexibility in spinal and whole body actions.
- Floor level locomotion and weight bearing actions on at least two body parts e.g. selected from the hands, forearms, shins.
- Execution of phrases using multiple levels and/or directions and more complex transitions of weight at standing level.
- Development of student's improvisational and compositional skills to develop dance works on themselves and others.
- Familiarity with basic manipulation of movement, motif and development.
- The students will be prepared for the more detailed movement instigations and isolations of year 9.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for Year 8 contemporary dance is formative throughout the year with feedback from staff at each class and progress and semester reports. The assessment process culminates with a graded examination of contemporary dance techniques in an open class situation, in front of a panel of internal and external dance experts.



YEAR 9

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course delves into more detailed use of the body, looking at various instigations for movement and more complex isolations and sequential actions in movement phrases. The developing physiques of the students at this age require more consideration in the delivery of class material, while at the same time the students are expected to venture into more challenging concepts in creative tasks. Essential components of the course will include; the efficient use and understanding of alignment; release and momentum in shifts of weight; the development of a balance between strength and flexibility. Vocabulary expands to include greater complexity of body actions with varied energy, time qualities and spatial elements, including more complex transfers of weight and dynamic transitions between levels. The student utilise group communication, learning skills, and creative processes such as improvisation, selection, arrangement refinement and evaluation, to work on given and self-generated tasks in the creation of dance works. Students begin to examine various stimuli for dance making and engage in analysis of dance works and choreographic processes.

CONTACT

The class is offered once per week and is a coeducational class of one and a quarter hours duration.

CONTENT - CLASS CONTENT RECOMMENDED FOR THIS YEAR LEVEL:

- Consolidation of year 8 material.
- Instigation of movement from a variety of body parts, e.g. hip, elbow, head etc.
- Focus on control and isolation of body parts.
- Ease in and out of floor-level actions and dynamic transitions to/ from floor.
- Locomotion and weight bearing actions at floor level, to and from one or two body parts.
- Increased mobility and range of motion in the spine and upper body actions.
- Execution of phrases involving various transfers of weight with off balance and large dimension spine work (combined spinal elements).
- Articulation of varied dynamic qualities within movement phrases.
- Strength and speed in changing directions and in elevations.
- Use of increased flexibility in limbs with established strength and control.
- Creating and performing extended improvisational tasks.
- Identifying and analysing elements of composition, such as motifs, phrases, sections.
- Preparation for VCE units 1 and 2 in Year 10 through developing vocabulary to describe dance.



YEAR 10 – VCE DANCE UNITS 1 & 2

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The year 10 contemporary dance course introduces students to advanced technical and physical dance skills, extending their vocabulary to include virtuosic actions and demanding elevation sequences. Essential components of the course include the demonstration of sequential movement patterns and transference and counter balance of weight through many body parts. The class vocabulary increases the demands on the students' flexibility, stamina and strength in complex actions and phrases. Students are challenged in the execution of floor-work and exposed to various movement styles and aesthetics of contemporary dance. Students will also begin to further develop contemporary partner work and techniques such as Improvisation.

Through the VCE Dance Course Units 1 and 2, which incorporates dance technique, composition and analysis, the students will undertake various tasks and one theory class (Dance Perspectives). The students undertake both written research and choreographic tasks, and develop their skills and knowledge of creating, rehearsing and performing dance through a variety of tasks. They develop their knowledge of dance making including the processes of improvising, selecting, manipulating/arranging, refining and evaluating dance (ISARE) to create performance works that are both self and peer-assessed and which count toward assessment for VCE Dance units 1 and 2. They also examine the influences on their own choreography as well as those on a range of professional choreographers, both current and historical.

Further information is available on VCAA website:-

<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/Pages/vce-study-designs.aspx>

CONTACT

The practical classes are offered three times per week, and are co-educational classes: two classes of one and a half hours duration, and one class of an hour and a quarter, with an additional theory session.

CONTENT - CLASS CONTENT RECOMMENDED FOR THIS YEAR LEVEL:

- Ease with moving in and out of virtuosic floor-level actions.
- Strength and ease in changing levels at speed.
- Increased mobility, strength, isolation and range of motion in the spine and upper body actions standing and travelling.
- Execution of phrases involving more complex transfers of weight and virtuosic actions.
- Established use of varied dynamic qualities within movement phrases.
- Locomotion and weight bearing actions to and from one or two body parts.
- Use of increased flexibility in limbs with established strength and control.
- Challenging and extended elevation sequences with complex level and direction changes.
- Creating and performing extended improvisational tasks.



- Identifying and analysing elements of composition.
- Manipulating motifs and other choreographic devices in own choreography.
- Utilising group structures in duos and trios of own choreography.
- Identifying and analysing the use of choreographic processes (ISARE) in own and others works.
- Discussing influences on a range of professional work.
- Ease with, and accurate use of VCE dance terminology.
- Completion of written and composition tasks for VCE Units 1 and 2 .

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for Year 10 contemporary dance technique has both summative and formative processes throughout the year with feedback from staff at each class and progress and semester reports twice yearly. The assessment process culminates with a graded examination of contemporary dance technique in an open class situation, in front of a panel of internal and external dance experts.

VCE Dance Units 1 and 2 are assessed through written tests, presentations and practical assignments that reflect the increased demands on applied knowledge, skills and comprehension of dance making and dance analysis.



YEAR 11 VCE DANCE UNITS 3 AND 4

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The year 11 contemporary dance course develops students' execution of advanced technical and physical skills through longer more demanding sequences, virtuosic actions and partner work. Essential components of the course include the demonstration of complex movement patterns and fast, dynamic transference of weight through the body, contact improvisation and partnering skills. The class vocabulary increases demands on the students' flexibility, stamina and strength through the performance of detailed actions and phrases. The students are challenged in the execution of floor-work at speed and exposed to various movement styles and aesthetics in contemporary dance. Year 11 contemporary dance curriculum introduces acrobatic-dance skills, upper body strength and flexibility, release-work, techniques of fall and recovery, and dexterity and skill in various manipulating movement qualities.

An integral part of the course is the completion of VCE Dance Units 3 and 4. To this end, the students continue to utilise research methods, build their communication skills, and creative abilities to work on set tasks. It demands high levels of creativity and compositional practice as the students are encouraged to develop a personal movement vocabulary and to manipulate choreographic devices and structures in their own works. The students develop two solo choreographic tasks, and one learnt group task. They are also assessed through a number of written assessments (SACS) in which they analyse the learning, choreographic, rehearsal and performance processes involved in the above choreographic works. The solo pieces they create are examined in the external VCE exam.

Students explore and analyse influences on seminal dance makers and key works. Their knowledge of these dance makers and all elements of the key works are assessed through written assessments (SACS) and the VCE external exam.

Further information is available on VCAA website:-

<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/Dance/Pages/Index.aspx>

CONTACT

The Contemporary and VCE course is delivered through one theory and three practical classes per week, two classes of one and a half hours duration and one of one-hour duration.

CONTENT CLASS CONTENT RECOMMENDED FOR THIS YEAR LEVEL:

- Introduction to acrobatic-dance elements, for example in floor work and partnering.
- Dexterity and fluidity of spine, combining actions in standing and locomotion.
- Developing ease with complex combinations of levels, directions, focus and dimensions.
- Complex and detailed instigation of movement and virtuosic actions in extended sequences.
- Dexterity with varied time and energy qualities in extended phrases taught at speed.



- Floor level locomotion and weight bearing actions to and from one or two body parts with evident use of safe dance practice.
- Development of individual movement vocabulary through the use of improvisation and choreographic processes.
- The ability to cooperate effectively and responsibly independently and with others on creative tasks.
- Identifying and analysing elements of composition.
- Utilising motif and development and wide range of choreographic devices in own solo choreography.
- Manipulating choreographic structure and analysing motifs/ phrases/ sections
- Complex manipulation of elements of movement in two solos with different intentions and form.
- Identifying and analysing the use of learning, choreographic, rehearsal and performance processes in own and others works.
- Ease with, and accurate use of VCE dance terminology.
- Assessments tasks for VCE Units 3 and 4.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for Year 11 contemporary dance technique has both summative and formative processes throughout the year with feedback from staff at each class and progress and semester reports twice yearly. The assessment process culminates with a graded examination of contemporary dance technique in an open class situation, in front of a panel of internal and external dance experts.

VCE Dance units 3 and 4 are assessed through internal assessments (SACS) and culminates in a practical exam and a written exam that contribute final grades for students' VCE scores.



YEAR 12

COURSE DESCRIPTION – CONTEMPORARY DANCE

This course is intended to prepare students for entry into tertiary training or into the profession of contemporary dance. Therefore, there is increased emphasis on achieving excellence with dance skills and performance abilities, and the demonstration of sophisticated creative and compositional skills. The students at this level further develop acrobatic dance skills, refined upper body strength and flexibility, release-work, techniques of fall and recovery, and dexterity and skill in manipulating movement qualities in phrases of varied choreographic styles.

Students will develop strong skills in improvisation and composition, partnering, group work and solo performance across a range of contemporary dance styles. They are able to analyse and discuss their own and others' work articulately and within the context of Contemporary dance practice. They are able to identify, analyse and discuss influences on various dance works and are familiar with major dance practitioners in contemporary dance history.

The graduates of this year are ready to explore the diversity and range of contemporary dance available in tertiary training and are prepared for the depth of study required at this level. In exceptional circumstances, some may even be ready for entry directly into companies or contract work within the industry.

CONTACT

This course is delivered through three classes per week of one and a half hours duration, and the classes are coeducational. There is also an extension study class in Contemporary of one and a half hours that students can elect to do to further their experience.

CONTENT CLASS CONTENT RECOMMENDED FOR THIS YEAR LEVEL:

- Established skill with acrobatic-dance elements, for example in floor work and virtuosic actions.
- Skilled use of weight; fall and recovery, swing and momentum in part and whole body actions.
- Dexterity and fluidity of spine and limb actions to a maximum range of motion with commensurate control strength.
- Aplomb and ease with complex combinations of levels, directions, focus and dimension.
- Established use of varied time and energy qualities with sophisticated musicality and use of accents.
- Detailed use of varied instigations for movement.
- Sophistication in the performance of phrases of varied choreographic styles and ability to adapt seamlessly to stylistic differences.
- The ability to work independently and cooperate effectively and responsibly with others on creative tasks, including duo and group partnering activities.
- Demonstrated performance ability with repertoire from a variety contemporary dance styles.
- Sophisticated manipulation of choreographic devices in own choreography.
- Development and manipulation of individual movement vocabulary through the use of improvisation and choreographic processes.



- Utilising complex group structures in works of own choreography.
- Identify and analyse the use of choreographic processes and influences in own and others works.
- Demonstrated initiative in pursuing choreographic and performance experiences beyond given course work.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for Year 12 contemporary dance technique has both summative and formative processes throughout the year with feedback from staff at each class and progress and semester reports twice yearly.

The assessment process culminates with a graded examination of contemporary dance technique in an open class situation, in front of a panel of internal and external dance experts.



ASSOCIATED STUDIES

WORLD DANCE (YEARS 7-10)

RATIONALE

World Dance in a training context is essential to the understanding and skill development of vocational dance students. The styles studied are drawn from the cultural and historical uses of dance at the very heart of societies across the world, and promote interpersonal connection of dance through skill and performance development.

AIMS

- To give students knowledge and experience in a broad spectrum of Ethnic Dance forms.
- To widen the vocabulary of dance movements and techniques in the development of artistic expression.
- To establish basic pas de deux skills, partnering and working together.

CONTENT

From years 7 to 9 a concentration upon European Character dance styles, including barre work as preparation for the complex and controlled centre work. These exercises develop strength, rhythm, dynamics, higher level coordination and balance, and are later expanded to include elements of various ethnic dance styles and their specific artistic qualities. Other dance forms may be approached, depending upon skill level attained.

At year 10 a greater variety of dance forms are approached. These may include:

- Classical Spanish Dance *Bolero, Sevillanas, Malaguena, Jota, Fandango.*
- Mexican/South American Dance
- Classical Indian and Contemporary Indian
- Tango Argentina
- Professional repertoire



JAZZ DANCE (YEARS 9-12)

RATIONALE

The development of musicality, performance styles, audience engagement and technical skills offered by music theatre and commercial jazz styles are invaluable tools of the professional artist. Students are offered multiple classes in the senior levels and specialist guest teachers are engaged for elective classes on a weekly basis.

AIMS

- To introduce students to different commercial dance styles.
- To consolidate physical skills offered by different jazz dance techniques.
- To stimulate a creative outlook by broadening the students' vocabulary of potential movement.
- To develop performance and presentation skills.

CONTENT

Jazz dance is required for students who wish to work in professional commercial stage shows, television and film projects.

All classes include a short floor warm-up, followed by execution of drills and routines as appropriate to the dance style and year level.

**An additional class is offered as an elective at Year 11/12.
This class is in a contrasting jazz style to the weekly classes. For example:
Breakdance, Hip hop, African etc.**

ACROBATICS (YEARS 7-9)

RATIONALE

Acrobatic dance provides the student with virtuosic physical skills, techniques and abilities beneficial to their future careers in dance. Acrobatics allows students to develop at their own pace utilising their natural abilities with a sense of self-direction as the course is individually tailored. The coursework develops coordination, speed, strength, flexibility and preparatory confidence for partner work and readies them for work in a variety of disciplines.

AIMS

- The aim of the course is to develop virtuosic acrobatic skills whilst increasing strength, flexibility and confidence with new and difficult work.
- The course utilises *The Acrobatic Dance Association* syllabus, which progressively trains students to integrate acrobatic skills with dance technique and choreography.



CONTENT

The course covers four main areas. These are balancing, floor work, quick work and specialties.

- Balancing includes headstands and handstands; partner work and chairs.
- Floor work includes slow work such as cartwheels front and back walkovers and bend backs.
- Quick work includes front handsprings, aerial cartwheels and backflips.
- Specialty work includes selective tricks suited to specific types e.g. back contortion for exceptionally flexible students, chair balances and pyramids that require stronger students to hold and smaller students to balance.

TAP (YEARS 7-10)

RATIONALE

Tap dance is a vibrant and dynamic dance style. Study of this technique develops high-level specific skills, a sense of rhythm and style, and confidence with versatility in performance.

AIMS

- To introduce students from an early age to the technique and style of tap dance.
- Mastery of difficulty and complex rhythmical sequences/time-steps performed in a variety of styles.

CONTENT

- Exercises leading to the development of tap skills as appropriate to the individual students. Starting with basic work and gradually building to time steps, pickups, wings, grab-offs etc.
- Short routines allowing individual interpretation, to assist in the development of rhythmical ability and individual style.
- Longer routines for development of style and presentation for group performances.



BODY CONDITIONING

YEARS 7 – 9

The VCASS Body Conditioning Program develops kinesthetic awareness and coordinated muscle engagement through functional imagery and exercises targeting agile strength, control and flexibility in movement. Engagement and strengthening exercises are influenced by current research, including but not limited to: Pilates, Gyrokinesis, Gyrotonics, and the program is designed by staff professionally training in these areas, working in consultation with our on-site physiotherapists.

RATIONALE

The Body Conditioning program serves as a foundation for the training in the Dance Program. References are made between the exercises and the formal training the students undertake to aid the transference of the practiced strengthening material and neurological information to dance technique.

The design of the Body Conditioning Program follows researched backed and scientifically proven principles. These principles are:

- Injury prevention
- Posture & Alignment
- Core strengthening
- Stretching & Flexibility
- Freedom of Movement
- Coordination
- Neuromuscular Coordination
- Performance enhancement

CONTENT

This program includes anatomical information, practical injury prevention and occasional group discussion on all aspects of the body as the instrument of the dancer's art.

AIMS

- Foster in students a kinesthetic awareness specific to the extreme demands of vocational dance training on young bodies.
- Create balanced engagement of certain muscle groups.
- Increase students' understanding of their own physical capabilities, potential and limitations.
- Provide a program that students can do individually as preparation and development of physical skills.



CONTENT

This program includes anatomical information, practical injury prevention and occasional group discussion on all aspects of the body as the instrument of the dancer's art.

- Emphasis is placed on a supple fluid spine.
- Fluency and control of maximum range in the hips.
- Engaged and lengthened muscular effort.
- Kinesthetic imagery of the flow of energy in multiple directions.
- Breath as an instigation of, and response to movement.

YEARS 10-12

Weekly Body Conditioning in the senior year levels includes diverse conditioning practices such as Pilates, Yoga, Plyometric, Weight training and Aerobics. The practices selected, anticipate the methods used in the profession and are taught by accredited staff to further challenge and develop the fitness strength and flexibility of the students appropriate to their physical development.



PERFORMANCE WORKSHOP (YEARS 7-12)

RATIONALE:

Dance is both a creative and interpretive art form. The experiential process of learning the art of performance begins initially in the studio situation. Within this context students develop confidence, and learn to value the co-operation and collaboration that goes into the creative process, eventually bringing an extended body of work to performance standard.

AIMS

- To develop the skills necessary for a performance artist.
- To develop the stamina, maturity and professionalism needed to sustain a full-length performance.
- To develop potential as an interpretive artist in a range of dance styles and techniques.

CONTENT

- Working within a professional company structure.
- Working with a variety of choreographers.
- Working in a range of dance styles and techniques.
- Studio work leading to studio/theatre performances where appropriate.
- Developing a repertoire of dance works.



VCE/VET CUA20113 CERTIFICATE II IN DANCE UNITS 1 & 2

THESE UNITS ARE COMPLETED IN YEAR 11

BSBWOR203B WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH OTHERS – 15 HOURS

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to work in a group environment promoting team commitment and cooperation, supporting team members and dealing effectively with issues, problems and conflict.

ASSESSMENT

1. The organization and presentation of a performance season including staging/choreography/lighting/etc.
2. The organization and presentation of a written reflection which may include: schedule, cast list and publicity both hard and software for a performance season, a log recording the processes involved in the season.

CUADAN201 DEVELOP BASIC DANCE TECHNIQUES – 20 HOURS

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to develop basic dance techniques and apply safe dance practices.

ASSESSMENT

1. Periodic observation of Practical Work by Examiner/Workplace Trainer, including question/answer.
2. Formal practical examination in November.

CUAWHS101 FOLLOW BASIC SAFE DANCE PRACTICES – 60 HOURS

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to apply a basic understanding of OHS issues to day-to-day dance activities.

ASSESSMENT

1. Demonstration of the Body conditioning program.
2. Correct demonstration of R.I.C.E and verbal or written questions.
3. Written OHS test as per 'PowerPoint' presentation.
4. Nutrition for Dancers.



CUAWHS201 DEVELOP A BASIC LEVEL OF PHYSICAL CONDITION FOR DANCE PERFORMANCE – 40 HOURS

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to plan and implement a basic fitness regime appropriate to dancers.

ASSESSMENT

1. Tests 1 – 4.
2. Written Assignments 1 – 4.

CUADAN203 PERFORM BASIC JAZZ DANCE TECHNIQUE – 80 HOURS

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to appreciate jazz dance as an art form and to perform basic jazz dance forms and techniques in a learning environment.

ASSESSMENT:

1. Periodic observation of Practical Work by Examiner/Workplace Trainer - Progress achieved and Quality of Course Work.
2. A formal Practical Examination at the end of the unit.

CUADAN205 PERFORM BASIC CONTEMPORARY DANCE TECHNIQUE – 45 HOURS

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to appreciate contemporary dance as an art form and to perform basic contemporary dance forms and techniques in a learning environment.

ASSESSMENT:

1. Periodic observation of Practical Work by Examiner, Progress achieved and Quality of Course Work, including question/answer.
2. A formal Practical Examination at the end of the unit.



CUADAN206 PERFORM BASIC BALLET

TECHNIQUE – 25 HOURS

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to appreciate ballet as an art form and to perform basic ballet techniques in a learning environment.

ASSESSMENT:

1. Periodic observation of Practical Work by Examiner/Workplace Trainer - Progress achieved and Quality of Course Work - including question/answer.
2. A formal Practical Examination at the end of the unit.



VCE/VET CUA20113 CERTIFICATE II IN DANCE UNITS 3 & 4

THESE UNITS ARE COMPLETED IN YEAR 12

CORE UNITS:

CUAPRF201 PREPARE FOR PERFORMANCES – 35 NOMINAL HOURS

1. Performance Anxiety Readings and Test.
2. Rehearsal preparation for Malthouse season, including safe dance practice issues.

CUFIND201A DEVELOP AND APPLY CREATIVE ARTS INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE – 20 NOMINAL HOURS

1. Source and Apply Industry Information from Ausdance include observations in Workbook.
2. Use technology to search for opportunities in the dance industry include observations in Workbook.
3. Seek information on laws, regulations and industry bodies and include observations in Workbook.
4. Seek information on dance as a career include observations in Workbook.

CUAPRF304 DEVELOP AUDITION TECHNIQUES – 25 HOURS

1. Prepare a resume.
2. Prepare a workbook including career plan, personal competencies and interview experiences.
3. Attend a dance audition, include observations on dress, etiquette etc. in the Workbook.

CUADAN202 INCORPORATE ARTISTIC EXPRESSION INTO BASIC DANCE PERFORMANCES – 45 NOMINAL HOURS

1. Rehearse basic dance techniques including ballet, jazz dance and contemporary dance.
2. Develop expressive techniques – projection of personality in these techniques
3. Perform these techniques.



ELECTIVE UNITS:

**CUADAN305 INCREASE DEPTH OF JAZZ DANCE TECHNIQUE
– 50 HOURS**

1. Periodic observation by Workplace Trainer – Progress achieved and Quality of work.
2. A formal practical examination at the end of the unit.

**CUADAN306 INCREASE DEPTH OF BALLET DANCE
TECHNIQUE – 70 HOURS**

1. Periodic observation by Workplace Trainer – Progress achieved and Quality of work.
2. A formal practical examination at the end of the unit.

**CUADAN308 INCREASE DEPTH OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE
TECHNIQUE – 45 HOURS**

1. Periodic observation by Workplace Trainer – Progress achieved and Quality of work.
2. A formal practical examination at the end of the unit.

VCASS

REPORTING & ASSESSMENT



REPORTS

Student work will be reported within the guidelines of the reporting policy of the school.

All dance subjects will be reported in full written reports twice a year. Progress reports will be issued twice a year for major studies – that is studies with more than one weekly class.

ASSESSMENT (PRACTICAL DANCE SUBJECTS)

The goal of the VCASS student is eventual entry into the dance industry. Assessment of students must take this long-term goal into account.

Assessment of practical dance subjects is through two different assessment procedures:

PROGRESSIVE MARK

An annual progress assessment is given by the main teacher of the student, in that subject area, in conjunction if necessary, with other teachers in the same discipline.

CRITERIA

The mark given will be based on clear criteria that will be communicated to students prior to the start of each unit of work.

Other factors that will determine the outcome of student assessment will include:

- **Progress – 60%**
- **Quality of Coursework – 40%**

The progress and quality of work progressive marks are based upon selected criteria appropriate to each year level. These criteria are issued to students at the commencement of their year course and are reported at the end of each semester.

EXAMINATION BY PANEL

An annual examination by panel for all practical dance subjects

The panel comprises:

- The Head of Dance (or representative)
- One or more external experts
- One or two members of the internal dance staff

The assessors will give a mark to each student arrived at without discussion. The examination will comprise a body of work covered during the year. Criteria for assessment will be provided to the students and to the panel. In the reporting of these assessments, the report will show two separate marks:

- **Examination**
- **Progressive Assessment (by main training teacher)**

EXAMPLE - EXAMINERS CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

Please mark the result in **numeral** form. The papers will be collected and totalled following the examination. No discussion about individual students will take place. When marking please take into account the following:

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT:

- Posture/alignment of the spine.
- Understanding of the rotation of the leg in the hip socket.
- Understanding of the distribution of weight.
- Co-ordination of movement.
- Technical execution of basic classical vocabulary.

ASSESSMENT CONTENT:

PORTS DE BRAS

BARRE

- Plies
- Battements tendus
- Battements glisses
- Ronds de jambes a terre & battements fondus
- Petits battements & battements frappes
- Adage



CENTRE

- Centre practice
- Adage
- Pirouette exercise
- Allegro:
 - Warm Up
 - Allegro
 - Beaten enchainment
 - Travelling enchainment
 - Boys tour en l'air enchainment
 - Pointe work

GRADING:

A+	90 - 100	C+	65 - 69	E+	45-49
A	80 - 89	C	60 - 64	E	40-44
B+	75 - 79	D+	55 - 59	UG	0-39
B	70 - 74	D	50 -55		

NB: *The pass grade is 50*



TIME ALLOCATION IN PROGRAM AREAS

<p>YEAR 7</p> <p>Body Conditioning 2.25 Ballet 6.00 Contemporary Dance 1.00 Acrobatics 1.00 Theory 0.75 World Dance 1.00 Tap 1.00 13.00</p>	<p>YEAR 8</p> <p>Body Conditioning 2.25 Ballet 7.25 Contemporary 1.25 Acrobatics 1.00 Tap 1.00 World Dance 1.25 14.00</p>
<p>YEAR 9</p> <p>Body Conditioning 1.50 (2.25) Ballet 6.50 Pointe .75 Contemporary 1.25 Acrobatics 1.00 Jazz 1.00 World Dance 1.25 Tap 1.00 14.25</p>	<p>YEAR 10</p> <p>Ballet 7.50 Repertoire 1.25 Contemporary/Comp 2.75 Pointe (Pas de Deux) 2.00 VCE (1 semester) 1.25 Jazz 1.25 World Dance 1.25 16.00</p>
<p>YEAR 11</p> <p>Ballet 7.50 Contemporary/Comp. 5.50 Jazz 2.25 Pointe/Pas de Deux 2.00 Ballet Composition/Stagecraft 1.25 Anatomy/Physiology .75 19.25</p>	<p>YEAR 12</p> <p>Ballet 7.50 Contemporary/Comp. 5.50 Jazz 2.50 Pointe/Pas de Deux 2.00 Ballet Repertoire 1.25 Career Planning .75 (3 terms) 19.50</p>
<p>ADDITIONAL CLASSES</p> <p>Performance Workshop Year 7 – 9 3.00 Performance Workshop Year 10 - 12 3.50 Male Class (Ballet, Coach, Dance Making.) Year 10 - 12 2.00 8.50</p> <p>TOTAL DANCE PROGRAM HOURS = 102.50 Hours</p>	
<p>EXTRA CURRICULA CLASSES OFFERED</p> <p>Royal Academy of Dancing Syllabus Year 7 - 9 3.00 Royal Academy of Dancing Syllabus Year 10 - 12 3.00 Cecchetti Syllabus Year 7 - 9 3.00 Cecchetti Syllabus Year 10 - 12 3.00</p>	