



## IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF TEACHERS OF DANCING

### Classical Indian Dance Faculty

#### SYLLABUS OUTLINE OF CLASSICAL INDIAN **BHARATANATYAM** EXAMINATIONS

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## FOREWORD

Bharatanatyam originated many centuries ago in the temples of Tamil Nadu in South India. It is known for its strong lines that make geometric and symmetrical shapes as well as its turn-out position by which it is commonly recognised. The dance form is embellished with intricately expressive hand gestures and elaborate facial expressions that lend to the story-telling aspect of this style.

The *mārgam*, which is the format of a traditional Bharatanatyam presentation, was formalised by the Tanjore Quartet in the second half of the eighteenth century. Traditionally, the training programme for Bharatanatyam dancers has been organised around this *mārgam*. Bharatanatyam dancers, to this day, generally follow this format in a traditional presentation. The ISTD syllabus is designed closely to reflect traditional teaching whilst considering the needs and experiences of present-day students worldwide.

Students of classical Indian dance, other than those in India, are in an environment that may not necessarily complement their experience of Bharatanatyam training. This syllabus, therefore, is based on the investing of time and effort in the early Grades, to create the necessary physical and cultural infrastructure for the dancer in training.

The syllabus also accommodates some changes in the traditional learning progression of dance material. It promotes holistic dance experience at the initial stages, even before each aspect of the physical training has been mastered. Students are also encouraged to see dance performances in order to gain a cultural and critical understanding, and a lively interest in Bharatanatyam and in the wider horizons of dance.

The ISTD syllabus provides a structure equally suited to students of any of the different *bāṇis* of Bharatanatyam, without favouring one over another.

The syllabus for each examination is presented in three sections:

- Ancillary Skills
- Technical Skills and Performance
- Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

For essential information on good teaching practices related to the syllabus, and for the full detail and explanation of the syllabus content, see the Bharatanatyam Examination Specifications available for purchase from the ISTD shop at headquarters.

# ISTD CLASSICAL INDIAN BHARATANATYAM DANCE EXAMINATIONS

## PRIMARY CLASS EXAMINATION

### INTRODUCTION

#### RATIONALE

This syllabus is common for Bharatanatyam and Kathak, in preparing children for the Graded Examinations of either genre. It may equally be taught by teachers of either genre, using the movement vocabulary which is familiar and which would be of use in later learning. This syllabus has been designed to introduce younger learners to classical Indian dance and as such has been designed to meet their needs.

Extensive notes on the syllabus are to be found in the Classical Indian Dance Primary Examination Specifications, which may be purchased from the ISTD Shop, Imperial House, 22/26 Paul Street, London EC2A 4QE, tel: 020 7377 1577, fax: 020 7247 8979.

### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

#### AGE LIMITS

The Primary examination has no lower or upper age limit but is recommended for those between the ages of six and eight.

#### GENDER DISTINCTIONS

The examination does not require the dancer to make a gender specific presentation. Males and females can be presented together.

#### TIME ALLOWANCES / NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

Examination	1 or 2 Candidates		3 or 4 Candidates
Primary Class	Not used		20 minutes

For the Primary Class Examination the teacher teaches three to four candidates in the presence of the examiner, demonstrating their experience of the syllabus material, followed by presenting them in a prepared dance sequence. The examiner will then have the opportunity to request syllabus material to be shown on an individual basis.

## MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

The teacher is responsible for the musical accompaniment in a recorded format. For the Primary Class Examination only, the teacher may be the operator.

## DRESS REQUIREMENTS

There are no marks for grooming for the Primary Class Examination; it is considered an essential aspect of training, giving poise and confidence. The following are expected:

- Candidates should be suitably dressed in clothes that enable the examiner to see the dance and allow the candidate to perform without distraction.
- Females should wear a suitably tailored *salwār* or *curidār kamīz*.
- Males should wear a suitably tailored *kurtā pyjāma*.
- All candidates should have their waist firmly bound.
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a single plait or bun. A long plait should be secured at the back to prevent its movement distracting from the dance.
- No dance costumes or jewellery should be worn.
- Ankle bells are optional.

## SYLLABUS CONTENT

This syllabus outline must be applied in conjunction with the Primary Class Examination Specifications.

### 1. Body Awareness

- 1.1 Warm-up
- 1.2 Cool-down
- 1.3 'Everyday' stance/the 'dance' stance
- 1.4 Awareness of body parts
- 1.5 Placing of the legs and feet
- 1.6 Carriage of the arms, shoulders, neck, head and eyes
- 1.7 Mobilisation of the arms, wrists, hands, fingers, shoulders; head and neck; face and eyes

### 2. Rhythm and Timing

- 2.1 Hand clapping, foot beating
- 2.2 Variations in the sound of stamping

### 3. Dynamics

- 3.1 Firm and gentle
- 3.2 Quick and slow
- 3.3 Rising and sinking
- 3.4 Action and stillness

### 4. Expression

- 4.1 Communication of feelings and emotions
- 4.2 Lucidity of mimetic statements

## 5. Spatial Awareness

- 5.1 Direction relating to body
- 5.2 Direction relating to space
- 5.3 Travelling
- 5.4 Turns and spins

## ASSESSMENT

The examination takes place in the presence of the teacher.

- Normally three to four candidates are examined simultaneously.
- The first part of the examination is conducted by the teacher, leading a pre-rehearsed dance or warm-up sequence, for 5 minutes, covering all aspects of the syllabus. This part demonstrates candidates' ability to follow instructions.
- The second part is a prepared dance performance of around 3 - 4 minutes. This can be a sequence of dance movements, which need not be genre specific.
- The final part is the examiner requesting material from the syllabus individually from each candidate.

## MARK SCHEME

### PRIMARY CLASS

Title of component	Marks attainable
Body awareness and control	15
Rhythm / timing: accuracy in keeping foot beats and clapping	15
Dynamics	10
Expression	10
Spatial awareness and use of space	10
Response to teacher	10
Movement memory	10
Performance quality	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The Primary Class Examination is assessed externally by visiting examiners recruited and trained by the ISTD.

The titles of the components and the marks attainable are detailed above. The overall mark is given out of 100 and the overall result is indicated as follows:

Grade	Marks
Distinction	80-100 marks
Merit	60-79 marks
Pass	40-59 marks
Not Attained	0-39 marks

## ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

Candidates are assessed on their ability to show:

- Technical accuracy with correct placement to the best of their physical facility.
- Appropriate use of limbs showing an understanding of the purpose or significance of each movement or sequence of movements.
- A sense of line and well co-ordinated movements.
- An assured performance showing the different qualities of movement required by each section of the examination structure.
- Musicality and rhythmic awareness.

# **BHARATANATYAM GRADED EXAMINATIONS: GRADES 1 - 6**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **RATIONALE**

Bharatanatyam makes a distinctive contribution to the education of all students, in that it uses movement, which is the fundamental mode of human expression. It offers a range of learning opportunities and enables participants to enjoy physical expression as well as develop intellectual sensibilities. As they work together in Bharatanatyam, candidates learn about co-operation and develop an understanding of the shaping of movement into artistic forms of expression.

Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam are concerned with progressive mastery in defined stages within the context of safe dance practice.

### **AIMS**

The aim of Graded Examinations is to provide an assessment scheme for dance, which gives the basis for the measurement of the individual candidate's progress and development, whether the candidate is pursuing dance as a leisure activity or as preparation for a professional career as a dance teacher or performer. There are six practical examination grades, numbered from 1 to 6, in order to indicate the increasing order of difficulty (6 represents the highest level of attainment).

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Bharatanatyam Graded Examination syllabus are set out below:

- To impart practical skills in Bharatanatyam as it is manifest today in its traditional form, complemented by appropriate background knowledge and understanding of the art, through a programme of training and assessment.
- To lay a holistic foundation either as an element in a liberal education or as a preparation for vocational training in Bharatanatyam or other dance-based careers, integrating the major aspects of the art form, including the movement vocabulary, the experience of performance and an understanding of the relevant music and literature.
- To develop an awareness and appreciation of Bharatanatyam in the context of a wider dance world.

### **LEARNING AND PROGRESSION**

Candidates develop the skill and understanding of Bharatanatyam, at the same time as building a sound technique, by developing the physical ability to communicate through movement in an expressive and artistic way. A clearly defined structure allows learning to take place in the context of safe dance practice. The Graded Examinations build up progressively, ensuring that steps and skills learned at lower levels prepare for more complex movements as the candidate progresses.

Each Bharatanatyam Graded Examination allows candidates to progress to the next higher grade in the Bharatanatyam genre. Also, a range of transfers to other dance genres becomes possible as the candidate develops physically and learns common skills such as running, gesture, posture, timing and rhythmic awareness. In this way, with additional teaching input, the candidate is able to develop a broad base of dancing skills.

Following on from the Graded Examinations, candidates may wish to progress to the Vocational Graded Examinations as preparation for employment as a professional dancer or as preparation for dance teaching qualifications.

The Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam also allow for those participating solely for recreational purposes to produce quality work in a safe dance context.

## **ENTRY CONDITIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **AGE LIMITS**

There is no upper or lower age limit for entering the Bharatanatyam Graded Examinations. It is recommended, however, that teachers ensure that candidates are at an appropriate level of maturity to meet and enjoy the demands of the syllabus.

It is recommended that children and adults are not entered at the same time.

### **PRIOR LEARNING**

The Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam are intended to be taken consecutively and most candidates will wish to progress through them in sequence in order to develop and demonstrate the requisite skills. However, in cases where examinations are undertaken without success at the previous grade, the candidate needs to be at an appropriate level of physical and artistic development. Before a candidate enrolls in a class leading to a Graded Examination, teachers are under a particular duty, therefore, to assess the achievement of the candidate, particularly with regard to safe dance practice.

### **GENDER DISTINCTIONS**

The examination does not require the dancer to make a gender specific presentation. Males and females can be presented together.

### **TIME ALLOWANCES / NUMBER OF CANDIDATES**

Candidates are normally examined in groups of three. Where this is not possible, candidates should be entered in pairs. In exceptional circumstances, a single candidate can be entered, for example if the teacher is not entering any other Grade 1 candidates who have learnt the same prepared dance sequence.

For Grades 1 - 6 the three candidates show a prepared dance sequence simultaneously, following which they each in turn answer questions about the prepared dance sequence they have shown, about other elements of the syllabus, and they may be asked to dance to demonstrate their understanding.

The examination of the candidates takes the following total time-

Examination	1 Candidate	2 Candidates	3 Candidates
Grade 1	15 minutes	25 minutes	30 minutes
Grade 2	20 minutes	30 minutes	35 minutes
Grade 3	25 minutes	35 minutes	45 minutes
Grade 4	25 minutes	40 minutes	50 minutes
Grade 5	30 minutes	45 minutes	60 minutes
Grade 6	40 minutes	60 minutes	80 minutes

These timings include an allocation of time for the examiner to assess candidates' files.

### MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

The teacher is responsible for the provision of accompaniment which must be in recorded format for which an operator will be required.

On no account may the teacher or another candidate in the same session be present to operate or accompany for the six Graded Examinations.

A double CD with sample music appropriate for the examination presentation is available from the ISTD shop.

### DRESS REQUIREMENTS

There are no marks for grooming for the six graded examinations; it is considered an essential aspect of training, giving poise and confidence. The following are expected:

- Candidates should be suitably dressed in clothes that enable the examiner to see the dance and allow the candidate to perform without distraction.
- Females should wear a dance practice *sāri* or suitably tailored *salwār kamīz*.
- Males should wear a *dhoti* or a suitably tailored *kurtā pyjāma*.
- All candidates should have their waist firmly bound.
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a single plait or bun. A long plait should be secured at the back to prevent its movement distracting from the dance.
- No dance costume or jewellery should be worn.
- No ankle bells should be worn for the Grade 1, 2 and 3 examinations. In Grades 4, 5 and 6 these are optional.

## SYLLABUS CONTENT

This syllabus outline must be applied in conjunction with the Bharatanatyam Graded Examination Specifications and the General Statement on QCF and Level Descriptors, available on the ISTD website.

### GRADES 1, 2 & 3 (QCF LEVEL 1)

Candidates demonstrate an increasing vocabulary of movement in the chosen technique. An understanding of the technique is reflected in the ability to coordinate simple movements to produce combinations of steps and quality of movement ie precision and control within the range of their own physical capacity.

Candidates communicate an increasing confidence in performance. They are able to interpret music and display sensitivity to musical content and style. Candidates' performances show a developing spatial awareness, an ability to work with others and responsiveness to an audience.

### GRADE 1

#### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and *Tāla*

- 1.1 Recitation of *śolkaṭṭu* for *aḍavus* in two *kālas* and appropriate *tāla*.
- 1.2 Recitation of *śolkaṭṭu* for the *korvai* with *tāla*.
- 1.3 Recitation of *jātis* covered.
- 1.4 Knowledge of *ādi tāla* and *rūpaka tāla*.

#### 2. Music

- 2.1 Twelve to fourteen *Saraḷi Varisai* in either *Māyamālavagowla* or *Śankarabharana*, to be sung in three speeds to *ādi tāla*.
- 2.2 One *gīta* in *rūpaka tāla*.  
These may be sung by following written notation.

#### Technical Skills and Performance

#### 3. Movement Vocabulary

(Assessed in first and second speed only, recommended to be practised in all three speeds)

- 3.1 *Taṭṭu aḍavu* - seven to nine varieties of stamping in *sthānaka* and *araimaṇḍi*.
- 3.2 *Kaṭṭu aḍavu* - three varieties using crossing and stamping patterns (using *kaṭakāmukha* and *alapadma* or *tripatāka hasta*).
- 3.3 *Meṭṭu aḍavu* - stamping on the ball of the foot.
- 3.4 *Nāṭṭu aḍavu* - eight varieties of stretching the leg.
- 3.5 *Paraval aḍavu* - varieties of *tā tai tai ta*
  - In *araimaṇḍi* with feet and arms in synchrony.
  - In *araimaṇḍi* with arms moving in a full circle.
  - In *sthānaka* with arms moving in synchrony then opposition.
- 3.6 *Di di tai* - in sequences exploring various arm movements for one step, different foot positions for the same rhythm and a variety of floor patterns.
- 3.7 *Naḍai* - the basic Bharatanatyam walk incorporating awareness of three *jātis* - *caturaśra*, *tiśra* and *miśra*.

**4. Nritta**

4.1 Selection of *aḍavus* from the above section.

4.2 At least one *korvai* spanning a minimum of four *āvartanas* of *ādi tāla*, in first and second speed only, using the *aḍavu* vocabulary of this Grade. This must be presented in the prepared dance sequence in a distinctly separate manner for easy identification by the examiner.

**5. Abhinaya / Nritya**

5.1 Gestures and expression for two *ślokas* such as the *Guru* and *Siva ślokas*.

**6. Creative Exercise**

6.1 Using *di di tai*, a candidate will be expected to create a variety of floor patterns using different hand gestures and / or foot positions on instruction from the examiner.

**Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File**

**7. Health & Body Conditioning**

7.1 Simple warm-up exercises for the beginning of class.

7.2 Holding of the posture (*araimaṇḍi* and *sthānaka*) - positions of the feet, degree of turn-out, alignment, centering, shoulders.

7.3 Exercises for centering of the eyes; eye, neck and head exercises for the purpose of focussing and alignment in presentation; exercises for hand and eye coordination.

7.4 Simple cool-down exercises for the end of class.

**8. Theory**

8.1 An understanding of the principles of movement and the function of the exercises.

8.2 *Ślokas* - *Guru vandana*, *Siva stuti*, *sahanāvavatu*, or any other *śloka* – knowing the words and meanings.

8.3 *Śira*, *driṣṭi*, *grīva* and *maṇḍala bheda ślokas*, *asamyuta* and *samyuta hasta ślokas*.

8.4 *Nāṭya Kramaha śloka*.

8.5 *Deva hastas* relating to *ślokas* learnt.

8.6 Nomenclature of *aḍavus*.

**9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)**

9.1 A record of musical notations.

9.2 A record of the movement vocabulary, prescribed *korvai*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered.

9.3 Brief notes on the origin of Bharatanatyam (4-5 independent points, written using around 200-300 words).

9.4 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material.

**The Grade 1 examination** consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of six minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the movement vocabulary in two speeds, *nritta* composition and *abhinaya* as prescribed in the syllabus. The prepared piece for the exam should include sections of *aḍavus* for the Grade, as well as prescribed compositions of *nritta* and *abhinaya* pieces.
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner.

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

## GRADE 2

### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and Tāla

- 1.1 Recitation of *śolkaṭṭu* for *aḍavus* in *trikāla* and appropriate *tāla*.
- 1.2 Recitation of *śolkaṭṭu* for the *korvai* with *tāla*.
- 1.3 Knowledge of *pancajāti*.
- 1.4 Knowledge of *tāla* and its *angas* (limited to *ādi tāla* and *rūpaka tāla*).

#### 2. Music

- 2.1 *Janṭa Varisai* - students will be expected to sing seven to nine exercises in two speeds, in *ādi tāla*.
- 2.2 At least two *gītas*, each in a different *tāla*.  
These may be sung by following written notation.

### Technical Skills and Performance

#### 3. Movement Vocabulary (in three speeds)

- 3.1 *Taṭṭu aḍavu* - seven to nine varieties in ascending and descending tempi.
- 3.2 *Śimir aḍavu* - two varieties in *tīśra jāti*.
- 3.3 *Paraval aḍavu* - varieties of *tā tai tai ta*
  - Arms and feet working in opposition.
  - Arms moving in a circular pattern, incorporating a spin for the footwork.
  - The footwork to incorporate a jump (on the first beat or the second beat).
  - To incorporate a T-shaped pattern for any of the varieties learnt in this or the previous grade.
- 3.4 *Periya / rangakramaṇa / uśī aḍavu* – Series of off-beat steps covering space in a variety of floor patterns.
- 3.5 *Egarmeṭṭu / kudittameṭṭu aḍavu* - four to eight varieties of *tai hat tai hi*.
- 3.6 *Cil / jāru / sarikkal aḍavu* - varieties of *taiya taihi* in which the *sthānaka* position is used:
  - Two varieties using *patāka hasta*.
  - Two varieties using *alapadma hasta*.
  - One variety using *mrigaśīrṣa hasta*.
- 3.7 *Bhramari* - two varieties of *ekapāda*.
- 3.8 *Utplavana* - three varieties, of which one includes use of *kartari hasta*.
- 3.9 *Taṭṭu meṭṭu / jāti aḍavu* demonstrating *pancajāti*.
- 3.10 *Muktāya / tīrmāna aḍavu* – *ta dhin gi ṇa tom* series.

#### 4. Nritta

- 4.1 A selection of *aḍavus* from the above section.
- 4.2 A *nritta* composition based on a *swara korvai*.

#### 5. Abhinaya / Nritya

- 5.1 A *śloka* more complex than those prescribed for Grade 1. This can be performed as free verse or bound to rhythm. Examples of *ślokas* that can be used include, *mūshika vāhana*, *śantākāram*, *yākundendu*. The *sāhitya* of a simple *gīta* can also be used.

#### 6. Creative Exercise

- 6.1 On instruction from the examiner, development of a narrative based on a sentence structure using *patāka hasta viniyoga*.

## Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

### 7. Health & Body Conditioning

- 7.1 Understanding and maintenance of a good posture as well as development in the execution and understanding of exercises from Grade 1.
- 7.2 Exercises for developing balance.
- 7.3 Strengthening feet and legs.

### 8. Theory

- 8.1 An understanding of the principles of movement and the function of the exercises.
- 8.2 Nomenclature of *aḍavus*.
- 8.3 *Śira*, *driṣṭi* and *grīva bheda viniyogas* - not with *śloka*.
- 8.4 *Patāka hasta viniyoga* - *śloka* or Sanskrit names.
- 8.5 *Sthānaka*, *utplavana*, *bhramari* and *cāri bheda ślokas* or Sanskrit names.
- 8.6 Knowing the words and meanings of the *śloka* from the *abhinaya / nritya* section.

### 9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)

- 9.1 A record of musical notations.
- 9.2 A record of the movement vocabulary, the prescribed *korvai*, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered.
- 9.3 Notes on the mythological background of Bharatanatyam with the story of the creation of the Natya Veda. (Around 500 words)
- 9.4 Notes on *nritta*, *nritya* and *nāṭya*.
- 9.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material.

The Grade 2 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of eight minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the movement vocabulary in three speeds, a *swara korvai* and a more complex *śloka* compared to Grade 1. The prepared piece for the exam should include sections of *aḍavus* for the Grade, as well as prescribed compositions of *nritta* and *abhinaya* pieces.
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner.

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

## GRADE 3

### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and Tāla

- 1.1 Recitation with *tāla* of *śolkāṭṭu* of *Alāriṣṣu korvai* and *kuraippu* and knowledge of their rhythmic structures.
- 1.2 Understanding of *tāla* structure of the invocation and recitation of any *korvais* included in the invocation.

#### 2. Music

- 2.1 Ability to sing *alankāras* in *sapta tāla* and knowledge of the structure of the *sapta tāla*. These may be sung by following written notation.
- 2.2 Ability to sing the invocation to *tāla*.

### Technical Skills and Performance

#### 3. Movement Vocabulary

- 3.1 *Eṭṭa aḍavu* - five varieties of *tat tai tām / tat tai tā ha*.
- 3.2 *Pakka aḍavu* - varieties of *tat tai tā ha*
  - Three varieties done on the spot.
  - Two varieties of travelling movement.
- 3.3 *Tā hata jham tari tā*.
- 3.4 *Maṇḍi aḍavu* - two combinations in which the *muzhumaṇḍi* position is used.
- 3.5 *Sarikkal aḍavu* - in which the starting position is *muzhumaṇḍi*.
- 3.6 *Mei aḍavu* - two varieties.
- 3.7 *Muktāya / tīrmāna aḍavu* – *ki ṭa ta ka dha ri ki ṭa tom* series.

#### 4. Nritta

- 4.1 A selection of *aḍavus* from the above section.
- 4.2 *Tā hata jham tari tā korvai* of *tīśra Alāriṣṣu*.
- 4.3 *Kuraippu* set to a suitable time cycle.

#### 5. Abhinaya / Nritya

- 5.1 An invocatory item with both *nritta* and *abhinaya*, for example, *Kavittuvam*, *Stuti*, *Vandana*. It is mandatory that the *abhinaya* performed in this Grade is set to a time cycle as opposed to free verse.

#### 6. Creative Exercise

- 6.1 The candidate will be expected to apply any *jāti* to any *aḍavu* as requested by the examiner.

### Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

#### 7. Health & Body Conditioning

- 7.1 Good understanding of a safe posture: spinal column, hip-knee-ankle alignment, shoulder-elbow-wrist alignment.
- 7.2 Short warm-up and cool-down sequences for Bharatanatyam class.

## 8. Theory

- 8.1 An understanding of the principles of movement and the function of the exercises.
- 8.2 Nomenclature of *aḍavus*.
- 8.3 Knowledge of *sāhitya* for the items learnt – words and meanings.
- 8.4 Knowledge of the four types of *abhinaya*.
- 8.5 Knowledge of *Pātraprāṇa* with *śloka* as well as meanings.
- 8.6 *Viniyogas* of *asamyuta hastas* up to *śukatuṇḍa - śloka* or Sanskrit names.

## 9. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)

- 9.1 A record of musical notations.
- 9.2 A record, with notations, of the prescribed *korvai*, the *kuraippu*, and the rhythmic structures within the invocation.
- 9.3 A record of the movement vocabulary, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered.
- 9.4 Information on different *bāṇis* of Bharatanatyam.
- 9.5 Knowledge of and basic information on other classical Indian dance genres.
- 9.6 History of Bharatanatyam through the ages, and to the present day.
- 9.7 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material.

The Grade 3 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of ten minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the movement vocabulary, as well as the prescribed *nritta* and *nritya* compositions. The prepared piece for the exam should include sections of *aḍavus* for the Grade, as well as the prescribed *nritta* and *nritya* compositions.
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner.

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

## GRADES 4 AND 5 (QCF LEVEL 2)

Candidates demonstrate consolidated technical skills and an increased range of movements in sequences of increased length and complexity. They show a clear understanding of mechanics and purpose of the required vocabulary.

Candidates show the ability to sustain an appropriate sense of style throughout more complex sequences and an increased sensitivity to varying musical qualities. Technical facility and improved spatial awareness lead to an increased assurance of presentation.

### GRADE 4

#### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and *Tāla*

1.1 Recitation, with *tāla*, of the whole *Alārippu* and of the *Jatiswaram korvais*.

#### 2. Music

2.1 Ability to sing the dance items learnt with *tāla*.

#### Technical Skills and Performance

#### 3. Movement Vocabulary

3.1 Miscellaneous *aḍavus* - a selection of four should be made, each demonstrating a different movement quality. Suggested *aḍavus* - *ḍolā* or *vīsu*, *katti* and complex *maṇḍi aḍavus*. These are only suggested *aḍavus*; teachers can use any other complex *aḍavus* not taught in previous grades.

#### 4. *Nritta* and *Nritya*

4.1 A selection of *aḍavus* from the above section.

4.2 *Alārippu*.

4.3 *Jatiswaram*.

4.4 *Śabdham*.

#### 5. Creative Exercise

5.1 The examiner will prescribe a simple narrative of the complexity of a *Śabdham* and the candidate will be expected to interpret this using *the hasta viniyogas* upto *alapadma*. The words for the narrative will be a description / translation in English and not *sāhitya* from a song.

#### Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

#### 6. Health & Body Conditioning

6.1 Thorough understanding of a safe posture: spinal column, hip-knee-ankle alignment, shoulder-elbow-wrist alignment.

6.2 Understanding of the difference between general and style-specific warm-up and cool-down.

6.3 Knowledge of exercises for developing stamina.

6.4 Use of breath.

#### 7. Theory

7.1 An understanding of the principles of movement and the function of the exercises.

7.2 Nomenclature of *aḍavus*.

- 7.3 Knowledge of *sāhitya* for items learnt – words and meanings.
- 7.4 Awareness of the Natya Sastra.
- 7.5 Knowledge about the content of the Abhinaya Darpana.
- 7.6 *Asamyuta hasta viniyogas* up to *alapadma* - *śloka* or Sanskrit names.
- 7.7 *Aṣṭadikpālaka hastas* and *daśāvatāra hastas*.
- 7.8 An understanding of *padārtha*, *vākyārtha* and *sancāri*.

**8. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)**

- 8.1 A record of musical notations.
- 8.2 A record, with notations, of the *Alārippu* and *Jatiswaram korvais*.
- 8.3 A record of the movement vocabulary, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt.
- 8.4 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material.

**The Grade 4 examination** consists of:

- Presentation of the file which must include a repertoire list of items learnt in this and previous Grades.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of twelve minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the movement vocabulary, *Alārippu*, *Jatiswaram* and *Śabdham*. The prepared piece can be put together using these three items fully or in parts. The prepared piece for the exam should include sections of *aḍavus* for the Grade, as well as the prescribed *nritta* and *nritya* compositions.
- All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece.
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

## GRADE 5

### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and Tāla

1.1 Recitation, with *tāla*, of the *Tillāna korvais* and any other rhythmic structures learnt within the items.

#### 2. Music

2.1 Ability to sing the dance items learnt with *tāla*.

### Technical Skills and Performance

#### 3. Nritta and Nritya

3.1 *Kīrtanam*.

3.2 *Tillāna*.

3.3 *Padam* (involving a *sancāri* over a minimum of 4 cycles of the song line).

#### 4. Creative Exercise

4.1 Two *reṇḍu kalai āvartanas* of *śolkaṭṭu* will be given by the examiner and the candidate will be expected to set *aḍavus* to the sequence. The *śolkaṭṭu* will be a recitation of simple beats as opposed to words typically used in a *jati / tīrmāna*.

### Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

#### 5. Health & Body Conditioning

5.1 Demonstration of core stability exercises.

5.2 Ability to demonstrate strengthening exercises of all major body parts.

#### 6. Theory

6.1 An understanding of the principles of movement and the function of the exercises.

6.2 Knowledge of *sāhitya* for items learnt – words and meanings.

6.3 Introduction to *nāyika bhedas*, including *aṣṭanāyika* and a description of each one.

6.4 Introduction to *bhāva* and *rasa*.

6.5 *Asamyuta hasta viniyogas* up to *triśūla - śloka* or Sanskrit names.

#### 7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)

7.1 A record of musical notations.

7.2 A record, with notations, of the *Tillāna korvais* and any other *korvais* in the items learnt.

7.3 A record of the movement vocabulary, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt.

7.4 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material.

### The Grade 5 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file which must include a repertoire list of items learnt in this and previous grades.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of fifteen minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform *Kīrtanam*, *Tillāna* and a *Padam* (involving a *sancāri* as described above). The prepared performance can be put together using these three items fully or in parts.
- All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece.
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.

- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

### GRADE 6 (QCF LEVEL 3)

Candidates demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of a particular style through a wide range of movements performed with technical strength. Along with confidence, candidates convey self-awareness, resulting in a sensitive personal interpretation of musical mood.

Candidates demonstrate a mature awareness of audience as well as subtleties of performance combined with expression and fluidity of movement involving dynamics and use of space.

### GRADE 6

#### Ancillary Skills

- 1. Rhythm and *Tāla***
  - 1.1 Recitation, with *tāla*, of all rhythmic structures of the *Varnam*.
- 2. Music**
  - 2.1 Ability to sing the dance items learnt with *tāla*.

#### Technical Skills and Performance

- 3. Nritta and *Nritya***
  - 3.1 *Varnam*.
  - 3.2 A minimum of one item from the following selection – *Jāvali* / *Aṣṭapadi* / *Bhajan* / *Devarnāma*. Teachers are advised to present at least one item in the *nāyaka* / *nāyika* mode.
- 4. Creative Exercise**
  - 4.1 The examiner will give the candidate a line of a familiar song along with its meaning. This will be taken from repertoire of either this or previous Grades. The candidate will be asked to create movement and expression to this applying *padārtha*, *vākyārtha* and elements of *sancāri*. The actual *sāhitya* will be used for this exercise.

#### Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

- 5. Health & Body Conditioning**
  - 5.1 Further development of core stability exercises.
  - 5.2 Thorough understanding of strength training and stretching.
- 6. Theory**
  - 6.1 Knowledge of *sāhitya* for items learnt – words and meanings.
  - 6.2 *Samyuta hasta viniyogas* - *śloka* or Sanskrit names.
  - 6.3 Understanding of a *mārgam*.

**7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)**

- 7.1 A record of musical notations.
- 7.2 A record, with notations, of the rhythmic structures in the *Varnam*.
- 7.3 A record of the movement vocabulary, rhythm and *tāla*, theory and *abhinaya* / *nritya* covered including knowledge of the *sāhitya* of the dances learnt.
- 7.4 A record of at least two Bharatanatyam or other classical Indian dance performances seen, with notes on artists, repertoire and comment on performance discussing *angaśuddha* and characteristics of the *mārgam*.
- 7.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material.

**The Grade 6 examination** consists of:

- Presentation of the file which must include a repertoire list of items learnt in this and previous grades.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of twenty minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Grade 6 syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nritya*, with a compulsory inclusion of at least part of the first half and part of the second half of the *varnam*.
- All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece.
- Individual response to simple questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.
- Further individual demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

Three candidates are normally examined simultaneously.

## ASSESSMENT - BHARATANATYAM GRADES 1 – 6

### MARK SCHEME

#### GRADES 1, 2 AND 3

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time keeping of <i>tāla</i> -	10
Music - singing while keeping <i>tāla</i> .	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Movement Vocabulary - Stance, rhythmic transitions, tempo changes, adherence to <i>tāla</i> in movement, rhythmic co-ordination of parts of the body.	20
<i>Nritta</i> composition(s)-.	15
<i>Abhinaya/Nritya</i> - Expression throughout the presentation.	10
Creative Exercise.	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; BODY CONDITIONING, THEORY, AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Health & Body Conditioning.	5
Theory – response to questions.	15
File - adequacy and presentation and response to questions generated from the file.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**GRADE 4**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time keeping of <i>tāla</i> .	10
Singing of the dance repertoire learnt with <i>tāla</i> .	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Movement Vocabulary.	5
<i>Alāriṭṭu</i> .	10
<i>Jatiswaram</i> .	15
<i>Śabdham</i> .	15
Creative Exercise.	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; BODY CONDITIONING, THEORY AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Health & Body Conditioning.	5
Theory – response to questions.	15
File - adequacy and presentation, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire. Response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of repertoire, and independent research.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**GRADE 5**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time keeping of <i>tāla</i> for all rhythmic components learnt.	20
Singing of the dance repertoire with <i>tāla</i> .	
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Kīrtanam</i> .	15
<i>Tillāna</i> .	15
<i>Padam</i> (involving a substantial <i>sancāri</i> ).	15
Creative Exercise.	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; BODY CONDITIONING, THEORY AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Health & Body Conditioning.	5
Theory – response to questions.	15
File - adequacy and presentation, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire. Response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of repertoire, and independent research.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**GRADE 6**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time keeping of <i>tāla</i> for all rhythmic components learnt.	20
Singing of the dance repertoire with <i>tāla</i> .	
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Varnam</i> .	30
<i>Jāvali/Aṣṭapadi/Bhajan/Devarnāma</i> .	15
Creative Exercise.	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; BODY CONDITIONING, THEORY AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Health & Body Conditioning.	5
Theory – response to questions.	15
File - adequacy and presentation, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire. Response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of repertoire, and independent research.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Graded Examinations are assessed externally by visiting examiners recruited and trained by the ISTD.

The examinations are divided into Sections and each Section is composed of several components which are separately assessed and aggregated to give the Section total. The titles of these components and the marks attainable for the Bharatanatyam Graded Examinations are detailed further below.

Candidates must gain at least 25% of the marks attainable in each Section in order to pass the examination overall. In cases where 25% of the marks attainable does not come to a round figure, eg 12 1/2, the pass mark for the Section is lowered to the nearest round figure, in this example, 12.

The Section totals are aggregated and the overall mark is given out of 100. If all Sections are passed, then the overall result is indicated as follows:

Grade	Marks
Distinction	80-100 marks
Merit	60-79 marks
Pass	40-59 marks
Not Attained	0-39 marks

However, if the candidate is unsuccessful in one or more Sections, as explained above, the total mark given out of 100 will not correspond to the result indicators in the chart. In this circumstance, whatever the overall numerical mark may be, the result given will be **Not Attained**.

## CLASSIFICATION OF RESULTS

The principle of best fit is applied in deciding the appropriate classification for each candidate. It is not to be expected that a candidate in a particular category will necessarily demonstrate all of the characteristics listed in that category.

A candidate who achieves a **Distinction** classification (80-100 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- flair, vitality and skill
- fully appropriate style
- incisively-focussed dancing
- precision in the technique of the genre
- consistent, highly developed musicality
- confident and accurate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set

A candidate who achieves a '**Merit**' classification (60-79 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- skill and proficiency
- largely appropriate style
- focussed dancing
- competence in the technique of the genre
- evidence of developing musicality
- relevant and appropriate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set

A candidate who achieves a '**Pass**' classification (40-59 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- competence
- basic ability to carry out the required movements
- periodic moments of convincing focus
- basic competence in most aspects of the technique of the genre
- basic musicality
- broadly relevant and appropriate response to questions asked and/or tasks set, but some prompting may be required

A candidate who achieves an insufficient level of achievement '**Not Attained**' classification (00-39 marks) is one who has not yet demonstrated attributes required to gain at least a 'Pass' classification.

#### **ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE**

Candidates are assessed on their ability to show:

- Technical accuracy with correct placement to the best of their physical facility
- Appropriate use of limbs showing an understanding of the purpose or significance of each movement or sequence of movements
- A sense of line and well co-ordinated movements
- An assured performance showing the different qualities of movement required by each section of the examination structure
- Musicality and rhythmic awareness

# BHARATANATYAM VOCATIONAL GRADED EXAMINATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

### RATIONALE

The Vocational Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam, from Intermediate Foundation through to Advanced 2, develop the candidate's expertise in such a way as to provide the basis for either professional employment as a dancer or further training as a dance teacher.

Throughout the study of the syllabus, candidates are following a vocational path, requiring a high level of commitment and with an increasing emphasis on safe dance practice. Successful candidates at this level should show virtuosity in performance, a high standard of technique and a sound knowledge and understanding of the Bharatanatyam genre, including an understanding of reference and context. Candidates undertaking a study of the Bharatanatyam Vocational Graded syllabus should also typically display a sense of self-awareness and be self-motivated in terms of their personal development. As distinct from the general Graded examinations, a greater degree of personal interpretation is encouraged and the candidate is expected to show the potential to communicate effectively with an audience.

Candidates will need to show the qualities of professionalism, commitment and focus, with the ability to manage a greater workload than that required for the general Graded examinations. This would typically result in a successful candidate spending significant additional time each week in lessons, in practising and in studying independently.

The Vocational Graded Examinations are regulated qualifications on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Intermediate Foundation is located at Level 2, Intermediate is located at Level 3, and Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 are located at Level 4.

### AIM

The aim of the ISTD Vocational Graded Examinations in Bharatanatyam is to provide an assessment scheme, which gives the basis for the measurement of the individual candidate's progress and development, in preparing to be a professional dance performer or teacher. There are four practical examinations graded to measure appropriate stages of development from a general standard of Bharatanatyam education to that of professional competence and readiness.

### OBJECTIVES

The syllabus objectives of the Bharatanatyam Vocational Graded Examinations are :

- To impart the practical skills in Bharatanatyam creation and performance, as they are manifest today, complemented by appropriate contextual knowledge and understanding, through a programme of education and assessment.
- To inculcate a holistic perception of Bharatanatyam in the context of the world of dance.
- To lay a foundation of personal resources to survive and succeed in the professional dance world.

## LEARNING AND PROGRESSION

All Bharatanatyam Graded Examinations are concerned with progressive mastery in defined stages. They also develop and demonstrate competence and artistry in, and communication through, the Bharatanatyam technique. The Vocational Graded Examinations are concerned specifically with the mastery of technique and underpinning understanding, to a level sufficient to prepare candidates for further vocational training and match current expectations in the employment sector.

## ENTRY CONDITIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

### AGE LIMITS

Lower age limits are set in the interests of the health and safety of the candidate within the demands of the syllabus.

Intermediate Foundation	minimum age 11
Intermediate	minimum age 12
Advanced 1	minimum age 14
Advanced 2	minimum age 15

### PRIOR LEARNING

Intermediate Foundation is an optional examination, otherwise these examinations must be taken in the correct order. Exemption from the Intermediate and Advanced 1 examinations may be obtained if the candidate is a student who already holds an equivalent genre Intermediate or Advanced 1 certificate of an Ofqual approved dance awarding body. Application for exemption must be made in writing to the UK Examinations department.

### GENDER DISTINCTIONS

The examination does not require the dancer to make a gender specific presentation. Males and females can be presented together.

### TIME ALLOWANCES / NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually. The candidate shows a prepared dance performance, following which she/he answers questions about the prepared performance, about other aspects of the syllabus, and may be asked to dance additional items to demonstrate understanding and skill. The examination of candidates takes the following time:

Examination	1 Candidate	2 Candidates	3 Candidates
Intermediate Foundation	45 minutes	65 minutes	N/A
Intermediate	55 minutes	80 minutes	N/A
Advanced 1	65 minutes	95 minutes	N/A
Advanced 2	80 minutes	115 minutes	N/A

### MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

Teachers entering candidates must make their own arrangements for provision of music.

### DRESS REQUIREMENTS

There are no marks for grooming for the Vocational Graded Examinations; it is considered an essential aspect of training, giving poise and confidence. The following are expected:

- Candidates should be suitably dressed in clothes that enable the examiner to see the dance and allow the candidate to perform without distraction.
- Females should wear a dance practice *sāri* or suitably tailored *salwār kamīz*.
- Males should wear a *dhoti* or a suitably tailored *kurtā pyjāma*.
- All candidates should have their waist firmly bound.
- Hair should be pinned away from the face and, if necessary, drawn back in a single plait or bun. A long plait should be secured at the back to prevent its movement distracting from the dance.
- No dance costume or jewellery should be worn.
- Ankle bells should be worn.

## SYLLABUS CONTENT

This syllabus outline must be applied in conjunction with the Bharatanatyam Vocational Examination Specifications and the General Statement on QCF and Level Descriptors, available on the ISTD website.

### INTERMEDIATE FOUNDATION

#### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and *Tāla*

- 1.1 Introduction to the use of *taṭṭukazhi* to conduct *aḍavus* and practise in *pancajāti*.
- 1.2 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *taṭṭukazhi*, of the *trikāla jati / tīrmāna*, *Jatiswaram korvais* and *Alārippu*.
- 1.3 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *taṭṭukazhi*, of any rhythmic patterns pertaining to the *Śabdham* and *Kīrtanam*.

#### 2. Music

- 2.1 Ability to vocalise the items learnt to *tāla* and demonstrating musicality. It is expected that this is done by memory, but if not possible, this may be demonstrated by following written *swaras / sāhitya* in which case an appropriate proportion of marks will be deducted by the examiner.
- 2.2 Knowledge of compositional structure ie: *pallavi*, *anupallavi* and of *rāgas* and *tālas* pertaining to the set dance pieces in this Grade.

#### Technical Skills and Performance

#### 3. *Nritta* and *Nritya*

- 3.1 *Trikāla jati / tīrmāna* in *ādi tāla*.
- 3.2 *Miśra Alārippu*.
- 3.3 *Jatiswaram*.
- 3.4 *Śabdham*.
- 3.5 *Kīrtanam*.

#### 4. Creative Exercise

- 4.1 Understanding composition of a *korvai* through tasks such as completing the missing part of a *korvai*, or creating the end of a *korvai* set to *ādi* or *rūpaka tāla*. The *śolkaṭṭu* will be a recitation of simple beats as opposed to words typically used in a *jati / tīrmāna*.

#### Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

#### 5. Health & Body Conditioning

- 5.1 Understanding and demonstration of general and style-specific warm-up and cool-down.
- 5.2 Demonstration of core stability exercises.
- 5.3 Ability to demonstrate strengthening exercises of all major body parts.
- 5.4 Controlled accuracy of limbs both in stillness and movement.

## 6. Theory

- 6.1 *Asamyuta hasta viniyoga ślokas - śloka* or Sanskrit names.
- 6.2 Introduction to *navarasas*.
- 6.3 Literal meaning of the *sāhitya* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the dance items.
- 6.4 Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Bharatanatyam Grades 1 - 4.

## 7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)

- 7.1 A record, with notation of the prescribed *jati / tīrmāna* and items learnt.
- 7.2 Record of theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered.
- 7.3 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. This should include their own notes and reviews on performances attended and on independent research of dance topics and articles.

The Intermediate Foundation examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file which must include a repertoire list of items learnt in this and previous Grades.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of twenty five minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Intermediate Foundation syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nritya*. The prepared performance can be put together using the items of this syllabus fully or in parts.
- All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece.
- Response to questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.
- Further demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually.

## INTERMEDIATE

### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and *Tāla*

- 1.1 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *taṭṭukazhi* of the prescribed *korvai* and *Tillāna korvais*.

#### 2. Music

- 2.1 Ability to vocalise the items learnt to *tāla* and demonstrating musicality. It is expected that this is done by memory, but if not possible, this may be demonstrated by following written *swaras / sāhitya* which will be reflected in the marks awarded . . .
- 2.2 Knowledge of compositional structure ie: *pallavi*, *anupallavi* and of *rāgas* and *tālas* pertaining to the set dance pieces in this Grade.

### Technical Skills and Performance

#### 3. *Nritta* and *Nritya*

- 3.1 A *korvai* spanning between 60-90 seconds in a less commonly used *tāla*, such as *aṭa* and *jhampa*.

- 3.2 *Tillāna*.
- 3.3 One item from the following selection – *Padam / Jāvali / Aṣṭapadi*.
- 3.4 One item from the following selection – *Bhajan / Devarnāma / Tevāram*.

#### 4. Creative Exercise

- 4.1 Be able to demonstrate a varied interpretation of a part from the expressional material learnt in this Grade.

### Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

#### 5. Health & Body Conditioning

- 5.1 Further development of core stability exercises.
- 5.2 Thorough and in-depth understanding of strength training and stretching.
- 5.3 Detailed general and style-specific warm-up and cool-down.
- 5.4 Understanding of the use of breath.

#### 6. Theory

- 6.1 *Samyuta hasta viniyoga ślokas - śloka* or Sanskrit names.
- 6.2 Understanding of *bhāva* and *rasa*.
- 6.3 *Nāyika* and *nāyaka bhedas* in relation to the items learnt.
- 6.4 Knowledge of the literal meaning of the *sāhitya* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the dance items.
- 6.5 Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Bharatanatyam Grades 1-4 and Intermediate Foundation although taking any of these examinations is not a pre-requisite.

#### 7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)

- 7.1 A record, with notation, of the prescribed *korvai* and *Tillāna korvais*.
- 7.2 Record of theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered.
- 7.3 Essay on *bhāva* and *rasa*.
- 7.4 Essay on *nāyaka / nāyika bheda*.
- 7.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. This should include their own notes and reviews on performances attended and on independent research of dance topics and articles.

The Intermediate examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file which must include a repertoire list of items learnt in this and previous Grades.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of 30 minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Intermediate syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritya* and *nritya*. The prepared performance can be put together using the items of this syllabus fully or in parts.
- All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece.
- Response to questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.
- Further demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually.

## ADVANCED 1

Candidates wishing to enter Advanced 1 must have passed Intermediate.

### Ancillary Skills

#### 1. Rhythm and Tāla

1.1 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *taṭṭukazhi* of rhythmic structures in all items learnt as well as the *Varnam jatis / tirmānas* and korvais in *Varnam swaras*.

#### 2. Music

2.1 Ability to vocalise the *śloka* and items learnt to *tāla* and demonstrating musicality. It is expected that this is done by memory, but if not possible, this may be demonstrated by following written *swaras / sāhitya* which will be reflected in the marks awarded.

2.2 Knowledge of compositional structure ie: *pallavi, anupallavi* and of *rāgas* and *tālas* pertaining to the set dance pieces in this Grade.

### Technical Skills and Performance

#### 3. Nritta and Nritya

3.1 A minimum of one item from the following selection – *Mallāri / Puṣpānjali / Kavittuvam / Toḍayam*.

3.2 *Śloka*.

3.3 *Varnam* (Each line of the song should fit into one *āvartana* of *ādi tāla* or four *āvartanas* of *rūpaka tāla*).

#### 4. Creative Exercise

4.1 Creating and performing a *nritta* sequence incorporating given *aḍavus* in suggested rhythmic structures set to two *āvartanas* of *ādi tāla*. For this, *śolkattu* from a *jati / tirmāna* will be given by the examiner and the *aḍavus* to be used will be indicated.

4.2 Creating *sancāri bhāva* as stipulated by the examiner. This will be to a song that is unknown to the candidate. The examiner will prescribe the content of the *sancāri bhāva*.

### Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

#### 5. Health & Body Conditioning

5.1 Demonstration and explanation of exercises to help in implementation of core stability exercises within genre specific movement.

5.2 Demonstration and explanation of the importance of a cool-down sequence after a Bharatanatyam performance.

5.3 Ability to demonstrate and explain the concept and analysis of the principles of posture, balance and alignment for all *aḍavu* categories.

#### 6. Theory

6.1 *Gati Bhedas* and *Bāndhava Hastas*.

6.2 Literal meanings and knowledge of the *sāhitya* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the items learnt.

6.3 Understanding of a *mārgam*.

6.4 In-depth understanding of the four types of *abhinaya*.

6.5 Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Bharatanatyam Grades 1-4, Intermediate Foundation and Intermediate.

**7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)**

- 7.1 A record, with notation, of *Varnam jatis / tīrmānas* and *korvais* in *Varnam swaras*.
- 7.2 Record of theory and *abhinaya / nritya* studied.
- 7.3 Researched material on requirements for dance costumes and make-up for traditional Bharatanatyam performance.
- 7.4 Own notes on mythology and literal background of prescribed pieces.
- 7.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. This should include their own notes and reviews on performances attended and on independent research of dance topics and articles.

**The Advanced 1 examination** consists of:

- Presentation of the file which must include a repertoire list of items learnt in this and previous Grades.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of 35 minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Advanced 1 syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nrirta* and *nritya*. The prepared performance can be put together using the items of this syllabus fully or in parts.
- All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece.
- Response to questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.
- Further demonstration if requested by the examiner. The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually.

**ADVANCED 2**

Candidates wishing to enter Advanced 2 must have passed Advanced 1.

**Ancillary Skills**

**1. Rhythm and Tāla**

- 1.1 Recitation, with *tāla* as well as with *taṭṭukazhi* of rhythmic structures in all items learnt as well as the *Varnam jatis / tīrmānas* and *korvais* in *Varnam swaras*.
- 1.2 Ability to vocalise any item learnt in this Grade and previous ones whilst conducting the accompanying dance rhythmic patterns through *taṭṭukazhi*.

**2. Music**

- 2.1 Ability to vocalise the items learnt to *tāla* and demonstrating musicality. It is expected that this is done by memory, but if not possible, this may be demonstrated by following written *swaras / sāhitya* in which case an appropriate proportion of marks will be deducted by the examiner.
- 2.2 Knowledge of compositional structure ie: *pallavi, anupallavi* and of *rāgas* and *tālas* pertaining to the set dance pieces in this Grade.

**Technical Skills and Performance**

**3. Nrirta and Nritya**

- 3.1 One expressional item in *tālamālika* or a less commonly used *tāla*, other than *ādi tāla* or *rūpaka tāla* .

3.2 *Varnam* - a more complex one than previously done in Advanced 1, ie slower paced such as a Tanjore Quartet one, displaying maturity in *sancāri*. Instead of a *Varnam*, a similarly structured slow-paced item incorporating *jatis / tīrmānas* and *swaras* as well as equally elaborate *abhinaya* sections can be chosen. (Candidates may choose to perform a *Swarajati*, *Pancarātna*, *Nrityopahāra* or even a *Kīrtanam* such as *Bhāvayāmi*, but these must display the required complexity and maturity and must be slow paced).

#### 4. Creative Exercise

4.1 Creating a narrative based on a given theme (applying *padārtha*, *vākyārtha* and *sancāri*) where the examiner will choose a song unfamiliar to the candidate.

4.2 Creating and performing a *jati / tīrmāna* facilitated by the examiner. In this, the examiner will recite the *jati / tīrmāna* and the candidate will be required to set movement to it and perform it. The examiner will not make suggestion to what *aḍavus* should be used.

### Health & Body Conditioning, Theory and File

#### 5. Health & Body Conditioning

5.1 Ability to analyse movement thoroughly whilst suggesting appropriate corrections and developing methods.

5.2 Knowledge of safe dance practice for dancers and injury management.

#### 6. Theory

6.1 *Navagraha hastas*.

6.2 Knowledge of the literal meanings of the *sāhitya* and mythological background of the narrative content covered in the items learnt.

6.3 Candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Bharatanatyam Grades 1-4, Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced 1.

#### 7. File (A4 Ring Binder, clearly named in large on the front and spine of the binder)

7.1 A record, with notation, of the *Varnam*'s or the alternative item's *jatis / tīrmānas* and *korvais* of the *swaras*.

7.2 Record of theory and *abhinaya / nritya* covered.

7.3 A study of the requirements for lighting, sound and set for traditional Bharatanatyam presentation.

7.4 Own notes on mythology and literal background of prescribed pieces.

7.5 Candidates should also be encouraged to collect a rich variety of supporting material. This should include their own notes and reviews on performances attended and on independent research of dance topics and articles.

The Advanced 2 examination consists of:

- Presentation of the file which must include a repertoire list of items learnt in this and previous Grades.
- Performance of a prepared dance sequence of 45 minutes' duration only, demonstrating ability to perform the Advanced 2 syllabus through an appropriate proportion of *nritta* and *nritya*. The prepared performance can be put together using the items of this syllabus fully or in parts.
- All items have to be learnt in full even if only parts of the items are used in the prepared piece.
- Response to questions testing theory, questions generated from the file and the performance.
- The examiner can request the candidate to demonstrate the item in full if it is edited in the performance. Music of learnt compositions should be kept available by the teacher.
- Further individual demonstration will be requested by the examiner from syllabi of other levels as a compulsory part of this examination.

Candidates are encouraged to be entered in pairs, although candidates may be examined individually.

## ASSESSMENT – BHARATANATYAM VOCATIONAL GRADE EXAMINATIONS

### MARK SCHEME

#### INTERMEDIATE FOUNDATION

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and time-keeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , demonstrating use of <i>taṭṭukazhi</i> .	20
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Trikāla jāti/tīrmāna</i> .	5
<i>Mīśra Alāriṭṭu &amp; Jatiswaram</i> .	20
<i>Śabdham</i> .	10
<i>Kīrtanam</i> .	10
Creative exercise.	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; BODY CONDITIONING, THEORY AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Health & Body Conditioning.	5
Theory – response to questions.	15
File - content, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire. Response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of the repertoire and independent research.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**INTERMEDIATE**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and timekeeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , demonstrating use of <i>taṭṭukazhi</i> .	20
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Korvai</i> in a less common <i>tāla</i> .	5
<i>Tillāna</i> .	15
<i>Padam/Jāvali/Aṣṭapadi</i> . <i>Bhajan/Devarnāma/Tevāram</i> . (One item from each selection).	25
Creative exercise.	5
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; BODY CONDITIONING, THEORY, AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Health & Body Conditioning.	5
Theory – response to questions.	15
File - content, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire. Response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of the repertoire and independent research.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**ADVANCED 1**

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and timekeeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , demonstrating use of <i>taṭṭukazhi</i> .	20
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Mallāri/Puṣpānjali/Kavittuvam/Toḍayam.</i>	10
<i>Varnam.</i>	25
<i>Śloka.</i>	5
Creative exercise.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; BODY CONDITIONING, THEORY, AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Health & Body Conditioning.	5
Theory – response to questions.	15
File - Content, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire. Response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of the repertoire and independent research.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## ADVANCED 2

<b>ANCILLARY SKILLS</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Music, rhythm and <i>tāla</i> - recitation and timekeeping of <i>tāla</i> , singing the items learnt with <i>tāla</i> , demonstrating use of <i>taṭṭukazhi</i> .	20
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
<i>Varnam</i> .	25
Expressional item.	10
Other items from the <i>mārgam</i> .	5
Creative exercise.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; BODY CONDITIONING, THEORY AND FILE</b>	
<b>Title of component</b>	<b>Marks attainable</b>
Health & Body Conditioning.	5
Theory – response to questions.	15
File - Content, detail and clarity of documentation of dance repertoire. Response to questions generated from the file, designed to assess understanding of the repertoire and independent research.	10
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Vocational Graded Examinations are assessed externally by visiting examiners recruited and trained by the ISTD. Assessment is carried out by means of a practical demonstration of the knowledge, understanding and skills required.

The examination is divided into Sections and each Section is composed of several components, which are separately assessed and aggregated to give the total out of 100.

Candidates will, however, be unsuccessful if

1. 20% of the marks attainable or below are given for any one component
2. 40% of the marks attainable or below are given for any three components

This reflects the need to ensure competence across a wide range of components.

Results are indicated using the following attainment bands:

<b>Distinction</b>	<b>80-100</b>
<b>Merit</b>	<b>65-79</b>
<b>Pass</b>	<b>50-64</b>
<b>Not Attained</b>	<b>00-49</b>

Full attainment descriptors are given further below.

## **CLASSIFICATION OF RESULTS**

The principle of best fit is applied in deciding the appropriate classification for each candidate. It is not to be expected that a candidate in a particular category will necessarily demonstrate all of the characteristics listed in that category.

A candidate who achieves a '**Distinction**' classification (80-100 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- Flair, vitality and skill
- Fully appropriate style
- Incisively-focussed dancing
- Precision in the technique of the genre
- Consistent, highly developed musicality
- Confident and accurate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set

A candidate who achieves a '**Merit**' classification (65-79 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- Skill and proficiency
- Largely appropriate style
- Focussed dancing
- Competence in the technique of the genre
- Evidence of developing musicality
- Relevant and appropriate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set

A candidate who achieves a '**Pass**' classification (50-64 marks) is one who demonstrates the following attributes in performance:

- Competence
- Basic ability to carry out the required movements
- Periodic moments of convincing focus
- Basic competence in most aspects of the technique of the genre
- Basic musicality
- Broadly relevant and appropriate response to questions asked and/or tasks set, but some prompting may be required

A candidate who achieves a '**Not attained**' classification (00-49 marks) is one who has not yet demonstrated the attributes required to gain at least a '**Pass**' classification

## REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The ISTD policy and procedure for all reasonable adjustments for all qualifications is contained within the Equal Opportunities policy on the ISTD website.

The Vocational Graded Examinations are designed for those who are intending to pursue a career in dance, either as a performer or as a teacher. It is, therefore, very unlikely that a potential performer will require reasonable adjustments. However, a potential teacher must be able to demonstrate all movements precisely, in order to teach them effectively.

As the 'Intermediate' examination is also now included as a unit within the Diploma in Dance Instruction, it is likely some candidates will apply for adjustments. This is because they are:

- Those candidates who are possibly already teaching and who do not have the stamina or muscular strength that is normally required at this level, and it would be deemed to be unsafe to require them to perform using the same degree of strength and stamina as a younger dancer.
- Candidates who do not have sufficient physical facility to perform the movements at speed to the required standard, but who can nevertheless demonstrate them at a slower pace.
- Candidates who, through their physical make up, would be causing injury to themselves, eg very stiff feet.

The same criteria apply to candidates at Advanced 1 and 2 level.

Such candidates must apply to the Customer Services and Quality Assurance Department, using the Application for Reasonable Adjustments form, at least three weeks prior to the examination entry, giving detailed reasons for the request. This will be processed giving the Faculty opportunity to refuse special conditions, recommend additional examination time, or give further detailed guidance. In principle, the examination must not be weighted to give an advantage to either the candidate with reasonable adjustments or the able bodied candidate. The demands on both must be equal.

Reasonable adjustments will be generally granted for certain specific sections of the examination, and candidates should indicate which of the sections might be affected. Candidates should attempt all movements and throughout, must dance to the best of their own physical ability. In the interests of safety and to facilitate accuracy of movement, some candidates may indicate their own tempo and may take extra pauses for breath as necessary. If required, questions may be asked, and these will be phrased in such a way as to clarify the knowledge of the mechanics of the movement. Questioning is not permitted for every section of the examination and would normally be used in a maximum of two sections.

# PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

## UK AND EUROPE

A separate Syllabus Outline is available from ISTD Headquarters for the:  
**Level 3 Diploma in Dance Instruction (Classical Indian Dance)**  
**Level 4 Diploma in Dance Education (Classical Indian Dance)**

## RESULTS AND CERTIFICATION

All ISTD examinations are single performance at one moment in time, with a detailed marking system awarded according to the assessment criteria and attainment descriptors given for each examination.

Examiners return the results and report sheets as soon as possible after the examination. The report sheets for each candidate are individually checked within the Quality Assurance department for administrative accuracy. Under normal circumstances the report sheets for UK examinations will be issued to the teacher within 21 working days of the examination. Any errors found are corrected by the examiner prior to further processing of the whole examination session, and may therefore extend these timings, although the department will make every effort to process these as rapidly as possible.

All results are entered by Sections, and checked for achieving the minimum pass levels, per Section and in total, and correct levels of attainment against the total mark achieved.

Results are then cleared for certificate issue, which is undertaken by the Customer Services and Quality Assurance department, and should be within 6 to 8 weeks of the examination. Copies of all report sheets and results are held on archive for reference as necessary.

## RE-TAKES

Candidates who are not successful may not re-take the examination until 3 months after the original examination.

## OFQUAL QUALIFICATION ACCREDITATION NUMBERS

The Classical Indian dance faculty was formerly known as South Asian dance, and its qualifications were submitted for regulation under that title. During the period of change of name, the qualifications offered will be under the South Asian titles until the re-submission to Ofqual has been accepted.

501/0755/0 ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 1 (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/0753/7 ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 2 (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/0754/9 ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 3 (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/0756/2 ISTD Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 4 (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/0757/4 ISTD Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 5 (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/0758/6 ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 6 (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/0764/1 ISTD Level 2 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate Foundation (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/0728/8 ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/0760/4 ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1 (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/0761/6 ISTD Level 4 Diploma in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 2 (South Asian Dance: Bharatanatyam)

501/1002/0 ISTD Level 3 Diploma in Dance Instruction (South Asian Dance)

501/0750/1 ISTD Level 4 Diploma in Dance Education (South Asian Dance)