Dance

Stage 6

Support Document

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7.4 Sample Teaching Strategies — Film and Video
1 Introduction

In 1999, a new syllabus for Stage 6 Dance was published as part of the revision of the NSW Higher School Certificate. These revisions were based on a report of the Higher School Certificate by Professor Barry McGaw and became known as the Government’s White Paper.

The Dance Stage 6 Syllabus (1999) replaces the Dance 2 Unit Syllabus and the Classical Ballet 2/3 Unit Syllabus and is for implementation for the Preliminary course in the year 2000.

This support document is designed to assist teachers in the implementation of Stage 6 Dance.

This document is divided into five major sections:

- **Dance as an Artform in the Dance Stage 6 Syllabus**
  
  This section clearly articulates the notion of dance as an artform as adopted in the Dance Stage 6 Syllabus (1999).

- **The Performance Component**
  
  This section examines performance in both the Preliminary and HSC courses. It provides some different approaches to teaching and learning, and articulates the requirements for core and Major Study — Performance.

- **The Composition Component**
  
  This section examines composition in both the Preliminary and HSC courses. It provides some different approaches to teaching and learning, and articulates the requirements for Core and Major Study — Composition. There is a sample approach to sequencing content that may be of use to teachers.

- **The Appreciation Component**
  
  This section examines appreciation in both the Preliminary and HSC courses. It provides some different approaches to teaching and learning and articulates the requirements of the Major Study — Appreciation. There is a sample approach to sequencing content that may be of use to teachers.

- **Major Study — Dance and Technology**
  
  This is a new area of study in Stage 6 Dance. There is background information provided as well as a sample sequencing of content for both the Film and Video and Virtual Body options.
2 Dance as an Artform in the Dance Stage 6 Syllabus

The study of Dance in Stage 6 is based on the premise that in order to appreciate and make judgements about dances as works of art (appreciation) students should experience the connection between dance training and style (performance), and the compositional process and the formal qualities of a dance (dance composition). Students should experience this connection because dance philosophers and writers draw clear links between the training, the compositional process, and the properties of dances as works of art. That is, in dance in education, students should not only understand but experience dance through the inter-relatedness of the course components. This inter-relatedness between composing, performing and appreciating, and the communication of ideas as dance, is what contributes to our understanding of dance as an artform. The implications for teaching and learning are that:

- students in the performance component experience dance training incorporating technique and style:
  - in learning about being performers they should experience being choreographed
  and that
  - choreography should be based on the processes and formal qualities that underpin dance
- students in the composition component experience making a dance or a work based on the areas of study but also informed by their experiences in being choreographed as part of the performance component
- students appreciate dance works of art based on knowledge, understanding and skills relating to dance concepts but also because of their experiences in the other course components, promoting positive values about dance as an artform.

The dances that form the basis for study in the appreciation component, are identified with the artistic function of dance and as works of art are linked to the tradition of theatre dance. The implication here is that the study of performance and composition should also be based on the tradition of theatre dance. This is shown in the Dance Stage 6 Syllabus where:

- the training which underpins the performance component is based on the fundamentals of classical ballet and modern dance techniques, which form the basis of training in theatre dance
- the core performance ‘dance’ and the major study performance ‘work’ are a result of classwork and as such should be based on compositional processes and formal qualities
- there is a link between the technique employed in the performance component and the emphasis on personal style in core and Major Study — Composition
- the experience of performing and composing informs appreciation which, in turn, informs performance and composition.
3 Approaches to Programming

Performance, composition and appreciation provide the foundation for all learning in Stage 6 Dance. It is acknowledged that students may enter the Preliminary course with a wide range of prior dance experience. In order to accommodate the range of students in a single course, a higher percentage of weighting/time has been allocated to the performance component in the Preliminary course to provide for the necessary physical training and the understanding of how this training occurs.

The course structure in the Preliminary course has an additional 20% of time that is to be allocated by the teacher across the components to suit the specific circumstances and context of the class. It is stipulated that there is a 20% minimum allocation for composition, a 20% minimum allocation for appreciation and a 50% maximum allocation for performance. The teacher will be required to make decisions based on the particular needs of the class, their interests and backgrounds in dance when allocating this additional 20%.

When programming the content and outcomes it is important to consider the progression of content in each component within the indicative time and how this affects individual lessons. A clear understanding of outcomes will assist teachers to begin programming units of work and devising teaching strategies. When developing assessment tasks, clear criteria must be developed and students should be marked against the set criteria.

This support document provides suggested approaches to performance, composition and appreciation. Some teaching strategies and content sequences are provided to assist programming approaches, as well as sample assessment tasks and marking criteria. These approaches are not intended to be prescriptive, but are provided as suggested starting points to assist teachers in the development of programs to suit the specific needs of their students.
4 The Performance Component

Core performance occupies a minimum of 40% (maximum 50%) of indicative course hours in the Preliminary course and 20% of the indicative hours in the HSC course. This component involves the knowledge, skills and understanding, values and attitudes that enable communication through dance performance. There are three areas of study:

• the knowledge, skills and understanding that enable the physical preparation of the body for dance
• the knowledge, skills and understanding through which this physical preparation is applied to the performance of dances
• the application of knowledge, skills and understanding gained from the first two areas to the performance of a selected dance.

The first area of study, the physical preparation of the body to dance, is referred to as ‘dance training’. In common practice, dance training is usually seen in conjunction with a particular dance style. In this context, dance training is seen as developing a particular set of physical skills called a ‘dance technique’, which enables the dancer to perform movements in that particular style. In these cases, the name of the dance style identifies the technique, for example – classical ballet technique(s), modern dance technique(s), jazz dance technique(s). Even within dance styles, particular emphases developed by individuals to further enhance the performance of their works is identified as a ‘technique’. Examples of such techniques include the Cecchetti Method (classical ballet), the Graham Technique (modern dance) and the Luigi Method (jazz dance).

The Dance Stage 6 Syllabus employs a generic training described as ‘dance technique’ within the context of safe dance practice and anatomical principles of movement. This training is seen as the appropriate preparation for the study of dance performance, composition and appreciation within the context of the syllabus. The training here is seen as ‘generic’ in that it is ‘all round training’ based on what is generally accepted as the best preparation for the range of dance activities within the context of the study of dance as an artform. The training is based on the fundamental physical principles that underpin performance in classical ballet and modern dance, rather than their particular stylistic characteristics.

This training enables the students to be able to perform and compose movements, phrases, sequences and dances based on skills, knowledge and understanding, and experience of the body’s capabilities. The dances that students perform and compose will be a result of classwork, based on the areas of study. These should meet the needs of the students and achieve the relevant course outcomes, without being locked into the conventions of a single or nominated style.

In the classroom, this syllabus direction translates into providing students with experience in:

• working in parallel and turn out
• on centre and off centre
• high centre of gravity and low centre of gravity
• floor work, barre work and centre work
• movements in which the dancer resists gravity and gives in to gravity
• work in which the torso is centred, using the torso to generate the movement.

4.1 The Basis of Core Performance

It is recognised that a student may bring a range of dance experiences (including no experience) to the study of performance in the Preliminary course. As the body is the instrument through which dance is experienced, a higher percentage of the weighting and indicative time (40% to 50% maximum) has been allocated to the performance component in the Preliminary course to provide as much experience to the understanding of the body’s capabilities as possible. This additional course time provides for the essential physical training, the understanding that underpins the training, the knowledge and application of safe dance practices and the development of a movement vocabulary. In the core, the performance is designated as a ‘dance’ and in the Major Study the performance is designated as a ‘work’.

The role of the teacher in this component is to provide instruction to students in dance technique, based on the fundamentals of both classical ballet and modern dance techniques, safe dance practice and anatomical principles of movement. Teachers should be able to sequence dance exercises, combinations and movement patterns, apply dance technique to dance performance and provide students with the opportunity to experience and practice dance performance. Teachers should also provide opportunities, where possible, for students to view live performances and dances on video tape that are analysed in terms of the areas of study.

In the HSC course performance component, it is the role of the teacher (or the teacher in conjunction with the students) to devise a dance as a result of class work that, through the areas of study, enables the students to meet the course component outcomes. In terms of the syllabus, the ‘dance’ is considered to be ‘…a coherent organisation of technical sequences, phrases and sections which have an overall unity…but need not be driven by thematic considerations’ (*Dance Stage 6 Syllabus* p 22).

Devising the ‘dance’ as a result of class work may provide a teacher with an opportunity to reinforce the inter-relatedness of the course components by approaching the development of this performance task in relation to the areas of study in core composition. By observing the teacher’s process in using the elements of dance to achieve the stated outcomes and then having the opportunity to experience them as performers, students are assisted in understanding and appreciating dance as an artform.

4.2 Dance Style and the Core Performance

The new *Dance Stage 6 Syllabus* does not prescribe a style of dance for the core performance ‘dance’. This provides some flexibility in devising the ‘dance’. In a sense, it allows the teacher and the students to develop a personal style along the lines of the areas of study in core composition. The movements in the ‘dance’ may be devised or derived from different sources, even a fusion (hybrid) of different dance
styles. The focus is not on dance style(s) as such, but the demonstration of ‘dance technique’ applied to dance performance, as shown in the performance of a ‘dance’ that reflects the areas of study and the course outcomes.

The syllabus places a strong emphasis on the core performance ‘dance’ as being an outcome of the classwork. The study of ‘dance technique’ leads to the development of sequences, which leads into phrases, sections and finally a whole ‘dance’.

4.3 Linking Performance to the other Course Components

‘The body is the instrument through which dance is experienced and realised. Therefore, physical training and preparation of the body (dance technique) is fundamental and of paramount importance. This training informs all three components of the course’ (Dance Stage 6 Syllabus p 11).

The elements of dance (space, time and dynamics) are tools used by the dance composer, in conjunction with intent and stimulus, to generate movement. This movement is organised (structured) into motifs and phrases, which are in turn crafted to bring unity to the dance composition. Through the training of the body (dance technique), the student knows, experiences and appreciates the body’s physical capabilities, which in turn contributes to the development of a movement vocabulary. The student is able to draw on this movement vocabulary when generating the physical imagery that forms the basis for communication of ideas in dance.

Just as the student composes dances, they also perform their own dances and the dance compositions of others. Through knowledge, skills and understanding in composing and performing, the student is able to analyse, evaluate and appreciate the compositions and performances of others. In this sense, all the areas of study within each of the core components inform each other. The link between components is the communication of ideas through dance. This inter-relatedness between composing, performing and appreciating and the communication of ideas as dance contributes to our understanding of dance as an artform.

4.4 Sample Assessment Task — Core Performance

Outcomes to be assessed:

H2.1 understands performance quality, interpretation and style relating to dance performance
H2.2 performs dance skills with confidence, commitment, focus, consistency, performance quality and with due consideration of safe dance practices
H2.3 values the diversity of dance performance.

Task: Select a phrase of movement from your core performance dance. In an oral presentation/demonstration/lecture, with a maximum of 10 minutes:

• perform the phrase in which you demonstrate the relevant aspects of dance technique and performance quality
• explain and demonstrate, through the phrase, the desired aspects of performance quality
• explain and demonstrate the correct alignment, potential injury and appropriate training of the phrase
• give an overview of safe dance practices related to the performance of the phrase
• present a one A4 page summary of the main points of the oral presentation/demonstration/lecture.

Sample Marking Criteria

1. a demonstrated understanding of performance quality, interpretive skills and stylistic understanding
2. demonstrated skill and understanding of performance quality and safe dance practices within the dance
3. a demonstrated understanding of the diverse nature of dance as an artform

4.5 Major Study — Performance: Significant Changes

The Major Study — Performance component does not advocate, name or limit specific dance styles. The vehicle for the ‘work’ is seen in terms of providing for the further study of technique and performance as it relates to dance as an artform that is choreographically driven and based on a concept/intent. In Major Study — Performance, a ‘dance’ and a ‘work’ are differentiated in terms of the context/intent. A work is considered to be a coherent organisation of technical phrases and sections driven by thematic considerations that create a unified whole.

The Dance Examination, Assessment and Reporting Supplement (1999) provides marking guidelines for student responses to Major Study — Performance. These guidelines are indicative of the knowledge and skills that students can be expected to demonstrate at various mark ranges. The criteria outlined for determining achievement in Major Study — Performance provides some guidance in the direction that teachers might take in maximising the student’s capabilities in this component.

These are:
• the level of consistency of the demonstration of dance technique relative to anatomical structure
• the level and consistency of the demonstration of strength, endurance and coordination
• the level and consistency of execution relative to the complexity of the ‘work’
• the level and consistency of performance quality, kinaesthetic awareness, control/variation of dynamics and manipulation of the elements of dance
• the level and consistency of interpretation
• a strong and consistent link between the accompaniment and the interpretation.
5 The Composition Component

Core composition occupies a minimum of 20% (maximum of 40%) of indicative course hours in the Preliminary course and 20% of indicative course hours in the HSC course.

The composition component of the course requires students to demonstrate an application of their knowledge, understanding and skill gained by studying each of the areas of study. Through these they are encouraged to study the compositional theory and practices of others to develop a personal response to the compositional process.

The content encourages students to develop their personal creativity to generate original movement. Students compose movements in a personalised style that communicates intent through movement. The teacher has a vital role to play as a facilitator in this process.

5.1 The Basis of Core Composition

The core component ‘dance’ is the vehicle by which students demonstrate their application of the compositional process and is developed as a result of class learning experiences.

The student is required to approach composition in a manner that develops new and innovative ways of moving. The syllabus suggests that the ‘dance’ be considered in terms of the way in which the areas of study are selected and developed to best portray the concept/intent.

5.2 Dance Style and the Core Composition

The focus is not on the style or genre in which the dance is performed. It is on the students’ demonstration of knowledge, understanding and skill in the compositional process. The Dance Stage 6 Syllabus does not prescribe a style of dance for the core compositional ‘dance’. It allows the student to develop a personal style as movement is generated and selected to communicate a clear choreographic intent. Assessment should not focus on the dancer or dance style, but on the demonstration of the level of ability to link the areas of study to the choreographic intent.

5.3 Major Study — Composition

In the HSC course, students specialise in an in-depth study of one course component. The student is expected to apply the skills gained from the Preliminary course and develop a dance ‘work’.

The syllabus differentiates a ‘dance’ and a ‘work’ in terms of its context and intent and one that is driven by thematic considerations. The Major Study — Composition has a thematic context that requires the students to interpret and select movement and movement qualities to best present the choreographic intent of their ‘work’.
Students should link all of the areas of study to support the interpretation of this intent.

5.4 Sample Units — Composition

The following sample units illustrate an outcomes based approach to programming, revisiting common content through the Preliminary and HSC outcomes. The process is cyclical rather than linear as teaching and learning experiences are selected based on students' knowledge, understanding and skills. Teaching strategies and the learning experiences indicate what the students know and can do and their level of achievement in relation to the course outcomes. The sample units connect and sequence learning experiences allowing for consolidation, revision and extension activities.

Teachers play a vital role in the facilitation of these units.

Sample Unit: The elements  
Approximately 6 periods

Syllabus Outcomes
P1.2, P1.3, P3.4

Unit Focus

Through study of this unit, a student should be able to:

- apply the use of the elements in performance, composition and appreciation
- use the elements to create and structure movement to express ideas
- explore stimulus to improvise and create movement
- develop a dance vocabulary.

Content

- Exploration of action, space, time and dynamics in relation to a movement sequence. (Sequences can be a performance class exercise/combination or taken from core appreciation works.)
- Lessons 1–4, the stimulus (sequence) is provided along with a demonstration on how the elements can be used to manipulate movement.
- Lessons 5–6 the students develop a given/generated sequence through manipulation of combinations of elements.

Sample Unit: First steps  
Approximately 5 periods

P1.4, P3.2, P3.4

Unit Focus

Through study of this unit, a student should be able to:
• apply the use of the elements in performance, composition and appreciation
• use the elements to create and structure movement to express ideas
• explore stimulus to improvise and create movement
• develop a dance vocabulary
• demonstrate the ability to articulate movement to express ideas
• sequence and organise movement.

Content

• Create shapes in response to stimulus material and vary using space, time and dynamics using stimulus material, eg kinaesthetic, auditory, visual, ideational, tactile. Shapes should be varied and the transitions between shapes should be considered.
• Select and organise the shapes and develop into short movement phrases demonstrating the use of space, time and dynamics.
• Manipulate these phrases using other elements of dance.

Sample Unit: Communicating ideas Approximately 5 periods

Syllabus Outcomes

P3.2, P3.4, P3.5

Unit Focus

Through study of this unit, a student should be able to:

• respond and explore stimulus to create movement to express ideas
• use the elements to create and structure movement to express ideas
• develop a dance vocabulary
• demonstrate the ability to articulate movement to express ideas in a personal style.

Content

• View a variety of videoed work samples illustrating the different approaches to communicating through dance. Selections should include a variety of thematic ideas, exemplifying symbolic presentations, abstract, lyrical, comic and dramatic dance.
• Present a series of stimulus materials to explore how to communicate meaning through movement, eg poetry, movement, art or movement phrases.
• Explore the material and create movement based on ideas, mood, imagery and symbolism.
• Manipulate the improvised movement material using the elements of dance to communicate a series of concepts and ideas.
Sample Unit: Motif development

Syllabus Outcomes

P3.2, P3.4, P3.5, P3.6

Unit Focus

Through study of this unit, a student should be able to:

• create movement to reflect a choreographic intent
• organise and sequence movement
• create motifs as the foundation for dance
• develop a dance vocabulary
• use the elements to manipulate motifs to reflect intent
• demonstrate the ability to articulate movement to express ideas in a personal style.

Content

• View a variety of videoed work samples illustrating the use of motifs.
• Discuss the use of the elements that characterise the motif and phrase.
• Provide contextual information on the compositional process and discuss the theoretical principles of motif construction and development.
• Provide a selection of stimulus material for students to improvise a personal movement response and create a motif based on a concept/intent.

Sample Unit: Phrasing

Syllabus Outcomes

P3.2, P3.3, P3.5, P3.6

Unit Focus

Through study of this unit, a student should be able to:

• use the elements to manipulate and develop motifs to reflect intent
• communicate ideas using motif and phrase
• create and arrange movement into a phrase
• demonstrate an understanding of phrase structure
• develop the motif within phrases
• demonstrate the ability to articulate movement to express ideas in a personal style.
Content

• View the videoed material from unit 4 and discuss it in terms of how the motif has been developed within the phrases.
• Select a motif from a studied work and develop a movement phrase based on the motifs, techniques etc observed within the work.
• Select a series of phrases from the work and reorganise the movement content.
• Create a new motif based on a choreographic idea and develop it into two or more new phrases.

Sample Unit: A choreographic study  
Approximately 8 periods

Syllabus Outcomes

P3.3, P3.5, P3.6, P4.4

Unit Focus

Through study of this unit, a student should be able to:

• research and gather information on how dance is structured
• analyse the structural forms of major dance works
• demonstrate the ability to create phrases and arrange using conventional forms
• use the elements of choreography to communicate intent.

Content

• Study of conventional forms in the work of others (video), eg binary, ternary, rondo, theme and variation, canon/fugue, narrative, organic.
• Create a series of phrases and arrange them in a variety of sequences.
• Structure the sequences using the conventional forms.
• Explore the purpose and use of transitions.
• Develop a variety phrase-transition-phrase using the elements of dance.
• Conduct a choreographic study using constructional devices (repetition, variation and contrast to achieve unity).

Sample Unit: Compositional study  
Approximately 23 periods

Syllabus Outcomes

P1.1, P1.2, P1.3, P1.4, P3.1, P3.2, P3.3, P3.4, P3.5, P3.6 P3.7, P4.4, P2.5

Unit Focus

Through study of this unit, a student should be able to:

• identify and select the appropriate elements of composition/choreography in response to a specific concept/intent
• demonstrate the use of the elements of composition/choreography in a personal style in response to a specific concept/intent
• demonstrate the ability to critically appraise and evaluate dance
• demonstrate the skills of gathering, classifying and recording information about dance
• demonstrate, in written and oral form, the ability to analyse and synthesise information when making judgements about dance.

Content

• Revision of stimulus material.
• Formulation of a choreographic concept.
• Submission of a documented proposal, including music options, type of dance and mode of presentation based on the chosen concept.
• Generation of ideas through exploration/improvisation.
• Reflection and evaluation of the concept — does the work reflect the initial concept? What elements need further refinement? What is needed to for the meaning of the dance to be more explicit?
• Resubmission of proposal.
• Further selection and refinement of ideas.
• Further motif and phrase development.
• Video work, analyse the motif and phrases used, examine and evaluate their development in the work.
• Further refinement.
• Submission for final assessment.

5.5 Sample Assessment Task — Composition

The following sample task relates to core composition. It examines the ways in which a student has gained knowledge, skills and understanding about composition, the elements of composition and the compositional process through a multi-dimensional assessment task. This task is designed for students studying the Preliminary course but these principles could easily be adapted for students in the HSC course.

Syllabus Outcomes

• Understands the use of dance terminology relevant to the study (P1.2).
• Identifies the elements of dance composition (P3.1).
• Understands the compositional process (P3.2).
• Understands the function of structure as it relates to dance composition (P3.3).
• Explores the elements of dance relating to dance composition (P3.4).

Task

Each student is required to research the elements of dance, space, time and dynamics. The task should be submitted in written form and should include:

• a description of each of the elements of space, time and dynamics
• an explanation of the role of space, time and dynamics in relation to dance composition.

Each student is required to vary a common movement phrase determined by the teacher by manipulating the elements of space, time and dynamics. Students will explain and demonstrate the developed movement phrase to the class. The practical presentation will include:

• an explanation of how the elements were used in relation to the original movement material
• a demonstration of the result of the exploration
• a description of how the elements contribute to the expression of ideas in movement.

Each student is required to submit a journal that documents:

• the ideas and approaches used
• the decisions made and reasons for these selections
• explanations of any changes in direction
• reflections on their own learning in dance by considering which of the strategies or techniques used were most effective.

Sample Marking Criteria

• The ability to apply the elements in performance, composition and appreciation.
• The ability to use the elements to create and structure movement to express ideas.
• The ability to explore stimulus material to improvise and create movement.
• The development of a dance vocabulary and communication of ideas about their work in progress.
• The ability to articulate movement to express ideas.
• The ability to sequence and organise movement.
6  The Appreciation Component

6.1  What is Dance Appreciation?

Dance appreciation examines dance as an artform, dance histories from national and international perspectives as well as analysing and critiquing specific dance works.

Dance appreciation is divided into two core areas and an elective major study as outlined below.

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<tr>
<th>HSC COURSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CORE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Preliminary Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>20% of indicative course hours (ie 24 hours).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Australian dance history</td>
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<tr>
<td>• introduction to dance analysis.</td>
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<td>Up to an additional 20% of course time may be allocated by the teacher to suit specific circumstances/context of the class.</td>
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For further details, refer to the *Dance Stage 6 Syllabus* and Course Prescriptions

6.2  The Study of Dance Appreciation

Dance appreciation develops students' ability to make informed judgements about dance. By studying the history of dance, students can draw links between the cultural, practical and theoretical components of dance.

In studying various choreographers and their works, students gain an understanding and broad appreciation of dance, its styles and structure and qualities of performance.

Armed with a knowledge of the history of dance, its context in time and place, key individuals in the creation and performance of dance, and having observed examples of these works, the student is better equipped to add value to their own
performances and compositions. The major tools students will use in dance appreciation are:

- research
- observation
- analysis
- criticism.

### 6.3 Changes to the Preliminary Course in Dance Appreciation

Indicative course hours remain the same from a minimum of 20% up to 40%. The new syllabus offers more flexibility in selecting how the additional core time (20%) is distributed between the core components.

The previous course only offered a single 20% option.

The new course focuses on Australian dance history, with a greater emphasis on indigenous Australian dance.

The new course now includes an introduction to dance analysis. Dance analysis in practice includes works from Australian and international choreographers.

### 6.4 Linking Dance Appreciation with the other Course Components

While the study of composition develops students’ knowledge and skills in the manipulation of the elements of dance, generating and organising movement into structures, dance analysis promotes critical thinking. In describing, interpreting and evaluating a variety of dance works, students gain a wider exposure to dance that can contribute to their own creative dance experiences. It promotes a larger movement vocabulary for students to explore and develop and will also enable them to evaluate their own work.

Performance dance appreciation in the Preliminary course complements performance as well. In developing dance analysis skills and applying them to well know Australian and international dance works and companies, students become more aware of the capabilities and performance qualities of world class dancers. These companies become role models in the art of performance for the student.

Studying the history of dance also benefits composition and performance in that students become aware of the different styles of dance, its context and how the environment, society, culture, events and technology can inspire the creation and impact on the performance of dance.
6.5 Classical Ballet and the Preliminary Course

Classical ballet has played and continues to play a part in the development of dance in Australia and can be examined as part of Australian dance history. In the Introduction to Dance Analysis section of the course, an opportunity exists to study works of various classical based companies in historical and more contemporary contexts.

6.6 Studying Australian Dance History in the Preliminary Course

Even though Australian dance history is not part of the HSC course, there is value in its study in the Preliminary course. Dance is constantly changing and evolving. Dance history examines when dance changed significantly, why it changed, how it took place and who played a part. Through dance history, students develop an empathy with key dance individuals — dance artists, choreographers and writers of the past and present and examine what influenced their work. In studying dance history in conjunction with dance analysis, students develop a clearer understanding of the form, function and meaning of dance.

The HSC course has a major emphasis on performance and composition. Students can enhance their performance and composition skills through a clearer understanding of form, function and meaning of dance by examining and questioning the past and present to move forward in their own dance development.

The skills developed and used in studying Australian dance history can also be applied to the study of prescribed choreographers, works and eras in the HSC and Major Study course components.

6.7 Changes to HSC Core Appreciation

The indicative course hours remain the same at 20%. International artists and their works have influenced dance in Australia. The new course focuses on these international artists and works whereas the old course focused on the study of contemporary Australian dance works and choreographers. Students are still expected to analyse dance works and examine the historical context. Writing and criticism remains a part of the course. There are two prescribed artists and two prescribed works to study.

6.8 Changes to Major Study — Appreciation in the HSC Course

The indicative course hours remain the same at 40%. The new Major Study — Appreciation course extends the knowledge and skills acquired by students in core appreciation. Students engage in an in-depth study of a prescribed seminal work of a choreographer who has significantly influenced the development of dance. Students will also study one prescribed era and two prescribed artists from two options. The era is an identifiable period in which significant development occurred in dance. This differs markedly from the old course where students studied six seminal artists from a period spanning several decades.
6.9 Dance Appreciation — Sample Course Overview

Preliminary course

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<tr>
<td>Introduction to dance analysis</td>
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<td>Dance analysis in practice</td>
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HSC course

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<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>Writing and criticism (Core)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prescribed works/choreographers (Core)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminal work (Major Study — Appreciation)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era (Major Study — Appreciation)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed artists/works (Major Study — Appreciation)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.10 Studying Dance Appreciation – Fundamental Concepts

The following six areas may be useful as a focus in the study of the fundamental concepts. Although they are presented hierarchically, it is possible to begin this learning by using one of these areas as a starting point.

- What is dance?
- The purpose of dance.
- The elements of dance.
- What is meant by ‘form’ in dance?
- The meaning of dance.
- Dance terminology.
6.11 Studying Dance Appreciation — Approaches to Teaching Appreciation in the Preliminary Course

**Dance in Australia**

**Pre-settlement**
- Aboriginal culture
  - Heritage dances
  - Religious dances

**Settlement**
- Emerging dance based on European tradition

**Aboriginal culture – Post settlement by Europeans**
- Impact of colonisation
- How did European influences impact?
- Aboriginal culture survives

**Influences**
- Political
- Cultural
- Social
- Economic
- Individual

**Australian dance in the 20th century**
- Classical, eg Pavlova, Helpman, Borovansky
- Modern, eg Bodenweiser
- Dance schools
- Dance companies

**Influence on Western dance – for example:**
- Beth Dean – ‘Corroboree’
- Jiri Kylian – ‘Road to Stomping Ground’

**Aboriginal Dance Companies**

**Fusion between 20th century and Aboriginal dance**
- Traditions merged
- Collaborations made
6.12 Studying Dance Appreciation — Approaches to Teaching
Dance Analysis in the Preliminary Course

Why analyse dance?
- to appreciate dance as an artform
- to become discerning and assist in developing performance quality
- to develop skills in composition.

**Purpose: to examine the success of the dance. Factors may include:**
- the purpose of the dance — theatre or social
- the choreography
- the individual performances
- the quality of the dance
- audience response and expectations of the dance
- the significance of the dance.

**Purpose: to deconstruct the dance and classify its components. For example:**
- the look of the dance
- the dancers
- production elements — eg set, design, costumes, music, lighting, movement
- the dynamics of the dance
- the dancers’ use of space.

**Purpose: to examine the choreographer’s motivation/intent. For example:**
- the meaning of the dance
- the subject matter
- the genre and style
- the context of the dance.
### 6.13 Studying Dance Appreciation — Approaches to Teaching
In-depth Analysis in the HSC Course

#### Steps in dance analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of dance</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spatial elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set environments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Form and structure

- The use of motifs
- The use of phrasing
- The overall form of the work

#### Organisation of the dance

- Sequencing
- Transitions
- Repetition
- Variation and contrast
- Formal structure
- Unity

#### Interpretation

- Context
- Genre
- Subject matter
- Meaning
- Significance

#### Evaluation

- Worth and merit
- Choreography
- Performance quality
- Context
6.14 Studying Dance Appreciation — Approaches to Teaching Writing and Criticism in the HSC Course

The following six areas may be useful as a focus in the study of writing and criticism. It is possible to begin this learning by using one of these areas as a starting point.

In writing and criticism, students could:
- examine the role of the critic
- examine types of criticism
- examine the impact of criticism
- analyse critical reviews
- write dance criticism
- learn to value dance criticism.

6.15 Studying Dance Appreciation — Prescribed Choreographers

Factors to be considered when studying the prescribed choreographers include:

- their background and training
- choreographic style
- their influences on other choreographers, dancers, education, society
- the works created
- the era/period of their work
- how they were influenced by social, political and cultural climates.

6.16 Studying Dance Appreciation — Seminal Dance Works

By analysing these key areas, students should be able to identify characteristics of the work that helps to classify it as a seminal work. This area requires the application of all knowledge and skills from the previous appreciation experiences and requires the student to recognise the relationships between the various aspects of the dance work and enables them to write about and discuss them critically.

Factors to be considered when studying seminal works include:

- an analysis of the work
- the history of the work
- the original context of the work
- the contribution of the work as an artform
- the present context ie who performs it now?
- the choreographer — their influences, motivation, philosophy and other works
- criticism of the work, both past and present.

6.17 Studying Dance Appreciation — Dance Era

This area examines the relationship of dance within its time. It considers how the artwork reflects its time and how the artwork reflects change.
Factors to be considered when studying a dance era include:

4. the historical context of the work  
5. key people involved in the creation of the work and the writings about these key people  
6. common characteristics reflected in the arts at the time the work was created  
7. the influence this era had on the development of dance styles  
8. socio-cultural influences.

6.18 Studying Dance Appreciation — Prescribed Artists/Works

This area examines the factors that make a particular artist or work stand out from their peers.

Factors to be considered when studying prescribed artists or work include:

- the characteristics of a seminal artist
  - the value this artist has contributed to dance
  - the philosophies underpinning their work
  - the approaches used
  - the ideas and styles that contribute to the development of dance
  - the writings about the artist’s work
  - the significance of the timing of the works
  - how the artist’s work redefined dance or choreography at the time

- the characteristics of the artist’s work
  - the movement vocabulary used
  - the design of the dance
  - set, costumes, music, lighting and other production techniques
  - the performance quality.
6.19 Studying Dance Appreciation — Sample Assessment Task

Focus Area: Prescribed seminal work — HSC course

Component Weighting: 20%

A. Summarise the complete work and identify dominant movement structures that contribute to the overall form of the work. Provide an interpretation of the work with consideration of genre, subject matter and meaning.

B. Select a section of the work and provide a detailed analysis. Consideration should be given to the choreographers use of:
   • dance components, ie movement, space, time, dynamics, dancers, set and music
   • movement organisation ie form and structure.
   Provide an interpretation of the section analysed.

C. Discuss the context of the complete work. Consideration should be given to:
   • when it was created?
   • what era does it belong to?
   • what was happening in dance and the arts at the time?
   • what political, social and cultural influences were there at the time and are they reflected in the work?

D. What was the response of critics and audiences at the time it was performed? Provide an evaluation of the work and discuss why this work is considered seminal, ie what was its impact on the development of dance? What is the relevance of the work to the dance of today?

Marking Criteria

- A demonstrated understanding of dance from artistic, aesthetic and cultural perspectives through movement and in written and oral form.
- A demonstrated recognition, analysis and evaluation of the distinguishing features of major dance works.
- A demonstrated utilisation of the skills of research and analysis to examine dance as an artform.
- A demonstrated ability in written and oral form, to analyse and synthesise information when making discriminating judgments about dance.
7 Major Study — Dance and Technology

Appreciation of the contemporary context of dance must include awareness of works that employ technology. The use of technology, particularly computer-based technology, has become a part of our daily lives. The creation of virtual spaces mirrors societal shifts in modes of communication.

Video dance and virtual dance share their mode of presentation and visual form with popular media. A study of works in these areas raises some interesting issues for Stage 6 students, including the relationship of dance and technology, the changing form of dance in contemporary society, the definition of boundaries between art and media, the intent of the choreographer, the relationship between the work and the audience, and the definition of aesthetics, virtual and mediated dance.

These Major Study options require students to bring dance knowledge to the electronic media. Students must demonstrate a sound knowledge of the craft of composition learned in the core. In addition, they must be able to manipulate the media to achieve their choreographic intent.

Whilst Dance and Technology is an option for a Major Study, technological perspectives and some of the activities listed on the following pages could be incorporated into other course components.

7.1 Film and Video

Resource Requirements

Works must be submitted on video in VHS format.

Basic equipment needed will include a video camera, a video recorder and a monitor.

For analogue editing, it is recommended that students use an edit controller to control, assemble and insert edits. While it is not essential, a video mixer can provide transitions between shots (such as wipes and dissolves) and special effects. Analogue editing systems come in a variety of formats (eg VHS, S-VHS and U-Matic). Many schools already have these systems.

Digital editing requires some basic hardware to run editing software. Basic requirements include:

- a pentium processor with Windows 95 or later operating system or a Macintosh PowerPC
- 32 MB of RAM
- 60MB of hard disk space
- a CD-ROM drive
- a video capture card
- a sound card.

Many schools will already have computers with these features. Additional RAM will speed up all processes. There are a number of editing software programs readily
available. Internet sites provide information about the features and the costs of these programs.

7.2 The Virtual Body Option

Resource Requirements

The following minimum system requirements apply to the use of 3D animation software programs:

- a pentium processor with Windows 95 or later operating system, or a Macintosh
- Power PC
- 32 MB or RAM
- 15 MB of hard disk space
- a CD-ROM drive
- Quicktime 3 (this may be included with some software programs).

Many schools will already have computers with features that will support the software necessary for this study. Additional RAM will speed up all processes.

Software

There are a number of 3D animation software programs available for purchase. Lifeforms software is currently the best animation software for choreographic purposes, since it provides features that enable you to generate and organise movement of a virtual body. Be aware that other software programs may not allow you the facility to generate body movements. Teachers need to familiarise themselves with the marking guidelines and examination specifications to ensure that software fulfils all requirements.

Stagestruck, for example, will allow students to organise movement phrases selected from system vocabulary but does not allow for the creation of a movement itself. It is a good program to use to experiment with some aspects of forming but can not be used to create the submitted work for external examination.

Computer Skills and the Virtual Body

Students need basic computer skills to use most software programs.

Lifeforms is a relatively simple program to use. It has three main windows — the figure editor, the sequence editor and the render view.

The figure editor is the key to creating movement. The figure in the window can be manipulated using a mouse — body parts can be moved in any direction. Students can use their understanding of anatomy as it relates to dance when isolating and moving body parts. Shapes made in the figure editor are pasted into key frames in the sequence editor.

The sequence editor allows you to place a virtual body on a timeline, in ‘key’ frames. If you place particular poses or body shapes in non-adjacent frames, the program will
create the interim movement (the transition from one shape to another). As students become more skilled, they will create their own transitions.

The render view allows you to view the work in progress. Body shapes and movement phrases created can be viewed from a variety of angles. Virtual dancers can be positioned and moved around the space.

Rendering figures in *Lifeforms* is straightforward — the program offers a limited choice of renderings. Students who wish to create and render figures and environments in more complex programs (for example *3D Studio*) will need more advanced computer skills.

**Dance Knowledge and the Virtual Body**

It is essential that students have a good knowledge and understanding of the process of composition to achieve success in this major study option.

Students must demonstrate their ability to manipulate the elements of dance, generate movement in a personal style relevant to a clear concept or intent, and organise that movement into a unified structure.

In addition, students must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how new technologies have spawned alternative ‘performance spaces’ for dance and the ways in which choreographers use these technologies.

The virtual choreography must also demonstrate an application of understanding of the ‘real’ dancing body to the virtual body.

The following sections relate some possible teaching strategies for Major Study — Dance and Technology and clearly link them to syllabus outcomes. These strategies or perspectives are suggestions only. Teachers may develop further strategies based on student needs, interests and available resources.
### 7.3 Sample Teaching Strategies — The Virtual Body

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of study</th>
<th>Sample strategies</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Computer-based choreographic tools | • using the Internet, trace the development of choreographic software through the virtual work of Merce Cunningham  
• read and discuss a variety of viewpoints on virtual dance  
• write a 600 word rationale for the use of computer based program tools for the choreographer  
• using the Internet, research the relationship between dance and computer based technologies, eg use of MIDI sensors  
• discuss the dual purpose of choreographic software — as a tool for composing and as a means of creating virtual works | 1.1, 1.2, 1.4     |
| A study of artists and examples | • visit virtual dance sites on the Internet, compare approaches and the uses of technology  
• research the outcomes of the Metro Screen Projects  
• using the Internet, select quotes from Merce Cunningham about the use of the virtual body and record them in a journal  
• discuss the relationship between Cunningham’s real and virtual works  
• read and discuss a variety of viewpoints on virtual dance | 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 3.3 |
| Virtual dance                 | • explore computer based animation:  
  – open the figure editor. Click and drag body parts to create shapes. Select one shape and paste it into a key frame. Copy and paste it again in two or more frames  
  – select and paste a sequence from software vocabulary. Analyse and discuss the sequencing of key frames  
  – view the sequence from front, side and rear  
  – select a virtual body and explore possible renderings  
  – recreate a technical sequence of a movement for a virtual body, ensuring the virtual body maintains correct alignment | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manipulation of the elements of dance as they relate to dance choreography</th>
<th>• using a short locomotor sequence already created, explore a range of pathways. This can be achieved by changing the stage position of the figure in selected key frames. Create three sequences on different pathways. Vary the timing for each sequence so that the virtual dancers perform the sequence in canon</th>
<th>1.2, 3.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generating movement as it relates to dance choreography</td>
<td>• using the figure editor, manipulate body parts of the virtual dancer to explore the following themes: curve, twist, lean • using a visual stimulus (eg a painting) create an interesting body shape. Vary the shape using the figure editor in the following ways: place the shape off centre; invert the shape; twist the shape; and, embellish the shape. Place these shapes in non-adjacent key frames and view the transitions created by the program</td>
<td>1.2, 3.1, 3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organising the movement as it relates to dance</td>
<td>• select a shape or short movement from the software vocabulary. Develop this movement into a non-locomotor phrase and a locomotor phrase (students must be made aware that overuse of system vocabulary does not demonstrate achievement of outcomes for this option)</td>
<td>1.2, 3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organising the work (form/structure)</td>
<td>• create an angular shape on the floor. Copy this shape to several key frames. Develop transitions between the key frames. Create a second phrase that uses standing angular shapes, and the original transitions. View the performance of each phrase. • manipulate the timing of each phrase. Change the staging of the dancer when performing the phrases. Assess the effectiveness of these choices. • copy the phrases (in different order) to two virtual dancers</td>
<td>1.2, 3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7.4 Sample Teaching Strategies — Film and Video

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of study</th>
<th>Sample strategies</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Analysis of types and functions of dance on film/video | • research the development of film and technology and its relationship to filmed dance  
• view and discuss filmed dance from the early 20th century to contemporary fusion of dance and video media  
• deliver an oral critique of one example of filmed or videoed dance drawn from those listed in the areas of study  
• research the work of Loie Fuller for the use of early lighting and film techniques  
• brainstorm and discuss the purpose of filming dance (eg archival, notation, promotional, re-interpreting a work performed on stage, to enhance a music clip, to make a work that only exists in a film or video medium) | 1.1, 1.2, 1.4 |
| A study of examples | • view the ballets from *The Red Shoes* and *An American in Paris*. Discuss and compare how filmic effects have been used to create illusion within the works. Compare these ballets with stage dance – what features of filmed dance are not possible on the stage?  
• discuss the collaboration of Cunningham, Cage and Rauschenberg in the creation of *Points in Space*  
• view video clips from works by Busby Berkeley, eg *42nd Street, Gold Diggers of 1935*. Discuss visual design and camera viewpoint  
• examine the choreography of Fred Astaire, eg in what ways did his work favour the camera as audience? What is the relationship between dance and character? What is the contribution of the dance to the narrative? What is the relationship between the dance and the musical elements?  
• view the opening dance sequence in *West Side Story*. Write a two page report that describes: the context of the work (era, audience and film technology); the relationship between the dance and other elements of the film (characters, narrative, aural and visual elements); the way in which the filming and editing | 1.1, 1.2, 1.4 |
| **Choreographic considerations** | process enhances one element of the dance (space or time or dynamics)  
- view a section from *Boxes*. Read the contextual notes about the performance of that section. In what ways do you think the experience of the stage version may differ from the work on video?  
- film a sequence from a performance class. Analyse the difference between viewing the dance live and on screen | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 |
| | **Choreographic considerations** | create a frame proportionally the same as a TV screen using flats or curtains to mask the area – explore movement within this frame – whole body, cropped body and isolated body parts  
- discuss how the meaning of the image changes when the body is seen in long shot, medium shot, close up and extreme close up  
- explore movement travelling into and out of the frame  
- compare a sequence of movement performed wholly within the frame to the same sequence framed in close up — discuss the dynamic effect of each sequence  
- film a phrase of movement performed by one dancer in an empty space. Discuss how the camera ‘reads’ the space  
- film two dancers (one foreground and the other background) performing a phrase of movement. Discuss how spatial relationships create three dimensionality  
- film the two dancers as before and add objects into the space — does this enhance the definition of the space?  
- experiment with simple lighting to define the space. Does lighting enhance the three dimensionality of the space?  
- view Meryl Tankard’s *Sloth*. Discuss the site selected for the work. What are the advantages and limitations of filming outdoors?  
- discuss the concept of an abstract video space |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Filming and editing considerations</th>
<th>1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• explore the language of film/video, eg shot size, focus, zoom, pan, tilt</td>
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<tr>
<td>• experiment with framing and cropping movement with still and moving camera</td>
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<tr>
<td>• follow a moving sequence with a moving camera</td>
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<tr>
<td>• focus on one dance element (space, time or dynamics). How has this element been manipulated by the filming and editing process?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• film a sequence derived from performance classwork using one static camera and one in long shot</td>
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<tr>
<td>• discuss ways of filming motifs and phrases in sequence (viewing the work performed using a cardboard viewfinder can be helpful)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• film separate motifs and phrases exploring film/video language — shot size, symmetry, asymmetry, cropping, line, direction, orientation, use of thirds</td>
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<tr>
<td>• create a storyboard that sequences the most effective shots</td>
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<tr>
<td>• film the storyboard sequence</td>
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<tr>
<td>• edit the footage filmed from the storyboard — assemble the footage as sequenced, explore the use of wipes and dissolves, experiment with the format of the frame between landscape and portrait, enhance the colour/texture using special effects</td>
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</tbody>
</table>