

VICTORIAN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS SECONDARY SCHOOL
**2026 DANCE
CURRICULUM HANDBOOK**



Victoria's premier school for the training and education of talented young Dancers, Musicians, Theatre and Visual Artists.



Victorian College of the Arts
SECONDARY SCHOOL



Department
of Education





DANCE CURRICULUM 2026

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PURPOSE

The purpose of the dance course at Victorian College of Arts Secondary School (VCASS) is to provide excellence in dance training alongside a rich academic education, to prepare talented young people for professional careers in the dance industry.

PHILOSOPHY

The Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School recognises that performing artists are an essential part of any culture as they inspire, reflect, entertain and comment upon that society in the most fundamental and significant ways. To that end, the school understands that 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, providing students with the knowledge and skills enabling them to participate effectively in a rapidly changing and interdependent world.

RATIONALE

The performing career of a dancer typically begins in the late teenage years and often concludes around the age of forty. Because of this relatively short professional span, dancers must undertake the majority of their technical and artistic training throughout childhood and adolescence. The serious study of dance demands a high level of dedication, with daily classes and many hours of disciplined practice.

At the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School (VCASS), these needs are met through a thoughtfully designed curriculum and timetable that allow students to pursue both their academic and dance education simultaneously. The program is led by highly skilled and experienced teachers who understand the specific challenges and requirements of a dancer's development.

Admission to VCASS is through audition, a process that ensures selection is based on talent and potential rather than location or financial background. This approach allows gifted young dancers from a wide range of communities to access high-quality training and education in a supportive and professional environment.

EVENTS AND AWARDS

Celebrating and sharing the joy of dance underpins the performance events in our annual calendar. Students are offered regular opportunities to perform in our on-site studio theatre and external venues. Practical dance exams, solos displays, group workshops, student-produced seasons and major school performances are scheduled throughout the year. These provide the opportunity for honing vital performance skills, individual artistry and connection to our audience and community.

We also recognise and value our student achievements with a range of awards culminating in the Anne Woolliams Award and the Year 11 Choreographic Award. The Anne Woolliams Award recognises the all-round performance skills, in particular artistry and technical capacity of an outstanding Year 12 student, celebrating the values and vision of the founding Dean of Dance at VCA, Anne Woolliams.

The Year 11 Choreographic Award recognises the creative and choreographic body of work of a student in Year 11 whose work has demonstrated excellence in vision, individual exploration of movement vocabulary and use of creative process to develop and produce their works.

GOALS

- To provide excellence in dance training and education in preparation for performance careers
- To encourage confident performance, 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 to 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

VCASS is dedicated to providing exceptional, specialist training under the guidance of expert educators across a diverse range of dance disciplines. Our curriculum is designed to cultivate technically proficient, creative and artistically expressive dancers through a structured and progressive curriculum.

Our students thrive through opportunities to perform, choreograph, collaborate, and solve problems creatively. Their aspirations inspire and guide us to continually offer experiences and challenges that nurture growth, resilience, and artistic development.

In Years 7,8 & 9, students receive comprehensive foundational training in ballet, contemporary, jazz, tap, and acrobatics. This broad-based approach ensures the development of versatile skills, fostering adaptability and a well-rounded understanding of dance as both a technical and creative discipline.

In Years 10,11 & 12, we focus on the specialized study of ballet, contemporary, and jazz, with an emphasis on refining technique, artistic expression and creative collaboration. This advanced training is designed to prepare our students with the necessary skills, discipline, and creative insight for tertiary studies or a professional career in dance.

We are dedicated to fostering a supportive and inspiring environment where students are encouraged to pursue excellence and cultivate their artistic voice. Our vision is to empower each individual to reach their full potential and make a meaningful contribution to the broader dance community

Lynette Wills

Head of Dance

CLASSICAL BALLET STUDIES

RATIONALE

Classical Ballet serves as the foundational dance form that underpins all genres of dance. It offers a rigorous and highly disciplined training method that develops physical control, strength, precision, artistry, and versatility. This comprehensive technique equips students with the skills necessary to excel across a wide range of theatrical dance styles. Students beginning their studies at VCASS typically possess a strong background in Classical Ballet, and many of our graduates are accepted into prestigious tertiary ballet institutions worldwide.

AIMS

At the completion of this course, students exhibit comprehensive understanding and correct execution of our Classical Ballet Progressions Framework. This six year framework leads students from a basic level of understanding and facility to the high level expected for entry into advanced Tertiary training, or the dance profession.

The purpose is to train a Classical Ballet style based upon individual physiological and anatomical facilities and draw upon the strengths of a variety of traditions. The emphasis is upon the aesthetic quality of technical elements alongside the development of virtuosity. The resulting technique is adaptable to any choreographic demand and gives the dancer the facility to execute a range of traditional and twenty-first century ballets.

YEAR 7 BALLET

Year 7 Ballet focuses on building a strong foundation in classical ballet technique. Key elements such as posture, control, placement, and alignment are emphasized through a structured movement vocabulary. This year is designed to consolidate students' technical skills and artistic capacity, preparing them for more advanced training in the years ahead.

The program delivers a cohesive and comprehensive approach, unifying student learning through carefully sequenced content. In addition to technical training, students engage in rehearsals, performances, and creative tasks that foster both their expressive and performance abilities. These opportunities play a vital role in supporting their overall growth as emerging ballet artists.

POINTE WORK and VIRTUOSO TRAINING - YEAR 7

Pointe work is introduced to the class content at the teachers discretion.

Preparation for Pointe work commences at the Barre part-way through the year. The introductory work is specifically tailored to the strengthening and essential control needed for pointe technique.

Preparatory steps of virtuosic coaching and vocabulary are delivered as part of the technique class, or as dedicated coaching classes and supported by strength and conditioning programs.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Posture/placing of the spine
- The correct use of rotation of the whole leg
- 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
- Enchainements are simple, in order to emphasise focus on technical elements
- Coordination of arms and head in all exercises
- The development of musicality is incorporated through the recognition of different time signatures, accents, phrasing 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
- Studio etiquette, joy of dance, grooming, work ethic and learning to respect and show consideration for others in the group
- Encouragement of a positive attitude to learning with an eagerness to accept challenge.



YEARS 8 & 9 BALLET

In Years 8 and 9, the ballet curriculum builds upon the foundational vocabulary introduced in Year 7. Students continue to develop their physical strength, technical precision, and artistic expression in preparation for more complex and virtuosic work. The program deepens their understanding of classical ballet technique, musicality, coordination, and performance confidence.

POINTE WORK and VIRTUOSO TRAINING - YEARS 8 & 9

Pointe work is incorporated into weekly classes, extending the foundational training from Year 7. Students focus on consolidating their technique through increased vocabulary, technical strength, and the gradual addition of centre work. Modified excerpts of classical repertoire are introduced, and students perform short solos in an assessment setting at the end of the year.

Virtuoso training is designed to strengthen the control and coordination necessary for advanced ballet skills. This includes targeted strength and conditioning to build physical capacity. Students study modified choreography and prepare short solo performances, which are presented informally at VCASS.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Consolidation of previous work
- 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.

YEARS 10 & 11 BALLET

In Years 10 and 11, students continue to refine their ballet technique while developing the physical and artistic skills required to explore more complex movement vocabulary. This stage of training supports the execution of virtuosic steps, greater artistic expression, and the integration of performance elements.

Technical development is designed to support the inclusion of pas de deux work, solo variations, and ensemble pieces drawn from the current classical ballet repertoire. Students are challenged to deepen their interpretive abilities, enhance their performance presence, and demonstrate increased strength, control, and musicality in both classwork and assessment settings.

POINTE WORK and VIRTUOSO TRAINING – YEARS 10 & 11

In Years 10 and 11, dedicated Pointe Work and Virtuoso Training classes prepare students for the demands of solo and pas de deux repertoire. These separate, focused classes are designed to develop the specific technical and artistic skills required for the successful execution of advanced repertoire.

Pointe classes emphasize strength, stability, and articulation to support the complexity and nuance of solo and ensemble variations. Virtuoso training targets the control, elevation, and stamina essential for performing demanding sequences with precision and artistry. Together, these classes build the advanced level of proficiency necessary to perform repertoire elements with confidence, style, and expressive clarity.

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 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 integrate appropriate movement qualities within technique
- The demonstration of improved levels of strength, flexibility and coordination with effective and efficient use of technique
- The development of musicality, with the ability to recognise time signatures and tempi and to perform with the appropriate movement style.

YEAR 12 BALLET

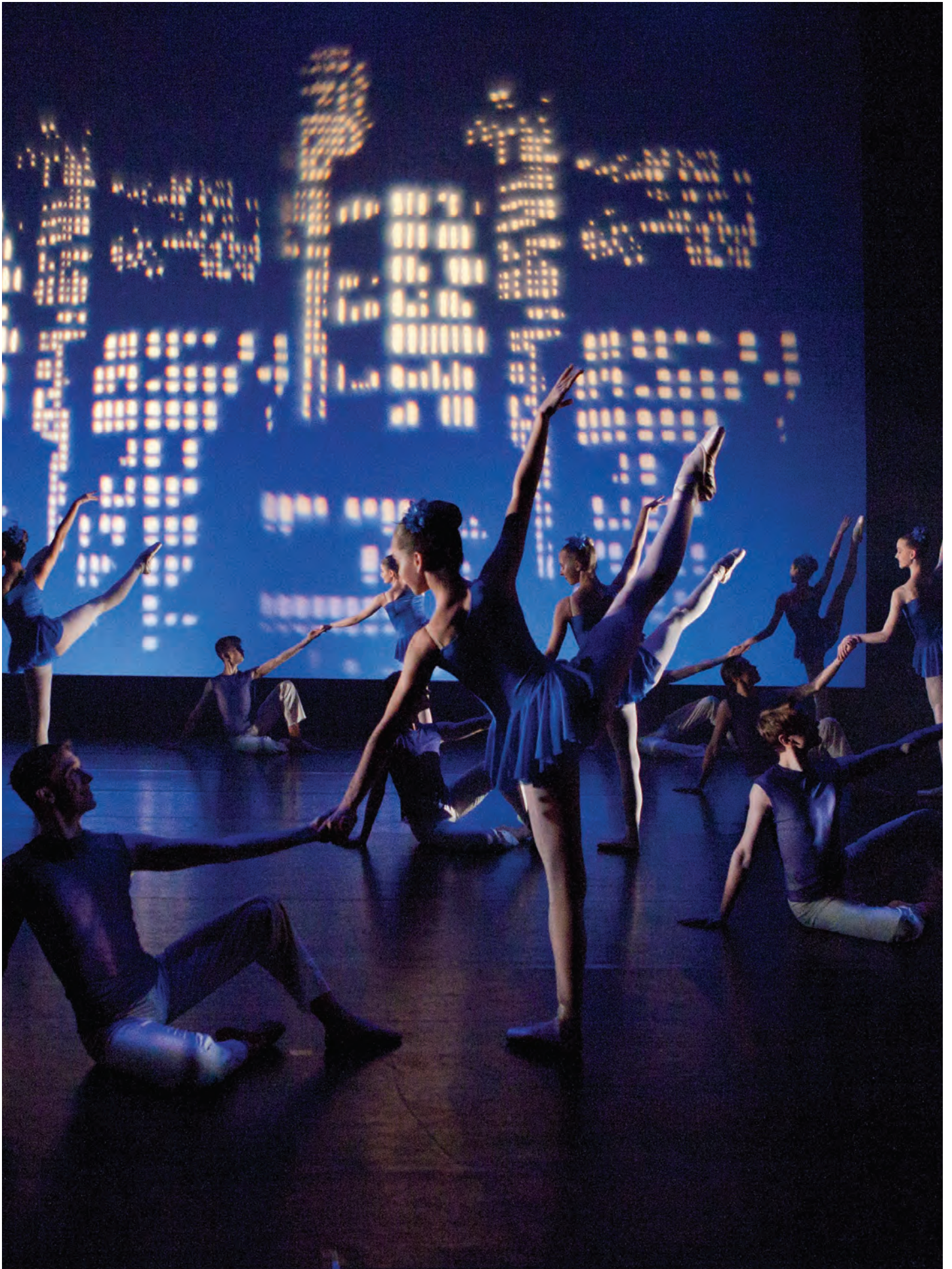
Year 12 Ballet is designed to prepare students for the professional demands of tertiary dance training, pre-professional pathways, and eventual entry into company environments. The course content reaches a high level of complexity, with increased expectations in technical execution, performance quality, and artistic maturity. Students are expected to demonstrate refined control, artistic presentation, and consistency in their classical ballet technique.

Pointe work and virtuosity are integrated into regular classwork, with ongoing development of advanced skills. Further extension is offered through individual solo coaching, and the study of repertoire for performances and audition settings. This final year supports students in honing their technical precision, deepening their artistic expression, and achieving the readiness required for progression into the professional dance world.

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 be independent and proactive in creating and utilising feedback
- 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 body coordination
- The ability to reproduce a movement sequence with speed of comprehension and correct technical detail
- The demonstrated development of an individual style with a confident approach to characterisation/interpretation
- The understanding, and practice, of a professional code of conduct in preparation for auditions and eventual employment.





YEARS 10, 11 & 12 PAS DE DEUX

Classical pas de deux classes support dancers in developing both technical proficiency and collaborative communication skills, while also demanding a high level of classical ballet technique. Appropriate training exercises and repertoire are selected for each year level, with all partnered lifting work carefully adapted by staff to suit the physiological development, technical ability, and compatibility of each partnership.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Develop the ability to coordinate and work in unison with a partner
- Understand and demonstrate good musicality
- Acquiring the technique and strength necessary for lifting and support work
- To develop the dynamics necessary in partnering, to establish and communicate relationships with a partner in an abstract or dramatic context
- Execution of repertoire from the Romantic and Classical eras. e.g: Ivanov, Petipa, Bournonville, Fokine, through to the works of 20th and 21st century choreographers

YEARS 10, 11 & 12 CLASSICAL BALLET REPERTOIRE

Students study and demonstrate works from a variety of choreographers. Works studied are chosen to develop the technical and interpretive skills, stamina and confidence associated with the performance of solo variations and group works.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Solo and group repertoire from the Romantic and Classical eras through to the works of 21st century choreographers
- Interpretation of role and understanding of choreographic context
- Musicality and dynamic qualities
- Demonstration of appropriate styles
- Consolidation of complex technical skills



THEORETICAL DANCE STUDIES

To complement physical training, student must learn the terminology, analysis and history of essential areas of the artform. Students analyse the execution and purpose of ballet exercises and explore the history and contributions of iconic artists . These studies help students to perform with understanding of the genesis and development of their art form.

YEAR 7 DANCE THEORY

In Semester One the course will cover the French technical terms and theory of Classical Ballet fundamental for Year 7 level. During Semester One the course will also cover the early history of classical ballet from the Italian Renaissance courts; to France through Catherine de Medici in the 16th century and development of court ballet in the 17th century under King Louis XIV. Semester Two explores the pre-Romantic period; Romantic era; post Romantic; Imperial Russian Ballet up to the beginning of 20th century including the Golden Age of Marius Petipa.

CONTENT

The consolidation of a glossary of ballet terminology alongside an introduction to basic physiology through written assignments and class room tasks:

- 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
- Basic anatomical information
- Basic treatment of common injuries
- Theatre terminology and etiquette

YEAR 8 DANCE HISTORY

In Semester One the course will cover the history of classical ballet from Serge Diaghilev and his Ballets Russes from 1909. Upon Diaghilev's death in 1929 Ballet Russe companies evolved, spreading dance globally including the tours to Australia in the 1940s. Semester One will also cover the early building of British Ballet. During Semester Two the course will explore the lives of three pivotal classical ballet choreographers of the 20th Century - Frederick Ashton, George Balanchine and John Cranko, some of their ballets and stylistic features. Studies will also include the development of modern pioneers and dance choreographers for musical theatre.

CONTENT

The learning of ballet and theatrical dance history through written assignments and classroom tasks, laying the foundational knowledge of the major dance artists since the 14th Century.

- To appreciate stylistic differences and the close reciprocal influences of dance, music, art and theatre throughout history.

YEARS 9 – 12

Elements of dance analysis become embedded in practical dance classes. Students continue to engage within class discussions and activities to investigate the aesthetic, creative and repertoire elements of each genre. Glossaries and terminology relevant to each of the core dance subjects (Ballet, Contemporary and jazz) are expanded in these year levels. Further analytical skills are introduced with observations and feedback on choreography, performances and during rehearsal processes. In-depth analysis is taught formally to years 10, 11 and 12 as part of VCE Dance and VCE/VET Dance.

CONTENT

- To develop and expand understanding and critical awareness of dance in the students' own lives and culture through discussion
- Attending and appreciating dance performances; executing and analysing the process of dance creation
- To appreciate stylistic differences and the close reciprocal influences of dance, music, art and theatre throughout history. See VCE/VET course outlines below

CONTEMPORARY DANCE

RATIONALE

VCASS acknowledges that the professional dance industry values those who demonstrate contemporary dance and choreographic skills. Progressive outcomes in the course develop a physically versatile and dynamic contemporary dancer, one who is equipped with experience in composition, collaboration and performance, prepared for entry into tertiary courses or the profession.

The course is derived from Cunningham, Graham, Limon, Horton and release techniques, with a focus on power, articulation and expression. Students develop their personal movement vocabulary and choreographic and analytical principles through research, improvisation, composition and performance-making. In Years 10 to 12, they create and present solo and group works on themselves and others.

AIMS

Upon completing Year 12, students demonstrate high level contemporary dance skills including technique, floorwork, partnering, choreography, collaboration and improvisation, as well as a sense of artistry and performance quality. The emphasis is on an articulate and released technique adaptable to choreographic demands of current contemporary dance forms.

YEAR 7 CONTEMPORARY

This course serves as an introduction to the theory and practise of contemporary dance. The groundwork for this study includes Kinetics, essential technique, physical skills and alignment, improvisation and imagery as well as the basic vocabulary required for contemporary dance.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Introduction of a variety of movement qualities within phrases and actions
- Development of musicality through various rhythmic patterns and phrasing
- Establishing use of alignment in transitions between actions and levels
- Developing strength and flexibility in spinal and whole body actions
- Introduction of floor work and weight bearing actions
- Beginning the practise of improvisation and composition skills

YEAR 8 CONTEMPORARY

The emphasis of the Year 8 course is on consolidating existing skills and developing dynamic qualities including transitions between levels, shifts of weight, and floor work. Combined actions of the spine are introduced as is travelling work using fall and recovery.

The students build collaborative and creative skills by working on improvisation tasks for choreographic works. Students begin to examine various stimuli for dance-making and engage in basic analysis of their own dance works.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Integration 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
- Essential floor work and weight bearing actions
- Development of students' improvisational and compositional skills

YEAR 9 CONTEMPORARY

This course delves into more detailed understanding of contemporary dance technique, looking at various instigations for movement, more complex isolations and sequential actions in phrases. Vocabulary expands to include greater demands on strength, flexibility and stamina through the incorporation of acrobatic elements, more complex transfers of weight, floor work and transitions between levels.

The students further develop interpersonal skills with creative tasks in both group and individual contexts, examining various stimuli for choreography and analysing dance works and the choreographic processes.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Ease moving in and out of floor-level actions
- Travelling and weight bearing actions at floor level, to and from 1 or 2 body parts.
- Increased mobility and range of motion in the spine and upper body actions
- Creating and performing extended improvisational tasks
- Identifying and analysing elements of composition, such as motifs, phrases, sections
- Preparation for VCE Dance Units 1-2 in Year 10 through developing vocabulary to describe dance



YEAR 10 CONTEMPORARY

The year 10 contemporary dance course introduces students to advanced technical and physical skills, extending their vocabulary to include virtuosic actions and demanding sequences. Essential components of the course include the demonstration of sequential movement patterns and transference and counter balance of weight through many body parts. 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.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Ease with moving in and out of virtuosic floor-level actions
- Mobility, strength, isolation and range of motion in virtuosic actions
- Varied dynamic qualities within movement phrases
- Creating and performing extended improvisational tasks
- Identifying and manipulating elements of composition and choreographic process



YEAR 11 CONTEMPORARY

Year 11 Contemporary develops students' execution of advanced contemporary dance skills through demanding sequences, virtuosic actions and partner work. Class content includes acrobatic-dance skills, upper body strength and flexibility, release-work, techniques of fall and recovery, and manipulation of various movement qualities.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Integration of acrobatic-dance elements in floor work and partnering
- Complex instigation of movement and virtuosic actions in extended sequences
- Dexterity with varied time and energy qualities in extended phrases
- Development of individual movement vocabulary through the use of improvisation and choreographic processes
- The ability to cooperate effectively and responsibly both independently and with others on creative tasks
- Identifying and analysing elements of composition
- Utilising a wide range of choreographic devices in own choreography
- Identifying and analysing the use of learning, choreographic, rehearsal and performance processes in own and others works.

YEAR 12 CONTEMPORARY

This course prepares students for entry into tertiary training with an increased emphasis on achieving excellence with contemporary dance technique, performance abilities and the demonstration of confident creative and collaborative skills. The students explore further floor-work and acrobatic dance skills, develop refined upper body strength and flexibility, release-work, techniques of fall and recovery, and dexterity in manipulating movement qualities in phrases of varied choreographic styles.

Repertoire classes provide opportunities to rehearse and explore contemporary partnering skills and exposure to the breadth of the art-form alongside rehearsals for upcoming performances.

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

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Aplomb and ease with complex combinations of levels, directions, focus and dimension
- Sophistication in the performance of phrases of varied choreographic style and the ability to adapt seamlessly to stylistic differences
- The ability to work independently and cooperate effectively and responsibly with others on creative tasks
- Development and manipulation of individual movement vocabulary through the use of improvisation and choreographic processes
- Demonstrated initiative in pursuing choreographic and performance experiences beyond given course work

VCE DANCE UNITS 1 & 2

VCE Dance Units 1-2 are offered concurrently to VCASS contemporary dance technique classes in year 10. The students undertake choreographic and theoretical assignments to develop their analytical skills and knowledge of creating, rehearsing and performing dance through a variety of tasks. They develop their knowledge of dance making to create performance works that are both self and peer-assessed and which count toward assessment for VCE Dance Units 1-2. They also examine the influences on their own choreography as well as those on a range of professional choreographers, both current and historical.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Ease with moving in and out of virtuosic floor-level actions
- Mobility, strength, isolation and range of motion in virtuosic actions
- Varied dynamic qualities within movement phrases
- Creating and performing extended improvisational tasks
- Identifying and manipulating elements of composition and choreographic process

Further information about VCE Dance Units 1-2 is available on VCAA website: [VCAA VCE Dance Study Design Contemporary Dance Units 1 & 2](#)

VCE DANCE UNITS 3 & 4

An integral part of the course is the completion of VCE Dance Units 3 & 4. The students utilise research methods to build communication skills and creative abilities to complete set tasks. It demands high levels of compositional practice to develop a personal movement vocabulary and manipulate choreographic devices and structures in their own works.

The students create two solos and one learnt group work. They are assessed through a number of written assessments (SACS) in which they analyse the learning, choreographic, rehearsal and performance processes involved in their choreography. The solo pieces they create are performed for examination in the external VCE examination.

Students also research and analyse influences on seminal dance makers and key works which are assessed through written assessments (SACS) and the VCE external written examination.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Integration of acrobatic-dance elements in floor work and partnering
- Complex instigation of movement and virtuosic actions in extended sequences
- Dexterity with varied time and energy qualities in extended phrases
- Development of individual movement vocabulary through the use of improvisation and choreographic processes
- The ability to cooperate effectively and responsibly both independently and with others on creative tasks
- Identifying and analysing elements of composition
- Utilising a wide range of choreographic devices in own choreography
- 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 3-4

Further information about VCE Dance Units 3-4 is available on VCAA website: [VCAA VCE Dance Study Design Contemporary Units 3 & 4](#)





JAZZ

RATIONALE

The professional dance industry has escalated the demand for flexible and adaptable dancers and the VCASS dance curriculum recognises the important role Jazz training takes as part of a coordinated delivery of skills and training. As such Jazz is a core subject in the VCASS dance curriculum, running from Year 7 to year 12.

The VCASS Jazz dance program heightens the understanding of choreographic nuance and broadens the scope of repertoire experienced by students. These elements allow for differentiation for individual students, add to specialist skills, support broader career opportunities and promote longevity within the landscape of a diverse and challenging career.

The Jazz dance program includes a focus on acting, interpretive and performance techniques which foster the ability to communicate and interpret a wide range of repertoire with the appropriate character and story-telling. This training is utilised and inherent to each discipline and thereby upskills each student's overall achievement.

AIM

The Jazz program aims to embed the founding principles of the dance training delivered at VCASS and promote the development of a well-rounded artist with experience in a diverse range of dance styles. Students achieve high-level skills in movement vocabulary and dynamic articulation which are connected to their ability to analyse and interpret story and character.

The junior years (Year 7, 8 and 9), establish focus on exacting form, technique and strength-building, laying the foundational skills that support virtuosic and technical achievement. This aspect of the course also provides an introduction to the context of professional aesthetic styles required of an industry jazz dancer.

The senior years (Year 10, 11 and 12), enrich this training while investigating the more diverse and complicated skills surrounding the application of acting and interpretation through dance. Students experience a comprehensive set of skills and technical abilities to interpret and deliver complex, nuanced and technically demanding repertoire. At the completion of this course students have the capability to audition for tertiary training - or in some cases employment - in musical theatre.



YEAR 7 JAZZ

The first year of the course introduces the founding principles of Jazz technique and promotes its ability to diversify and support success in dance training. The course includes an introduction to the history of jazz dance and academic study of the iconic repertoire and its choreographers.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Establish the founding principles and approaches to technique: posture, alignment, core stability, use of breath, control and studio etiquette
- Introduction to Jazz specific principles – e.g., parallel lines, low levels, flexed feet, isolation and dynamic movement qualities
- Specificity and accuracy - Develop an increased accuracy with the details, shapes, planes and lines within choreography
- Musicality - developing the ability to listen, respond and interpret music through movement
- Communication - facilitate group work to establish communication skills, spatial awareness and sound partnering technique
- Positive class culture – establish a respectful and communicative environment, providing a safe and productive learning atmosphere
- Research, document and present an assignment exploring the history and influences of Theatrical Jazz.

YEAR 8 JAZZ

The second year of training continues to develop and cement the founding principles of the Jazz technique and its ability to consolidate the diverse range of essential skills. The second year also increases the difficulty level surrounding repertoire and promotes learning approaches to the performance of choreography. The course continues to explore the history of Jazz dance and the academic study of its repertoire and choreographers.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Consolidation of the founding principles and approaches to Jazz; posture, alignment, core stability, breath, muscular support, parallel lines, low levels, flexed feet and isolation skills
- Introducing an increased difficulty level surrounding repertoire to challenge and train specificity and coordination skills
- Further development of musicality and the ability to move through a range of movement qualities within a phrase
- Introducing complexity and challenge into studied vocabulary
- Introduction and development of improvisation skills and autonomy in relation to the use of movement qualities and dynamics
- Continued (introductory level) partner work, increasing the development of communication and spatial awareness
- Research, document and present an assignment exploring the history and influences of Theatrical Jazz.

YEAR 9 JAZZ

The third year of training introduces more complexity using an increased range and combination of dynamic elements, technical skills, coordinative actions and transitions between levels. Set progressions are given to consolidate essential work and challenge the students to improvise and explore varied and expressive movements. The elements of storytelling are explored through introducing the combination of movement and music, expressive actions, and vocalisation.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Consolidation and extension of the founding principles and approaches to Jazz; posture, alignment, core stability, speed, breath, muscular support, parallel lines, low levels and flexed feet.
- The introduction of set progressions which develop coordination, individuality, autonomy and musicality
- A marked increase in the level of isolation training
- Increased difficulty in kick and pirouette combinations, building upon solid technical placement.
- Floor work – moving in and out of the floor safely, weight bearing and rolls and slides
- The exacting use of form and its relation to counts - learning the importance of counts and their role in communicating choreographic intention
- Continued (mid-level) partner work, advancing grips and weight transference.
- The continued development of stage presence and performative skills
- Maintain a Jazz history diary (exploring the history and influence of Theatrical Jazz Years 7 - 9)
- Vocal Project – the submission of a video requiring the students to choose their favourite song to submit a verse and a chorus for feed-back

YEAR 10 JAZZ

The Year 10 Jazz program forms part of a 3 year program spanning Years 10, 11 and 12. The Year 10 curriculum establishes essential advances in technical skills linked with increased nuance to storytelling and character interpretation. Technical and class formats continue with increased rigour and level of difficulty, introducing individual interpretation of given styles that also express mood and atmosphere development.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- The introduction of acting analysis and techniques with a focus on their application to dance choreography. This will be foundational work that exposes the students to a deeper and more embodied way of connecting story and dance movement.
- Continued advancement and reinforcement of the traditional jazz technique and class format. Increased level of difficulty throughout; kicks, pirouettes, leaps, floor work, centre practice and adage
- ‘Groove Progressions’ are delivered which allow specific moods and atmospheres to be incorporated.
- Consolidation of count training – exacting counts upon more difficult and highly syncopated choreography
- Continued (mid to high level) partner work, advancing grips and weight transference

YEAR 11 JAZZ

The Year 11 Jazz program establishes the skills required to acquire, replicate, interpret, and perform a broad spectrum of choreography. All areas of technique and technical precision are increased and the range of repertoire and styles diversify. Acting techniques and approaches are explored and applied to solos or group choreography which include given circumstances, objectives, actions and music track titles.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Advanced level jazz techniques and class format; cardio, isolations, 'Groove Progressions', kicks, pirouettes, adage, floor work, centre practice, leaps and grand allegro
- Dynamics and movement qualities are delivered to challenge the increased strength and capacity of students
- The consolidation of acting analysis and techniques with a focus on Stanislavski's method of given circumstances, objectives, actions and beat titles
- Continued (mid to high level) partner work, advancing grips and weight transference
- Acquisition of dance styles, increased understanding and application of groove and style practices to develop responsiveness to various styles of choreography

YEAR 12 JAZZ

The Year 12 Jazz program anticipates real-world circumstances such as auditions and/or company rehearsal environments. The program tests the student's responses to these circumstances and the subsequent analysis and reflection, inform any areas of training that need confirmation or deeper understanding. Responding to each Year 12 group provides an opportunity for greater differentiation of individual skills and becomes excellent preparation for auditions into professional life or further university study.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Acquisition of professional level skills in class content and exercises
- Replication of professional rehearsal circumstances
- Interpretation and individual styling within given choreography and the opportunity to collaborate with choreographers
- Audition practices – facilitating audition practice sessions to test and train students to demonstrate speedy acquisition of repertoire with incorporated performance qualities and interpretation
- Rapid consumption of repertoire to incorporate a broad range of styles over the year and consolidate the processes that work best for individual students
- Preparation of audition skills and material for professional or tertiary transitions



ACROBATICS

YEARS 7-9

RATIONALE

Acrobatic dance provides the student with virtuosic physical skills, techniques and acrobatic abilities beneficial to their future careers in dance. Students develop individual abilities within the given vocabulary of acrobatic skills. The classwork develops coordination, speed, strength, flexibility and confidence in acrobatic dance technique.

AIMS

The course utilises The Acrobatic Dance Association syllabus which progressively trains students to integrate acrobatic skills with dance technique and choreography. The course covers four main areas; balancing, floor work, quick work and specialties.

The course provides the opportunity for students to develop virtuosic skills, awareness and orientation skills in relation to their bodies and the surroundings, and helps them to prepare for contemporary dance, composition and commercial dance styles. Strengthening and flexibility are key areas of focus in this course.

YEAR 7

Year 7 Acrobatic dance provides the students with an introduction to acrobatic dance skills and technique. Students engage with basic skills to develop strength and safety with the content, and are provided with extension as appropriate to their capabilities.

YEAR 8

Year 8 Acrobatics aims to broaden the range of students' skills in this subject. The course provides the opportunity for students to prepare and develop essential virtuosic skills, Greater emphasis is placed on embedding consistency of skill, speed and power in their technique. More complex dance elements and combinations are explored to prepare for choreography in both contemporary and commercial dance styles.

YEAR 9

The Year 9 Acrobatic dance provides the student with advanced acrobatic dance skills and techniques designed for performing acrobatics in a theatrical context. Students develop individual abilities within the given vocabulary. The classwork covers a broad range of content in order to develop coordination, speed, strength, flexibility and confidence in acrobatics. The course provides the opportunity for students to compose and perform acrobatics in a dance context, preparing them for contemporary dance, composition and commercial dance styles.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- Balancing includes headstands and handstands; partner work and chair work
- Floor work includes slow work such as cartwheels, front and back walk-overs and bend-backs
- Quick work includes front handsprings, aerial cartwheels and backflips
- Speciality work includes selective skill 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- 8

RATIONALE

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

AIMS

To introduce and extend students to the techniques, heritage and styles of tap dance.

The course builds to develop mastery of difficult and complex rhythmical sequences performed in a variety of styles. Tap is taught in levels depending upon the background and technical achievement of the dancer. Students will learn a variety of tap steps including: shuffles, cramp rolls, time steps, pick-ups and wings, depending on their level of proficiency.

YEAR 7

In this introductory course, Year 7 students learn and use tap dance technique to develop rhythmic phrasing, syncopation, musicality, coordination and an individual movement style using the upper body.

Tap dance creates rhythms with the feet, playing rich phrases that have dynamics, expression, variety and musicality. Students will begin to learn a variety of styles including: soft shoe, traditional, contemporary, and acapella.

YEAR 8

In this intermediate course, Tap aims to develop secure and consistent skills. Students continue to develop the use of rhythmical phrasing, syncopation, musicality, co-ordination and an individual movement style using the upper body. They learn to produce clear, crisp and dynamic beats with their feet to build greater technical skill..

Students will explore how phrases are executed to vary dynamics, expression, variety and musicality. Students will continue to learn a variety of styles including: soft shoe, traditional, contemporary, and acapella.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

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

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

YEARS 7 - 9

RATIONALE

The Strength and Conditioning classes develop kinaesthetic awareness and cover a range of strength, fitness, flexibility activities to improve aerobic fitness, control, plyometric power and individual technical skills. These are delivered by dance staff in communication with our on site physiotherapists and respond to research and current practice in the professional dance industry.

TRAINING EMPHASIS: BODY AWARENESS

- Kinaesthetic imagery of the flow of energy in multiple directions
- Breath as an instigation of, and response to movement
- Providing a program that students can utilise in preparation for classes and training
- Fluency and awareness of muscular instigations and imagery for movement

TRAINING EMPHASIS: FITNESS

- This program develops specific strength training for dancers, including Plyometrics, Circuit, Aerobics and Resistance training.
- Tapered strength training to target specific needs
- Developing active strength and control for effective alignment
- Power, stamina and speed training for allegro and virtuosic dance skills

YEARS 10 -12

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

The Strength and Conditioning program develops kinaesthetic awareness and the physical capacity of students to build greater strength, flexibility, power, control and alignment in physical skills. These selected practices anticipate the methods used in the profession and provide greater opportunities to develop the fitness, strength and flexibility of the students appropriate to their physical development

This subject also allows the school to engage external experts for workshops when appropriate.

A circuit and free-weights class and a licensed training program titled "Progressing Ballet Technique" (PBT) The free weights circuit-class aims to build stamina and strength for the upper body, core and legs. Hand- weights, resistance bands, barbells and a range of strength-building equipment is used in these classes to develop increased physical capacity which supports safety and skills for partnering, steps of elevation and physical stamina.

Circuit class - Training Emphasis

- Safe technique in the use of weights, including alignment, and management of fatigue and loading.
- Strength building in the muscles of the upper body, legs and core.
- Use of repetition and loading with hand held weights in circuit programs to build strength and power.
- Building stamina with programs designed to challenge heart-rate

(Strength and Conditioning - Continued)

PBT (Progressive Ballet Technique)

PBT provides a comprehensive and graded series of exercises which trigger the areas of strength needed for the execution and coordination of dance actions.

Although based on ballet vocabulary, this program is valuable for dancers of all theatrical dance styles.

The program uses fitballs and hand-held accessories such as therabands to add complexity and progressions for students.

PBT - Training Emphasis:

- Kinaesthetic imagery of the flow of energy in multiple directions
- Breath as an instigation of, and response to movement
- Providing a program that students can utilise in preparation for classes and training
- Fluency and awareness of muscular instigations and imagery for movement
- Strength, control and awareness of muscular engagement for alignment and range of motions.
- Tapered training programs to target specific technical and physical needs and differentiation
- Developing active strength and authentic practices for control and alignment
- Improved balance, isolation, alignment, strength through the practice of dance-specific actions.



REPERTOIRE & REHEARSALS

YEARS 7-12

RATIONALE

Dance is a creative, technical and interpretive art form. Preparing for the joys of performance begins with the learning gained through classes, rehearsal and choreography. Within a rehearsal context students develop confidence to learn and apply the expressive skills of dance. They learn to prioritise the choreographic vision, to value the cooperation and collaboration of the rehearsal and creative processes, and how to bring dance works to a performance standard.

TRAINING EMPHASIS:

- To challenge and develop technical skills
- To authentically link technical skills to artistic interpretation
- To develop the stamina, maturity and professionalism needed to rehearse and execute a full-length performance
- To develop potential as an interpretive artist in a range of dance styles and techniques
- Working with a variety of choreographers
- To expose students to professional practices of rehearsals and performance preparation
- Developing a repertoire of dance works





VCE/VET CERTIFICATE II

IN DANCE UNITS 1 & 2 (COMPLETED IN YEAR 11)

CORE UNITS: (4)

DEVELOP BASIC DANCE TECHNIQUES

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to develop basic dance techniques for a limited range of styles under the supervision of a teacher.

ASSESSMENT

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

FOLLOW BASIC SAFE DANCE PRACTICES

And

DEVELOP A BASIC LEVEL OF PHYSICAL CONDITION FOR DANCE PERFORMANCE

These units describe the skills and knowledge required to build the foundations for a safe and healthy career in the live performance industry, through the application of safe dance practices. And the implementation of effective fitness regimes.

Students complete assignments covering fitness training, the musculoskeletal systems treatment of injuries, and safe dance practices.

ASSESSMENT

1. Demonstration of the Body conditioning program
2. Written questions and tasks
3. Development of a Personal Fitness Program
4. Periodic Tests

[VCE VET Dance - Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority](#)

PREPARE FOR LIVE PERFORMANCES

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to prepare to perform at a basic level for audiences in contexts such as various entertainment venues, functions and community events.

ASSESSMENT

1. Written Questions.
2. Preparation of at least two performance pieces.
3. Observation.

SELECTED ELECTIVE UNITS: (3) PROVIDE BASIC EMERGENCY LIFE SUPPORT

ASSESSMENT

1. Follow DRSABCD with ARC Guidelines
2. Respond to one simulated first aid scenario
3. Apply first aid procedures e.g. Anaphylaxis shock, choking, allergic reaction, bleeding control

PERFORM BASIC CONTEMPORARY DANCE TECHNIQUE

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to perform basic contemporary dance forms and techniques for audiences. This involves using knowledge of influences in contemporary dance when performing short dance sequences.

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

PERFORM BASIC BALLET TECHNIQUE

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to perform basic ballet techniques for audiences. It involves applying knowledge of ballet as an art form when performing short ballet sequences.

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 Dance - Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority](#)

VCE/VET DANCE UNITS 3-4

(COMPLETED IN YEAR 12)

CORE UNITS: (4)

DEVELOP PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to prepare physically and psychologically to perform for live audiences.

1. Written Questions.
2. Demonstration of performance techniques in at least two performance pieces.
3. Observation.

INCORPORATE ARTISTIC EXPRESSION INTO BASIC DANCE PERFORMANCES

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to incorporate artistic expression and expressive Techniques into basic dance performances under the supervision of experienced dance teachers.

ASSESSMENT

Rehearse basic dance techniques including ballet and contemporary dance.

4. Develop expressive techniques – projection of personality in these techniques.
5. Perform these techniques.

DEVELOP PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES & INCORPORATE ARTISTIC EXPRESSION INTO BASIC DANCE PERFORMANCES FORM PORTFOLIO 2 FOR SCORED ASSESSMENT

APPLY CREATIVE ARTS INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to develop and apply basic creative arts industry knowledge to industry practices. It includes understanding industry structures and operations, employment obligations and opportunities, the impact of new technology, and identification of industry laws, regulations, and protocols. It involves researching the creative arts industry and updating personal knowledge based on this research.

ASSESSMENT

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

[VCE VET Dance - Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority](#)

DEVELOP AUDITION TECHNIQUES

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to develop and apply an understanding of the audition process in the live performance industry.

ASSESSMENT

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.

APPLY CREATIVE ARTS INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE & DEVELOP AUDITION TECHNIQUES FORM PORTFOLIO 1 FOR SCORED ASSESSMENT

SELECTED ELECTIVE UNITS

INCREASE DEPTH OF BALLET DANCE TECHNIQUES

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to consolidate basic ballet dance technique and achieve a greater depth of expression in dance classes and performance.

ASSESSMENT

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

INCREASE DEPTH OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE TECHNIQUES

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to consolidate basic contemporary dance technique and achieve a greater depth of expression in dance classes and performance.

ASSESSMENT

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

INCREASE DEPTH OF BALLET DANCE TECHNIQUES & INCREASE DEPTH OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE TECHNIQUES FORM WORK PERFORMANCE FOR SCORED ASSESSMENT

[VCE VET Dance - Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority](#)

SCORED ASSESSMENT

Students wishing to receive an ATAR contribution for VCE VET Dance must undertake scored assessment. This consists of three coursework tasks, worth 50% of the overall study score, and a performance examination worth 50% of the overall study score.

Course Work Tasks

1. Portfolio 1
2. Portfolio 2
3. Work Performance

Performance Exam

Students are required to perform two solo dances learnt from the dance repertoire of a choreographer/teacher. Each solo dance performed must correlate to the elective units of competency that the student is enrolled in as part of the Units 3 and 4 sequence of the VCE VET Dance program. Each solo dance must demonstrate a distinctly different style and is performed to an external panel.

[VCE VET Dance - Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority](#)



REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT YEARS 7 - 12

REPORTS

Student achievement is communicated to families twice annually in alignment with the schools' Reporting Policy. All dance subjects will be reported on at the end of each term, with progress reports in Term 1 and 3 and semester reports at the end of Terms 2 and 4. Formative assessment data is used throughout the year to provide feedback, relating student progress and achievement to the skills outlined by Progressions Frameworks and course outlines.

INTERNAL DANCE ASSESSMENTS

Assessment for all practical dance subjects culminates with presentations in an open and set class format. Students present choreographed work that demonstrates skill progressions and technical achievements to a panel of staff and external professionals.

The assessment rubrics and criteria guide the panel to determine levels of student achievement and provide feedback to students which form part of their end of year report.







