

DANCE AUDITION GUIDELINES, KEY DATES & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

KEY DATES 2017 - TICKETED DANCE PERFORMANCES

All performances are at 57 Miles Street, Southbank at our Studio Theatre unless otherwise noted. It is strongly recommended that prospective students and their parents attend performances, which clearly demonstrate the focus of this school. Bookings online at www.trybooking.com (**unless otherwise noted*)

- Ballet Workshop Performances – 30th and 31st March 6:00pm at 8:00pm both evenings
- Dance Winter Workshop Performances – 28th and 29th June at 6:00pm at 8:00pm both evenings
- *Malthouse Dance Season at the CUB Malthouse Theatre 113 Sturt Street, Southbank at 7:30pm on Thursday 7th, Friday 8th, and Saturday 9th September, with a Matinee at 2:00pm on 9th September, – 4 x shows in total. **Tickets only available through www.malthousetheatre.com.au/your-visit/ticket-information**
Phone: - 9685 5111
- Year 11 Dance Creative Performance - 30th November at 6:00pm
- Year 7 to 10 Dance Creative Season performances 7th December at 6:00pm and 8th December at 6:00pm and 8:00pm.

FREE DANCE EXHIBITIONS

- Ballet Teachers Workshop Solos - date *TBA*
- Year 11 and 12 VCE Solos - date *TBA*

SCHOOL TOURS

- **Free**, but booking is essential. Go to <https://www.trybooking.com/248866>
- Wednesday morning tours commencing at 9:00am from 19th April to the 19th July
- School Open Day: 2017 Wednesday 24th May

DANCE APPLICATIONS

- Applications available online from Monday 24th April, 2017 at <http://www.vcass.vic.edu.au/entry>
- **All applications are filled out online only.**
- Applications CLOSE on Monday 24th July, 2017

DANCE AUDITION DATES and General Audition DAY information

- Years 11/12 Thursday 3rd August, 2017
- Year 7 Friday 4th August, 2017
- Year 7 Saturday 5th August 2017 (Call back)
- Year 8 Monday 7th August, 2017
- Year 10 Tuesday 8th August, 2017
- Year 9 Wednesday 9th August, 2017

Notification of specific year level audition groups and times will be notified via email after applications are closed.

- ❖ Applicants should arrive **at least** 30 minutes before scheduled audition time. The audition process usually takes between 2 to 3 hours. When the applicant is given a 'Call Back' the process can take most of the day. Prospective Year 7 applicants have their 'Call Back' the following day.
- ❖ Students applying for entry are auditioned in a classical ballet class. This may be followed by other dance activities. Applicants may be required to attend a second audition - this will usually be on the same day except for prospective Year 7 applicants where 'Call Back' is the following day.
- ❖ **All auditionees** are required to have some knowledge of classical ballet, however, students considering entry into years 7 and 8 with limited classical ballet skills are still encouraged to audition – the audition is structured to accommodate differing levels of training. Auditions include alternative movement style for juniors and contemporary dance for seniors; other styles may be requested.
- ❖ No set dance or syllabus work will be required.
- ❖ **Applicants who are 'Called Back' will be asked on the day of audition, to undergo a physical examination by a qualified physiotherapist appointed by the school. A charge of \$70.00 (cash) will be payable at the time of consultation. Results of the physiotherapist examination will be provided to the audition panel.**
- ❖ The applicants may also be required to undertake physique testing conducted by dance staff.
- ❖ **NB All applications and their contents remain the property of VCASS and will not be returned to applicants.**
- ❖ Applicants should note that it is **not** the policy of the school to give feedback on auditions. A letter will be sent at the end of term 3 **via email** advising you of your audition result.
- ❖ **Please note** that car parking facilities are **NOT** available on the school campus. Parking is available at the National Gallery of Victoria carpark, at the Australian Ballet Centre, Wilson parking in Sturt Street or on the street.
- ❖ For what to wear in the dance auditions - see '*Frequently Asked Questions*'.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I apply to study at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School?

Entry to the school is by audition only. The online Application form will be available during **Term 2** from late April and is accessible only from our website at www.vcass.vic.edu.au/entry We strongly recommend that applicants read through the application form and make sure you understand the documents required in pdf format and follow instructions carefully. Also read carefully through the rest of the **following Q and A** to help facilitate a calm audition day.

What documents do I need for the Online Application Form?

To complete the Online Application Form you need type in family details of names, addresses, phone numbers, school subjects, various dance studies, experiences, and other data. You also need to scan and upload a copy of the following documents: e.g. **A** - School Report from the second half of the previous year, **B** - School Report from the first half of the current year, **C** – Doctors medical certificate for fitness to train and other forms.

What are the panel looking for in the dance audition?

Our panel assess each applicant on their potential to train at our school. This includes skill level in classical ballet as well as physical attributes in flexibility, coordination, control, musicality, ability to comprehend and remember dance movements, also overall physical suitability for a comprehensive high level training program. We also look at maturity, openness, and experience, and where best to place the applicant within our school. No single aspect means an automatic YES or NO in the audition. It is a competitive audition with others applying for positions in the school.

What to expect on the audition day and in the dance audition?

All auditionees are welcomed at the registration desk at their allotted time **30 minutes prior to audition**. They are then directed to our cafeteria and from there the auditionee will be taken to a change room and then a warm up room by one of our senior dance students under the supervision of the dance Audition Coordinator. After they are warmed up and their number is pinned on, they are then taken to the audition studio to commence a 'basic' ballet class in front of the panel. Following ballet class auditionees will be asked to participate in a short contemporary dance sequence and sometimes short sequences of other movement styles. No set work is required. In total the audition should be completed in under 1.5 hours though it can take longer when there are very large numbers, therefore many groups, or pauses for other groups.

Auditionees will normally have two current students demonstrating at the front of the class. This helps them to feel relaxed and more confident throughout the audition process.

At the conclusion auditionees will be taken back to the change room and the audition coordinator will announce the 'call back' list of students. Auditionees will then return to parents waiting in the cafeteria. If you have received a 'call back' you will be required to complete further testing by our physiotherapy team and a further class which will include 'pointe' for girls (not Year 7 and only if previously studied for Year 8/9). If you have not been given a 'call back' your audition is over. Unsuccessful auditionees may choose to audition again the following year.

What dance or Syllabus exam standard do I have to be?

Classical ballet training, whether it has been studied and learned through syllabuses such as RAD, Cecchetti, ATOD, BBO or any other syllabus is appropriate as they are all based on the same balletic terminology and physiology. Ballet is used as the training method at VCASS as it enhances the students overall physicality and benefits all the other dance forms. **As** a guide for auditionees - a good criteria would be a **minimum** of one year's ballet training before applying to audition at VCASS.

What should I wear to the audition

Auditionees should wear normal ballet training clothes.

Girls should wear pink tights and pale coloured leotard.

Girls should wear 'split sole' pink tights in order to work barefoot when required. Pointe shoes for years 8 to 12 required – only if pointe has been studied. Girls hair in a tidy hair bun. **All auditionees** should bring a tracksuit for walking around the building, and may need a tracksuit for contemporary or creative work.

Boys should wear tights and a white leotard or **close fitting** white T/shirt. White socks and white canvas ballet shoes. Boys should have tidy hair, no fringe or hair in face. (If hair is long, must be tied back)

All auditionees should bring a tracksuit for walking around the building, and may need a tracksuit for contemporary or creative work.

When will I find out my result?

Emails will be sent to successful applicants on the last day of Term 3, 2017

If I am an International auditionee can I send in a VIDEO audition?

Yes. While we prefer a live audition, it is usual for international applicants to submit videos on **DVD or USB memory stick**. Complete the online application process, and send us your video by the application deadline (late July). After we have assessed a video application, we may require a follow-up live audition and interview over the internet via Skype. Requirements for a video audition are listed below under "*Video Audition Guidelines*".

Is it hard to get into the VCA Secondary School?

We always have more applicants than we have places, so the audition process is very competitive. Numbers vary every year some years we have had 300 auditionees and only taken 30 new students across Years 7 to 12. We endeavour to conduct the audition process in a friendly and supportive atmosphere, and encourage all applicants to continue with their dance training and studies if they are unsuccessful.

At what age can I apply to audition for a place?

Students in Years 6-11 are welcome to audition for entry into Years 7-12. Students entering Year 7 should turn 12 years of age by April 30th.

What fees and costs are involved to audition?

In 2016 the audition application fee was AUD \$80.00

Call back auditionee - physiotherapy consultant fee is AUD \$70.00

If I gain entry, what are the costs?

Gaining entry to the school is equivalent of winning a **major dance scholarship**. For Australian and New Zealand citizens all academic and dance training is provided at minimal cost, in the form of a dance performance and costume fee. Basic annual charges range from AUD \$1,500 Junior Students to \$2,000 Senior Students for Australian and New Zealand citizens, and from AUD \$19,000-\$22,000 for **International Students**.

Additionally, all students are required to purchase books, study materials, dance training clothes and shoes, and some performance wear. There will be additional costs for some excursions, special master-classes and tours.

What are the normal hours for a dance student?

Our regular school day Monday - Friday runs from 8:30am – (5.00pm) 5.30pm, (Dancers usually arrive at 7:45am to warm up before class on dance mornings) **Year 7** students generally finish at 3.45pm and **Year 8** students occasionally finish at 3.45pm.

The regular school timetable is structured around a two-part day - one half specialisation and one half academic study with specialist time from 4.00pm - 5.30pm daily. Senior students have specialist study on Monday morning with academic study in the afternoon – this alternates daily through the week for all levels.

Elective programs run after normal school hours and on Saturdays; a majority of our students participate in these programs.

Students are required to attend and/or perform at approximately 12 evening dance performances per year. We may require students to attend 2-3 Saturdays in Term 3 for rehearsals or performances.

What are the daily dress requirements?

There is no academic school uniform however dance students have a strictly enforced dress code for dance classes and performances. In terms of hair styles, the school is comfortable with hair choices that are not extreme and appropriate hairstyles for class and performances. Generally the school requires all piercings on the face that are not ear to be covered during the school day.

Can I still attend and train at my old dance school?

No. The simple reason, VCASS dance training is very intense and specifically structured to train for a vocational pathway in dance. The VCASS day is very long and physically taxing for young dancers, along with coping with the pressures of a full academic curriculum. Through past experience it has been proven to be too difficult a prospect for a young dancer and it creates unnecessary conflict and exhaustion with the real risk of injury for the student in such a high expectation program.

Do you have school camps?

Yes. All Year 7-9 students have a three day school camp each year in term 1.

Is VCASS the right school for my child?

There are many factors to consider when looking for a specialist school. We strongly recommend you read all of this FAQ document, and that you come to a school tour, open day, or performance to see our school for yourself. Free school tours run on some Wednesday mornings from April-July and must be booked via www.trybooking.com. Our training program is extremely busy, with high expectations. Some students travel long distances to come to VCASS. Sometimes families will wait until a child is older before they accept a place at VCASS. You may wish to audition "for the experience", that is fine with us. Each year we take in dance students at every year level from 7-12. 98% of our dance graduates go on to further dance training at a tertiary level, into the dance profession or into an associated industry.

DANCE CURRICULUM INFORMATION

The purpose of the School is to provide a high quality education and training program to prepare talented young people for performance careers in dance and music.

Philosophy

Performing artists are an essential part of any society, as they reflect and comment upon that society in the most fundamental ways.

The Performing Arts are vital to any culture for the following reasons:

- are a major force for social criticism and evaluation
- raise the quality of life
- assist in the development and articulation of a nation's identity
- contribute to the basic framework of education

(Industries Assistance Commission Report, 1976)

The Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School recognises the importance of performing artists and of their relationship with the world. It is committed to the nurturing and development of talented and educated students who can effectively and creatively enrich our lives.

In pursuing the goals of developing the performing arts, and its artists, the school believes that it must train and produce dancers and musicians of the highest calibre and that the option of pursuing a performance career should be available to all students with talent and potential regardless of social and economic circumstances.

Vocational training must begin at an early age and stage of physiological development if adequate proficiency for entry into performing art careers is to be achieved.

The vocational training should be taught within a broad educational framework, which provides students with the knowledge, skills and attributes to enable them to exercise autonomy and participate effectively in a rapidly changing and interdependent world.

The School seeks to recognise, develop and foster the unique talent of each student.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

CLASSICAL BALLET STUDIES

Year 7 – 12 Daily

POINTE WORK

Pointe Work Progressions - Year 7 semester 2

Pointe Work Progressions – Years 8 -12

PAS DE DEUX

Years 11 & 12 (Year 10 at the discretion of the Head of Dance)

CLASSICAL BALLET STUDIES: REPERTOIRE SOLO & GROUP

Years 10-12

THEORETICAL DANCE STUDIES

7-12 Classical Ballet Theory (separate class only in Year 7)

7-10 Dance Perspectives – by assignment

CONTEMPORARY DANCE

Year 7 - 9

Year 10 – VCE Dance Units 1 & 2

Year 11 – VCE Dance Units 3 & 4

Year 12

ASSOCIATED STUDIES

World Dance (Years 7-10)

Jazz Dance (Years 9-12)

Acrobatics (Years 7-9)

Tap Dance (Years 7-10)

Body Conditioning (7-12)

Performance Workshop (Years 7-12)

VCE VET CERTIFICATE II IN DANCE

Year 11 - Unit 1 & 2 Modules

Year 12 - Unit 3 & 4 Modules

For more detailed information to the whole dance curriculum and timetable please go to:-

http://vcass.vic.edu.au/cms_uploads/docs/dancecurriculumhandbook2017.pdf

Elective RAD and Cecchetti Syllabus classes are offered on campus, at an extra cost, twice weekly including Saturday

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Where is the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School located?

We are in the “Arts Precinct” of Melbourne near the corner of Miles Street and Sturt Street. Our address is **57 Miles Street, Southbank, Victoria, 3006, Australia**. We are an “urban” school with no exterior space or grounds of our own. Students have some access during lunchtime to a nearby park. Excursions and some performances are held off-campus.

Are you a government school?

Yes. We are funded by the Victorian State Government through the Department of Education and Training (DET). Our school year runs from late January to December.