

# DANCE

YEARS  
7–8  
V 8.3

## RATIONALE: DANCE

This rationale complements and extends the rationale for The Arts learning area.

Dance is expressive movement with purpose and form. Through Dance, students represent, question and celebrate human experience, using the body as the instrument and movement as the medium for personal, social, emotional, spiritual and physical communication. Like all art forms, dance has the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich all students, exciting the imagination and encouraging students to reach their creative and expressive potential.

Dance enables students to develop a movement vocabulary with which to explore and refine imaginative ways of moving both individually and collaboratively. They choreograph, rehearse, perform and respond as they engage with dance practice and practitioners in their own and others' cultures and communities.

Students use the elements of dance to explore choreography and performance and to practise choreographic, technical and expressive skills. Students respond to their own and others' dances using physical and verbal communication.

Active participation as dancers, choreographers and audiences promotes wellbeing and social inclusion. Learning in and through Dance enhances students' knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures and contexts and develops their personal, social and cultural identity.

## Dance: Years 7 and 8 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 8, students identify and analyse the elements of dance, choreographic devices and production elements in dances in different styles and apply this knowledge in dances they make and perform. They evaluate how they and others from different cultures, times and places communicate meaning and intent through dance.

Students choreograph dances, demonstrating selection and organisation of the elements of dance, choreographic devices and form to communicate choreographic intent. They choreograph and learn dances, and perform them with confidence and clarity, and with technical and expressive skills appropriate to the dance style.

## AIMS

In addition to the overarching aims of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, Dance knowledge, understanding and skills ensure that, individually and collaboratively, students develop:

- body awareness and technical and expressive skills to communicate through movement confidently, creatively and intelligently
- choreographic and performance skills and appreciation of their own and others' dances
- aesthetic, artistic and cultural understanding of dance in past and contemporary contexts as choreographers, performers and audiences
- respect for and knowledge of the diverse purposes, traditions, histories and cultures of dance by making and responding as active participants and informed audiences.

## Organisation and Content Structure

In the Australian Curriculum, the Arts is a learning area that draws together related but distinct art forms. While these art forms have close relationships and are often used in interrelated ways, each involves different approaches to arts practices and critical and creative thinking that reflect distinct bodies of knowledge, understanding and skills. The curriculum examines past, current and emerging arts practices in each art form across a range of cultures and places.

The Australian Curriculum: The Arts Foundation to Year 10 enables exploration of the dynamic relationships between Arts subjects. This can involve students making and responding to artworks in traditional, contemporary and emerging forms, using materials, techniques and technologies from one Arts subject to support learning in another. In this twenty-first century Arts curriculum, students explore innovative and hybrid art forms which extend and challenge art making and combine practices of two or more art forms.

Within all Arts subjects, design facilitates the creative and practical realisation of ideas. Design thinking is a fundamental strategy in the experimentation, refinement and resolution of an artwork and takes into account logical, critical and aesthetic considerations. Many different words describe design within the Arts such as choreographing, narrating, devising, constructing, composing and sculpting. Design connects the different art forms so that they inform each other, providing possibilities for students to create innovative and hybrid forms of art.

## Strands - Content descriptions in each Arts subject reflect the interrelated strands of *Making* and *Responding*.

- *Making* includes learning about and using knowledge, skills, techniques, processes, materials and technologies to explore arts practices and make artworks that communicate ideas and intentions.
- *Responding* includes exploring, responding to, analysing and interpreting artworks.

**Relationship between the strands:** *Making* and *Responding* are intrinsically connected. Together they provide students with knowledge, understanding and skills as artists, performers and audience and develop students' skills in critical and creative thinking. As students make artworks they actively respond to their developing artwork and the artworks of others; as students respond to artworks they draw on the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired through their experiences in making artworks.

**Viewpoints** - In both making and responding to artworks, students consider a range of viewpoints or perspectives through which artworks can be explored and interpreted. These include the contexts in which the artworks are made by artists and experienced by audiences. The world can be interpreted through different contexts, including social, cultural and historical contexts. Based on this curriculum, key questions are provided as a framework for developing students' knowledge, understanding and inquiry skills.

In **Dance**, students use the body to communicate and express meaning through purposeful movement. Dance practice integrates choreography, performance, and appreciation of and responses to dance and dance making.

## Knowledge and skills of Dance

In Dance, students develop kinaesthetic knowledge through the development of dance knowledge and skills and their engagement with the materials of dance. Early sensory experience using the body as the instrument of expression and movement as the medium is fundamental to the development of this kinaesthetic knowledge in dance and contributes to students' overall aesthetic understanding.

Dances may have a particular 'look', 'sound' and 'feel' that students respond to positively, negatively or with indifference according to the engagement of their senses, emotions and cognition. They consider their perceptions of different dances and their notions of what is appealing or not appealing in the bodies, movement, sounds, aural and visual settings of dances they participate in or view.

Through Dance, students learn to reflect critically on their own aesthetic preferences by considering social, historical and cultural influences, and the effects of local and global cultures upon their tastes and decision making. From early family experiences, students' aesthetic preferences are nurtured by an increasing range of cultural influences. The wider social, historical and cultural contexts for dance present students with differing aesthetic preferences, tastes and viewpoints determined by people and their cultures.

## The Arts across Foundation to Year 10: Years 7–10

As students move into adolescence, they undergo a range of important physical, cognitive, emotional and social changes. Students often begin to question established conventions, practices and values. Their interests extend well beyond their own communities and they begin to develop concerns about wider issues. Students in this age range increasingly look for and value learning that is perceived to be relevant, is consistent with personal goals, and/or leads to important outcomes. Increasingly they are able to work with more abstract concepts and consider increasingly complex ideas. They are keen to explore the nature of evidence and the contestability of ideas, debating alternative answers and interpretations.

In these years, learning in the Arts enables students to explore and question their own immediate experience and their understanding of the wider world. Learning through and about the Arts enables students to build on their own experiences and dispositions. Students explore and engage with artworks made by others. They make their own artworks drawing on their developing knowledge, understanding and skills.

Students' understanding of sustainability is progressively developed. They explore how the Arts are used to communicate about sustainability and also learn about sustainability of practices in the Arts.

Students learn that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have converted oral records to other technologies. As they explore forms, students learn that over time there has been development of different traditional and contemporary styles. Students explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art forms that are publicly available for broader participation in their community. Students may also extend their cultural expression with appropriate community consultation and endorsement. They identify and explore the social relationships that have developed between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and other cultures in Australia, reflected in developments of forms and styles in the Arts.

Through the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, students in Years 7 to 10 pursue broad questions such as: What meaning is intended in an artwork? What does the audience understand from this artwork? What is the cultural context of the artwork and of the audience engaging with it? What key beliefs and values are reflected in artworks and how did artists influence societies of their time? How do audiences perceive and understand artworks? What does the advancement of technology mean to the presentation of, and audience engagement with, different artworks? This curriculum also provides opportunities to engage students through contexts that are meaningful and relevant to them and through exploration of past and present debates.

**Content descriptions in each Arts subject focus on similar concepts and skills that, across the bands, present a developmental sequence of knowledge, understanding and skills.** The focus of each content description in Foundation to Year 6 expands into more specific content descriptions for Years 7 to 10 as presented in the table below. For transition purposes from primary to secondary in Years 7 – 8 and consistency state-wide, generalist primary teachers at Year 7 could focus on the four initial similar concepts and skills eg, the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 6th Content Descriptions, with the deeper and expanded concepts being the focus in year 8, eg, the 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 7th Content Descriptions. E.g. The focus in Year 7 could then be on: 8.1, 8.3, 8.5 and 8.6, and in Year 8: 8.2, 8.4, 8.5 and 8.7.

| Content description | Foundation–Yr 6   | Content description | Yrs 7–10   |
|---------------------|---|---------------------|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>     | Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas  | 1 <sup>st</sup>     | Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas   |
|                     |   | 2 <sup>nd</sup>     | Manipulating and applying the elements/concepts with intent    |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>     | Developing understanding of practices                         | 3 <sup>rd</sup>     | Developing and refining understanding of skills and techniques |
|                     |   | 4 <sup>th</sup>     | Structuring and organising ideas into form                     |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>     | Sharing artworks through performance, presentation or display | 5 <sup>th</sup>     | Sharing artworks through performance, presentation or display  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>     | Responding to and interpreting artworks                       | 6 <sup>th</sup>     | Analysing and reflecting upon intentions                       |
|                     |   | 7 <sup>th</sup>     | Responding to and interpreting artworks                        |

**Years 7–8: Level Description: Dance**

In Years 7 and 8, learning in Dance builds on the experience of the previous band. It involves students making and responding to dance independently, and with their classmates, teachers and communities. They explore dance as an art form through choreography, performance and appreciation. Students build on their awareness of the body through body part articulation. They extend their understanding and use of space, time, dynamics and relationships including performing in groups, spatial relationships and using interaction to communicate their choreographic intention. They extend the combinations of fundamental movement skills to explore dance styles. They extend technical skills from the previous band increasing their confidence, accuracy, clarity of movement and projection. As they experience dance, students draw on dances from a range of cultures, times and locations. They explore the dance and influences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and of the Asia region. Students learn about style and choreographic intent in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dances, and how these dances communicate social contexts and relationships. Students learn about sustainability through The Arts and sustainability of practices in The Arts. As they make and respond to dance, students explore meaning and interpretation, forms and elements, and social, cultural and historical contexts of dance. They evaluate choreographers' intentions and expressive skills in dances they view and perform. Students understand that safe dance practices underlie all experiences in the study of dance. They perform within their own body capabilities and work safely in groups.

**Years 7–8: Examples of knowledge and skills in Dance**

Students choreograph, perform and appreciate dances from a range of contexts, demonstrating an increasing range of movement skills and style-specific techniques. Through *Making* and *Responding*, students develop skills in and understanding of their dance making by becoming increasingly proficient in using choreographic, performance and appreciating practices.

**Examples of knowledge and skills in Dance**

The following information serves to articulate the main parts of the broader conceptual areas of Knowledge and Skills. These are not an exclusive, exhaustive list, but an indication of the breadth of study within dance. In this band students develop their knowledge of how ideas and intentions are communicated in and through dance. They build on and refine their knowledge, understanding and skills through dance practices focusing on:

**Body**

- body part articulations - for example, isolation of body parts in combination with each other
- weight transfer - for example, lunge, leap, roll
- body awareness, body bases, body parts, body zones

**Elements of dance****Space**

- using performance space - for example, confined, large
- using level, dimension, direction, shape, active space, positive space, negative space, planes, pathways, general space and personal space with increasing complexity/combinations

**Time****Dynamics**

- using metre, tempo, momentum, accent, duration, phrasing, rhythmic patterns, stillness and beat with increasing complexity/combinations
- inaction versus action, percussion, fluidity - for example, wrig, dab, mould, flow, bind

**Relationships**

- using weight, force, energy and movement qualities with increasing complexity/combinations
- groupings – for example, large and small groups, meet/part, follow/lead
- spatial relationships – dancers to objects, between dancers
- interaction – emotional connections between dancers
- style-specific use of props
- opposition of body parts

**Fundamental movement skills**

- using groupings, spatial relationships, interaction with increasing complexity/combinations
- combining fundamental movements in increasingly complex ways

**Technical skills**

- considering conventions and vocabulary of selected dance styles and applying this knowledge to developing movement vocabulary and dance techniques, for example, theatrical styles: modern dance, jazz, street dance, musical theatre
- increasing technical competence in control, accuracy, alignment, strength, balance, coordination, placement, flexibility, endurance and articulation

**Expressive skills****Safe dance practices**

- increasing confidence, clarity of movement and intention, projection, focus and musicality
- awareness of their own and others' physical capabilities when performing a specific dance style;
- knowledge of the musculoskeletal system

**Choreographic devices****Choreographic forms**

- unison, contrast, repetition, sequence, variation, abstraction, transition, canon
- binary, ternary, narrative

**Years 7–8: Considering Viewpoints in Visual Dance**

In both *Making* and *Responding*, students learn that meanings can be generated from different viewpoints and that these shift according to different world encounters. As students make, investigate or critique dances as choreographers, dancers and audiences, they may ask and answer questions to consider the choreographers' and dancers' meanings and the audiences' interpretations. Meanings and interpretations are informed by an understanding of how the elements of dance, materials, skills and processes are used in differing social, cultural and historical contexts. These questions provide the basis for making informed critical judgments about their own dance and the dance they see as audiences. The complexity and sophistication of such questions will develop across Foundation to Year 10. In the later years, students will consider the interests and concerns of choreographers, dancers and audiences regarding philosophies and ideologies, critical theories, institutions and psychology.

**Examples of viewpoints and questions within the Dance Content Elaborations Years 7–8**

Considering viewpoints:

- *Meanings and interpretations*: For example – What was the choreographer's stated intent for this dance? What ideas did you think the dance expressed?
- *Cultures*: For example – What is the cultural context in which this dance was developed, or in which it is viewed, and what does it signify? What are the stylistic differences in hip hop performances from different countries including Asia, Europe and the USA?
- *Forms and elements*: For example – How have the elements of dance been used by the choreographer to express his/her stated intent? What choreographic devices were evident in this dance? What choreographic form was used by the choreographer?
- *Evaluations*: For example – How successful was the choreographer in expressing his/her stated intent clearly to the audience? How well did the dancers use expressive skills in the performance?
- *Philosophies and ideologies*: What philosophical, ideological or political perspectives does the dance work represent, or how do these perspectives affect the audience's interpretation?
- *Societies*: For example – How does this dance relate to its social context and that of its audience? What are the protocols for viewing and performing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dances?
- *Histories*: For example – What historical forces and influences are evident in the dance work? How do the costumes and movements in this dance reflect the era in which it was created?

**Years 7–8 Content Descriptions: Dance**

- 8.1 Combine elements of dance and improvise by making literal movements into abstract movements
- 8.2 Develop their choreographic intent by applying the elements of dance to select and organise movement
- 8.3 Practise and refine technical skills in style-specific techniques
- 8.4 Structure dances using choreographic devices and form
- 8.5 Rehearse and perform focusing on expressive skills appropriate to style and/or choreographic intent
- 8.6 Analyse how choreographers use elements of dance and production elements to communicate intent
- 8.7 Identify and connect specific features and purposes of dance from contemporary and past times to explore viewpoints and enrich their dance-making, starting with dance in Australia and including dance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

NB: It is advised that the 'Learning in Dance' two page introduction (Subject, structure) is used along with this 'explorer' paper. Download it from the Australian Curriculum website.

Source: [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/) accessed 22/02/2017