



You need to know about... DANCE EXAMINATIONS

We are currently assessing dance students for ISTD Dance examinations. Here is some useful information to help you understand what exams are all about. We hope that this information helps with any queries you may have 😊

How will my child be assessed for an exam?

Students must have regular attendance and full knowledge of the full grades syllabus that they are studying before they can be considered for entry. Students enter the examinations in small groups; they need to retain a great deal of information and are marked on the following:

- Technique (Poise and Stance, Precision of footwork, Line and co-ordination)
- Rhythm (Timing, Rhythmic interpretation)
- Presentation, Response and Syllabus Knowledge
- Response and knowledge of their syllabus grade, Sense of performance
- Set amalgamations and the Dance section at the end of the exam



When will my child take an exam?

ISTD examinations are hard work. We are visited by official examiners.

Your children are very important to us, and so is their emotional wellbeing, so we do not rush children into taking an exam before they are ready as we want it to be a positive experience for them. We monitor each child's progress individually and have a duty of care to ensure they are entered for exams when our experienced staff feel they are ready. Children who are not quite ready this time will be entered in a following round, or the next. We provide examination sessions more than once a year as this will enable more students to access them.

Please do not feel you need to measure your child's progress against a fellow class member.

Examination Class Commitment

All schools provide a set of exam classes leading up to the examination date. Some schools run permanent exam classes for those who wish to train further. We are an 'all rounder' Performing Arts School, not a dance school, so there are other areas of focus throughout the year other than examinations.



OPEN STAGE FACTSHEETS



Exam class students are required to attend extra examination classes here at Open Stage for a set of weeks before the exam. These are not drop in classes and they must be attended alongside your child's weekly main dance class. There is a fee for both the exam classes and the examination itself. We will require payment for both of these before exam classes commence. Students with low attendance for main or extra exam classes will not be entered. We cannot provide a refund.

Open Stage will contact parents privately should their children be selected for the next sets of exams.

I don't want my child to take an exam

Open Stage students do not have to take examinations. It is your choice as a family. However we highly recommend that students give them a try as accredited examinations are a wonderful record of their achievement.

ISTD examinations are widely recognised, they assist with proper development, they can contribute to UCAS points and they are valuable and rewarding learning experience for your child.

We fully support every exam student throughout the process to make sure it's a positive experience for them. But if your child still chooses not to take an exam they won't get left behind, we can still look to move them into the next class when the time is right for them.

What is the ISTD Examining Board?

The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) is an international dance teaching and examination board based in London, England and is recognised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Council for Dance Education and Training and is also a member of the British Dance Council. The ISTD is a government recognised dance teaching organisation and examination board, which trains and certifies teachers to deliver its syllabus to students in both private and mainstream dance education.

The ISTD is primarily a dance examination board, with teacher members delivering its syllabi to students in both private and mainstream education. The majority of people who study the ISTD syllabus are people pursuing dance as a leisure activity and the organisation provides a structured examinations system that caters for pupils from beginner to professional level.

Typically, most subjects have a series of graded examinations. These progress from Primary dance class grade and up through numbers Grades (Grade 1, Grade 2, etc.), with Vocational graded examinations at Intermediate, Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 levels.



You need to know about... DANCE CLASS GRADES

Is my child in the correct dance class grade?

We need to ensure that parents/guardians understand that Pre-Primary dance class grade is not designed for Pre-School age children only.

We can understand why you may think this because you are used to mainstream schooling. If this were the case, your children would end up in Primary dance class for seven years whilst they are in main stream primary school – instead of progressing up through the grades.

Pre-Primary is a training programme that prepares young children for a big leap up into a longer and further structured Primary dance class grade, this is when they are required to remember a full grade syllabus of set dance exercises and amalgamations and have the opportunity to take accredited exams.

We will let you know when your child is ready to trial the next grade up, or enter for an exam etc

Students progress when they:

- Are happy, comfortable and coping with their level of dance training
- Are emotionally ready to move into the next grade
- Do not feel rushed
- Have good weekly attendance records
- Wear correct dance attire week in week out
- Feel positive regarding their role within Open Stage

Example of Grades

ISTD: Pre-Primary dance class grade, Primary dance class grade, Grade 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Vocational Grades - Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced 1, Advanced 2

Students are then able to progress to train to be a dance teacher.