

Assessment Specifications

Level 3 Dance 2026

Published in October 2025

General information

Domain:	Dance Perspectives
Standards:	91594, 91595
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, a range of questions will be provided. Candidates will be required to choose and respond to ONE of the questions. Each question may contain more than one part, but the answers will be assessed holistically.

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.

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:	91594
Title:	Analyse a dance performance
Version:	2
Number of credits:	4

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

- production/design decisions
- choreographic cohesion
- an important moment.

Candidates will be given 5 minutes to read the questions and select one to answer. 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 question 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 91594](#) and the most recent Assessment Report.

Standard:	91595
Title:	Demonstrate understanding of the development of dance in Aotearoa / New Zealand
Version:	2
Number of credits:	4

Candidates will answer ONE question on selected aspects of the development of dance in Aotearoa / New Zealand. In 2026, candidates should be familiar with:

- an established New Zealand Dance Company
- Michael Parmenter
- competitions and festivals in a cultural or social dance form
- a Māori dance form.

Candidates may draw on examples from more than one genre or style.

For further information, refer to the [Explanatory Notes of achievement standard 91595](#) and the Assessment Report.