Dance (2010)
Compiled by the Queensland Studies Authority

September 2011

About this advice
This advice is intended to help teachers implement the syllabus in their school setting. It provides information about suggested learning experiences. It is based on information provided in the Dance Senior Syllabus (2004).

It should be read in conjunction with the Dance Senior Syllabus (2010).
In the study of Dance, unique skills are developed and applied through learning experiences that recognise the interrelationships between the three syllabus dimensions: Choreography, Performance and Appreciation. For example, critical reflection refines and develops skills in Choreography and Performance while enhancing Choreography skills, and Performance (or performing) impacts on the ability to appreciate the works of others. Learning experiences reflect both the interconnectedness and the developmental nature of the course.

**General guidelines for learning experiences**

Learning experiences progress from simple to more complex as the course progresses, developing students as interdependent and independent learners. Opportunities for self-paced learning and shared and cooperative learning support the development of the dance components and skills relevant to learning and assessment.

Learning experiences draw on a range of pedagogical approaches; for example guided discovery, inquiry, cooperative learning, individualised instruction.

Learning experiences can reflect different stages of the course by adapting:

- the complexity, quantity or diversity of information that must be accessed, incorporated or used
- the information-gathering requirements
- the complexity of the required analysis, synthesis and evaluation of information
- the complexity of stimuli
- the abstractness of concepts or ideas
- performance conditions in danceworks
- the dance components and skills.

In developing learning experiences teachers must give careful consideration to the relationship between the danceworks selected for study and the dance components and skills examined, experienced and reflected upon as part of this study.

**Choreography**

In developing the dimension, Choreography, students have opportunities to explore, select, improvise, manipulate and structure movement for personal expression, and are encouraged to develop an individual style. Students research, conceive and generate conceptual and thematic intent for their choreography. Students’ understanding of their own choreography is enriched by the study of dance components and skills as they manifest through evolving styles of dance. Learning experiences should support the relationship between Choreography and Appreciation, encourage critical reflection and discourse about their own and others’ work and lead to the recognition of a range of possible choreographic/movement responses.

Critical reflection on their own work assists students to better define, interpret and articulate dance contexts and choreographic intent and more effectively respond to stimulus to reshape choreography. Learning experiences of this nature are especially important as a statement of choreographic intent by the choreographer must accompany each dancework.

Students should explore a variety of choreographic approaches, for example, the choreographer creates all movement material or asks the dancers to improvise around a stimulus and then selects and manipulates the movement into a dancework.
Students could be involved in:

- researching facts/concepts/themes
- exploring, selecting and manipulating dance components and skills
- responding to a range of stimuli to construct movement
- constructing movement sequences
- analysing and evaluating own choreographic process and danceworks
- experimenting with and critically reflecting on set and improvised movement
- analysing and evaluating techniques used by a variety of choreographers
- manipulating time signatures and complex rhythmic structures
- recognising signs and symbols associated with dance
- teacher-directed improvisation
- examining teacher exposition and demonstration
- workshops with professional artists
- individual, pairs, small and large group work
- planning and organising the development and rehearsal of a dancework
- student movement demonstrations and discussion
- experimentation with non-movement components
- creating statements of choreographic intent.

**Performance**

In developing the dimension, Performance, learning experiences should develop students’ knowledge, demonstration and manipulation of dance components and skills, while emphasising the required technical skills and exploring expressive skills in a variety of dance styles, genres and contexts. Replication of movement is central to many styles of dance, but it is important to encourage individual expression, acknowledging the individual nature of dancers and the unique impact this has on their interpretation of the choreographic intent.

Learning experiences in Performance assist students to refine and critically reflect on their demonstration and interpretation of the dance components and skills to communicate choreographic intent. Rehearsal should be used to reflect on their performances and where applicable the performances of other group members and groups.

The study of anatomy, alignment principles and safe dance practices help students understand the idiosyncratic nature of their own bodies and help shape personal expression. When using visual images of professional dancers as performance examples, teachers should, where possible, include dancers with different body types.

Students could be involved in:

- examining and enacting safe dance practices
- describing anatomical structures and exploring kinaesthetic understandings and applying this to their own bodies and movement practices
- exploring and enacting alignment analysis, i.e. standing, sitting, lying (e.g. parallel standing analysis, plié analysis, movement therapies, Alexander/Feldenkrais techniques, Pilates)
- devising warm-ups
- examining and critiquing their own and others’ performances, focusing on the dance components and skills, technique and expression
- performing as individuals, pairs, small and large groups to a variety of audiences, including teacher and peers
- demonstrating and manipulating dance components and skills in a variety of styles, genres and contexts
- analysing dance components and skills and their use in communicating choreographic intent
- rehearsing and refining performances
- viewing videoed student performance for feedback and critical reflection
- attending workshops with professional artists
- analysing the technical and expressive skills of professional artists.

**Appreciation**

In developing the dimension, Appreciation, teachers provide opportunities for students to critically respond to dance texts, contexts and artists. Students consider the purposes dance serves in society as well as how society shapes the evolution of dance.

Learning experiences in Appreciation should not be restricted solely to analysis of danceworks. For example, analysis could relate to a funding submission that requires evaluation and justification. It is important to acknowledge and relate initial aesthetic responses to danceworks that operate through the senses and feelings. Students should gain the skills necessary to develop, relate and communicate considered aesthetic responses to danceworks. To help students respond to their own danceworks and those of others, teachers need to develop in students the skills of analysis, interpretation, synthesis, evaluation and communication. These Appreciation skills are applied to the Choreography and Performance of dance in its context.

Students could be involved in:
- articulating initial aesthetic responses to danceworks (e.g. oral, written, through other art forms)
- maintaining a personal journal
- researching, collating and analysing contextual information from monologues, video, film, internet material, interviews, research papers, computer databases, textbooks, brochures
- interpreting pictorial formats (e.g. photographs, sketches, paintings, posters, diagrams)
- viewing danceworks (e.g. live, on video, through film, via the internet)
- examining newspaper, magazine and journal reviews, critiques and performance programs
- analysing and interpreting dance-related data (e.g. statistical information in graphic and tabular form, interviews and questionnaires)
- constructing and conducting interviews and questionnaires
- analysing, interpreting and evaluating choreography and performance of dance in particular contexts, through short written responses, essays, reviews/critiques and reports
- discussing and debating the aesthetic qualities of danceworks in groups
- engaging with professional practitioners, dance participants and audiences
- critically reflecting on students’ own choreography and performance work
- experimenting with multimedia presentations and seminars.
Examples of interrelated learning experiences

Choreography and Appreciation
Providing learning experiences that support the relationship between Choreography and Appreciation will help strengthen student performances in all three dimensions. Students transfer critical thinking skills developed in Appreciation to Choreography and vice versa.

Students could be involved in:
- reflecting on their own and others’ choreographic work
- explaining and demonstrating choreographic process, i.e. definition of context, developing choreographic intent, response to stimulus, reflection, reassessing and reshaping choreography, then repeated critical appraisal and reshaping of choreographic work
- analysing, interpreting and evaluating professional choreographers’ work to help build the students’ choreographic process.

Performance and Choreography
Students could be involved in:
- responding to a professional choreographers’ work
- responding to their own and others’ non-professional choreography
- assisting in the choreographic process by demonstrating the choreographer’s instructions during the creation of a dance
- analysing and evaluating the ways in which dancers’ physical and expressive skills affect the communication of the choreographer’s intent.

Appreciation and Performance
Students could be involved in:
- analysing, interpreting and evaluating professional and non-professional dancers’ physical and expressive skills
- reflecting on, manipulating and improving their own performance
- explaining their performance process by writing or speaking about it (e.g. in a logbook).