

Assessment Specifications

Level 2 Dance 2026

Published in October 2025

General information

Domain:	Dance Perspectives
Standards:	91211, 91212
Assessment method:	Examination, end of year
Assessment medium:	Printed paper

[Dance subject page](#)

[National secondary examinations timetable](#)

Information relating to all achievement standards

For each standard, three questions will be provided, and candidates will be required to answer all three questions.

Questions may include bullet point suggestions to provide guidance for candidates in answering the questions. These bullet points are not intended to limit candidates' answers.

Questions will require answers in extended paragraph or essay form. Answers should be supported by specific examples, and candidates may also use bullet points and diagrams, where relevant, to support their discussion. Diagrams should be labelled clearly and will be assessed on the quality of information conveyed, and not their artistic merit (i.e. simple stick figures are satisfactory).

Candidates must use ink for both sketched and written answers.

Information in planning spaces will not be marked.

Special assessment conditions

Refer to the NZQA website for further information:

[Aromatawai special assessment conditions](#)

Specific information for individual achievement standards

Standard:	91211
Title:	Provide an interpretation of a dance performance with supporting evidence
Version:	2
Number of credits:	4

Candidates will be required to answer THREE questions on key aspects of a dance performance they have studied. In 2026, candidates should be familiar with aspects of:

- ONE important movement
- costume
- the element of body awareness.

Candidates will be given 5 minutes to read the questions. A recording of the dance performance (3–6 minutes in duration) will then be shown twice, with a pause of 10 minutes in between. Candidates may start making notes or answering the questions at any time after the examination begins.

Candidates may refer to key aspects not shown in the recording to support their answers.

The recording

The recording of the dance performance may comprise either a complete work, or a single continuous excerpt from a longer work. It must:

- include only the 3–6 minutes of material that is to be viewed by the candidates
- NOT be a compilation of excerpts
- be of a dance work that is choreographed, performed and filmed to a professional standard, and include no acting footage that is not integral to the choreography
- show at least THREE dancers
- feature minimal editing (e.g. long shots, close-ups, and special filming effects), which does not detract from the candidates' overall view and understanding of the work.

The recording may be presented on any medium that can produce a high-quality display on a 60 cm screen. The recording must include only a single instance (or 'playing') of the 3–6 minutes of material.

Resources to be supplied by the school

The school must provide to the Exam Centre Manager, for each examination space:

- TWO copies of the recording of the dance performance
- a means of displaying the recording (i.e. monitor or screen) at least 60 cm (25 in) in size (measured on the diagonal)
- a means of playing the recording, plus a back-up device.

If the dance performance is not one from the list of suggestions above, the recording must be provided to NZQA. Further information on the submission of this material will be made available in 2026.

The dance performance

The dance performance should have sufficient variation and content to enable candidates to analyse and evaluate. Examples of suitable dances include:

Dance	From	Choreographer	Company
Section 1	<i>Trees, Birds then People</i>	Shona McCullagh	NZDC
Milagros		Javier De Frutos	RNZB
Poor Boy	<i>Ihi FreNZy</i>	Mark Baldwin	RNZB
Steps in the Street	<i>Chronicle</i>	Martha Graham	Martha Graham Dance Company
Little Red Rooster	<i>Rooster</i>	Christopher Bruce	Rambert Dance Company
Opening section	<i>Ghost Dances</i>	Christopher Bruce	Rambert Dance Company
Swan Song	<i>Swan Song</i>	Christopher Bruce	Rambert Dance Company
Various	<i>Mauri</i>	Stephen Bradshaw	Atamira Dance Company
Various	<i>Run</i>	Marc Brew	Touch Compass Dance Company
Various	<i>Mass Solitude</i>	Sarah Foster-Sproull	Footnote New Zealand Dance & Guangdong Modern Dance Company
Tawhirimatea	<i>Rotunda</i>	Shona McCullagh	NZDC
Coventry Carol	<i>Rotunda</i>	Shona McCullagh	NZDC
Passchendaele	<i>Salute</i>	Neil Ieremia	RNZB
Anatomy of a Passing Cloud		Javier De Frutos	RNZB

For further information, refer to the [Explanatory Notes of achievement standard 91211](#) and the most recent Assessment Report.

Standard:	91212
Title:	Demonstrate understanding of a dance genre or style
Version:	2
Number of credits:	4

Candidates will be required to answer three questions on a dance genre or style they have studied. The questions will relate to the relationship of the dance genre or style to its context, as well as features of the dance genre or style and how these have stayed the same or changed over time. In 2026, candidates should be familiar with:

- a significant person and/or group
- movement
- sound.

Candidates must refer to the same dance genre or style throughout, but may refer to a number of specific dances in the genre or style.

Candidates would benefit from having experienced the dance genre or style. Examples of suitable dance genres or styles include, but are not limited to:

- ballet (e.g. court dance, Romantic ballet)
- modern (e.g. Martha Graham, Isadora Duncan)
- contemporary/post-modern (e.g. Merce Cunningham)
- hip-hop (e.g. krumping, b-boy, clowning)
- kapa haka
- gumboot dance
- capoeira
- lindy hop
- Fosse jazz
- Argentinian tango
- tap dance (e.g. industrial tap).

For further information, refer to the [Explanatory Notes of achievement standard 91212](#) and the Assessment Report.