



Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing
Tap Dance

Pre-Primary & Primary Class Examinations, Tap Awards, Popular Tap Tests, Grades & Vocational Specification

Version of
Advanced 1 in this
Specification is only
valid for examinations
taken before
October 2026

For exams taken from
October 2024 onwards

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1 About the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD)

The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) exists to inspire, teach and support dancers and dance teachers around the world; making teaching and learning dance accessible to all.

Our membership is recognised as the mark of quality dance training globally. We support teachers to develop their careers and business through progressive training, performance qualifications and events. Together we aim to build a diverse and sustainable dance profession by championing inclusion and increasing access to dance teaching.

Since 1904, we've provided quality dance training across a diverse range of genres – enabling our members to inspire their students with a passion for dance. Our dance syllabi are carefully structured to support both children and adults in developing and progressing their technical dance skills.

Our clearly defined structure allows learning to take place in the context of safe dance practice and is designed to cater equally for those who wish to progress to make dance their profession. We offer a range of teacher training routes and pathways to develop careers into teacher training and examining.

The Society is a registered educational charity (250397), regulated examinations board and membership association. Find out more at istd.org

2 Tap dance

Introduction

Tap dance is a vibrant and rhythmic form of dance that combines intricate footwork with syncopated beats, creating a captivating performance art that has enthralled audiences for centuries. With its roots deeply intertwined with African, Irish, and British folk dances, tap dance has evolved over time to become a truly unique art form with immense cultural significance.

The origins of tap dance and its development through the centuries

The origins of tap dance can be traced back to the early 19th century when African slaves brought their rhythmic dancing traditions to the shores of North America. These African dance forms, rooted in body percussion and intricate footwork, merged with the lively jigs and reels of Irish and British immigrants, creating a dynamic fusion of movement styles.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, tap dance gained popularity through the emergence of minstrel shows and vaudeville. Minstrel shows, though controversial in their portrayal of racial stereotypes, provided a platform for African American performers to showcase their talent. Dancers like William Henry Lane, known as Master Juba, became pioneers of tap dance during this era, infusing African and Irish dance styles to create an electrifying and influential form of expression.

With the decline of minstrel shows, vaudeville emerged as the dominant entertainment medium in the early 20th century. Vaudeville theatres offered a diverse range of acts, and tap dancers found their place in the limelight. Performers such as Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, who achieved fame through his smooth style and precision, became icons of the era, capturing the imagination of audiences across America.

The Golden Age of Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s saw tap dance reach new heights of popularity, thanks to the introduction of sound in films. The emergence of musicals provided an opportunity for tap dancers to shine on the silver screen. Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, the Nicholas Brothers, Gene Kelly and Ann Miller were just some of the legendary performers who captivated audiences and showcased the versatility and technical skill of tap dance.

Tap dance continued to evolve and adapt to changing times. With the advent of jazz music, tap dancers incorporated complex syncopated rhythms into their routines, infusing the art form with even more energy and creativity. Notable tap dancers like the Nicholas Brothers and the Condos Brothers pushed the boundaries of tap with their athleticism and acrobatic moves.

In the 1970s, tap dance experienced a revival with the emergence of Broadway shows such as *A Chorus Line* and *42nd Street*. Choreographers like Bob Fosse and Tommy Tune incorporated tap into their productions, bringing renewed attention to this timeless dance form. The ground-breaking Broadway production of *Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk* in the 1990s, choreographed by Savion Glover, showcased the raw and powerful nature of tap, reconnecting it with its African roots.

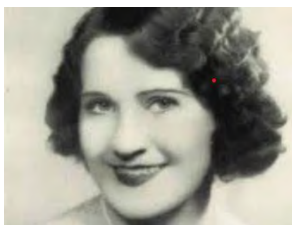
In the 21st century, tap dance continues to evolve and push the boundaries of artistic expression. Contemporary tap dancers explore various styles, incorporating elements of hip-hop, street dance, and even experimental movements. Tap festivals, workshops, and competitions around the world provide platforms for dancers to showcase their skills and exchange ideas, fostering a vibrant and diverse tap dance community.

Tap dance holds significant cultural and social importance. Throughout its history, tap dance has been a vehicle for self-expression, resilience, and cultural identity. African American tap dancers, in particular, have used the art form as a means of reclaiming their cultural heritage and challenging racial stereotypes.

Tap dance has also played a crucial role in breaking down barriers and fostering inclusivity. Dancers from various backgrounds and ethnicities have embraced tap, contributing to its evolution and enriching its cultural tapestry. Tap's universal appeal transcends language and cultural boundaries, allowing people from all walks of life to connect through the joy of rhythmic movement.

3 The history of tap dance within the ISTD

As a genre within the Society, tap dancing initially played a minor role in the Stage Branch syllabus of the 1930s. However, the foundation established in these early years provided a basis for its future creative development and ensured its survival as a rich, rhythmical dance genre. The work grew into an independent faculty that now offers one of the Society's most successful and popular syllabi.



Zelia Raye (1900–1981) was invited to create an examination syllabus. Joan Davis, Janet Cram, Tom Parry, Doreen Austin, Victor Leopold and Marjorie Davies were among the first to collaborate with Miss Raye. With their artistic and creative ideas about tap dance, these pioneers contributed to the development of the Branch. Its continued success owes a great debt to the talents of those such as Moyra Gay, Daphne Peterson, Gwen Carter, Marianne Jepson and Patricia Crail.

◀ Zelia Raye

The original graded syllabus for tap was technical and based on a simple vocabulary of steps. It grew slowly but steadily via the introduction of sequences at each level and in 1936 Tap Medal Tests were introduced.

In 1955, tap was declared to be only an optional section within the Stage Branch examinations. The decision coincided with the demise of tap in films and theatre, resulting in a difficult time for professional tap dancers.

However, a significant milestone occurred in 1970, as tap would no longer be an optional extra at the end of the Stage Branch examination. A new syllabus was created that established tap dance as a separate examination. The new format for tap examinations occurred alongside the renaissance of tap in America.

In the early 1970s, a newly structured Advanced Tap syllabus was choreographed by Daphne Peterson. Miss Peterson's legacy to the Society is legendary in both tap and modern dance.



▲ Life President: Dame Beryl Grey with Miss Daphne Peterson receiving the Imperial Award in 1984



▲ Murielle Ashcroft

In 1974, Murielle Ashcroft became Chair of the Modern Theatre and Tap Branch. Passionate about the Society and particularly the Branch, hers was to be a momentous leadership during which immense progress was made with the Tap Dance syllabus. New Senior Medal Tests were produced, choreographed by Gwen Carter and Moyra Gay in 1975.

In February 1977 the Marjorie Davies Star Tap Awards were launched. This popular award quickly became an important event in the Society's dance calendar. In 1978 Levels 1 and 2 of the Popular Tap Tests were introduced by Patricia Crail and Marianne Jepson and further levels followed in the ensuing years. In 1985 Murielle Ashcroft appointed a sub-committee to update the Grade and Major Tap syllabi. The team consisted of Gwen Carter, Patricia Ellis and Heather Rees. There was a completely new structure which provided a much more challenging and up-to-date approach to the genre. Daphne Peterson and Sheelagh Harbinson joined the team at Major level.

In 2002 the Tap Faculty became an independent faculty from Modern Theatre. There were immediate developments to ensure the continuing success of the genre; for example, Tap Awards replaced the Tap Medals and a new Grade 6 was created.

From 2007, the grades syllabus was gradually updated by Alison Forrester and Tracey Lee with creative input from Committee Members Jason Di Mascio and Nick French. The new syllabi included more close-work and rhythm tap. Alison Forrester created a new graded syllabus with a stronger connection to the American art form and the great tap masters.

In 2017, Heather Rees and Alison Forrester introduced a revised Intermediate syllabus, with Amalgamations from Ruth Armstrong and Hannah Willcocks. In 2023 work began on the revised Advanced 1 syllabus with contributions from Alison Forrester, Heather Rees, Aaron Lissimore, Andrea Ashton, Hannah Willcocks, Jessica-Jo Marshall, Tara Yasmin and Adam Maclean.

4 The purpose of Tap Dance Qualifications

Tap dance makes a distinctive contribution to the education of all students studying the genre. Using movement and rhythm, which are two of the fundamental modes of human expression, it offers a range of learning opportunities that enables participants to develop individual physical skills and at the same time cultivate intellectual, mental, and emotional development.

Working with their peers and a tutor, candidates will improve their ability to perform a wide range of movement sequences, incorporating the correct technique and appropriate stylistic qualities. As part of their training, they will learn about musical structures, dancing to different time signatures, expression, cooperation, teamwork, setting individual targets, giving and receiving peer feedback, and developing a sense of personal responsibility and accountability.

Candidates will aim to improve their understanding of posture, weight placement, tonal quality, rhythmicity, musicality, and stylistic qualities, as they develop their aptitude and ability to perform the syllabus content to the best of their ability. They will aim to improve movement memory, their knowledge of the associated vocabulary used within the dance industry and the ability to reproduce movement at speed from sight.

Students will benefit from being part of the wider dance and performing arts community and can build lifelong friendships, whilst also acquiring a range of transferrable skills including problem-solving, listening to instruction, working under pressure, working to deadlines and organisational skills.

From the Graded Examinations, candidates can progress to the Vocational Graded Examinations, which aim to prepare for further or higher education, full-time training, employment as a professional dancer or as a preparation for dance teaching qualifications.

Other benefits include:

- Improved condition of the heart and lungs
- Increased aerobic and motor fitness
- Increased muscular tone, strength and endurance
- Stronger bones and reduced risk of osteoporosis
- Better coordination and agility
- Improved balance and spatial awareness
- Increased physical confidence
- Improved mental functioning
- Improved general psychological wellbeing
- Greater self-confidence and self-esteem
- Better social skills

5 Transferable skills

Performing skills

- Artistry
- Communication
- Dynamic and rhythmic awareness
- Expression
- Fluency
- Phrasing
- Focus
- Musicality
- Projection
- Sensitivity to others
- Spatial awareness

Technical skills

- Accuracy
- Application of feedback
- Application of technique
- Coordination
- Creative engagement with movement material
- Fitness
- Flexibility
- Kinesthetic awareness
- Mastery
- Memory and recall
- Movement intensity appropriate to the style
- Placement
- Rhythm
- Sensitivity to the cultural framework and/or stylistic influences of the technique
- Stamina
- Strength
- Timing
- Understanding of anatomy and physiology

Personal skills

- Ability to analyse
- Application of knowledge
- Commitment
- Confidence
- Concentration
- Conviction
- Cooperation and teamwork
- Creativity
- Critical self-reflection
- Discipline
- Individuality
- Mental and physical wellbeing
- Perseverance
- Problem solving
- Respect
- Response to feedback
- Self-challenge
- Self-management
- Self-motivation
- Setting and achieving goals
- Understanding and appreciation of cultural framework, style and genre

6 Structure and regulation of Tap Dance qualifications

Regulation – UK

ISTD Vocational Graded Examination qualifications are regulated in the UK by:

- Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) in England
- Qualifications Wales
- Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA Regulation) in Northern Ireland

The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) provides a single, simple system for cataloguing all regulated qualifications, indicating qualifications by their level (degree of difficulty) and size (amount or breadth of learning). There are nine qualification levels in the framework, labelled in order of difficulty from Entry Level to Level 8. For further information, visit register.ofqual.gov.uk.

The size of the qualification on the RQF is indicated by a credit value, corresponding to a term used in the title. An Award is worth 1-12 credits, a Certificate is worth 13-36 credits, and a Diploma is worth 37 or more credits. One credit corresponds to 10 hours of learning for the typical learner, which is divided into Guided Learning hours (GLH), which is broadly contact time with the teacher, and personal study time, which together make Total Qualification Time (TQT).

The ISTD's qualifications on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) are as follows:

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 1 (Tap Dance)	501/0755/0	60	70	7
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 2 (Tap Dance)	501/0753/7	60	70	7
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 3 (Tap Dance)	501/0754/9	60	70	7
ISTD Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 4 (Tap Dance)	501/0756/2	75	95	10
ISTD Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 5 (Tap Dance)	501/0757/4	75	95	10
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 6 (Tap Dance)	501/0758/6	90	130	13

Qualification Title	Qualification Number	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Total Qualification Time (TQT)	Total Credits
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Tap Dance: Intermediate	501/0728/8	150	275	28
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Tap Dance: Advanced 1	501/0760/4	150	325	33
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Tap Dance: Advanced 2	501/0761/6	150	375	38

Unit Title	Unit Reference Number	Unit Level	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Qualification Credits
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Tap Dance: Intermediate	M/602/0189	Level 3	150	28
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Tap Dance: Advanced 1	T/602/0193	Level 4	150	33
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Tap Dance: Advanced 2	A/602/0194	Level 4	150	38

Regulation – Europe

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is an overarching framework that links the qualifications of different countries together and allows for comparison and translation. The EQF has eight levels across which qualifications can be mapped. The levels do not correspond directly with the UK's Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), although they are similar. The following table shows the level of our Vocational Examination qualifications on the RQF and the EQF.

Qualification Title	RQF Level	EQF Level
Intermediate	Level 3	Level 4
Advanced 1	Level 4	Level 5
Advanced 2	Level 4	Level 5

UCAS points

In the UK, our Vocational Graded Examination qualifications can contribute towards entry into higher education through the allocation of UCAS points. UCAS tariff points translate your qualifications and grades into a numerical value, which some universities, colleges, and conservatoires may refer to in their course entry requirements.

The number of points they can get depends on how well they performed in their examination i.e. Distinction, Merit or Pass.

Please note that Advanced 1 and 2 do not have any UCAS points allocated to them. This is because they are Level 4 qualifications and so are already on the same level as university study.

Grade 6	Tariff Points	Intermediate	Tariff Points
Distinction	14	Distinction	33
Merit	10	Merit	27
Pass	8	Pass	24

Equivalence of qualification levels

Qualification level	Level	Equivalence
Grade 4	2	Equivalent to GCSE standard
Grade 5	2	Equivalent to GCSE standard
Grade 6	3	Equivalent to A-Level and T-Level standard
Intermediate	3	Equivalent to A-Level and T-Level standard
Advanced 1	4	Equivalent to the first year of a degree or a Certificate of Higher Education or Higher National qualification at Level 4
Advanced 2	4	Equivalent to the first year of a degree or a Certificate of Higher Education or Higher National qualification at Level 4

Pre-Primary & Primary Class Examinations Specification



7 Pre-Primary and Primary Class examinations

The Pre-Primary and Primary Class examinations have a lower age limit of five years and no upper age limit. This is to ensure that they are physically developed sufficiently to safely meet the demands of the syllabus. Examinations are taken in the form of a class conducted by the teacher, in which they can offer encouragement and support throughout but may not give personal correction. Teachers should be located at a discreet distance from the examiner and should introduce each candidate by name to the examiner.

Each child will receive an individual report and result, which will reflect their own achievement.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the Pre-Primary and Primary Class examinations is to introduce our assessment system and for pupils to experience the examination process within the comfort of the class environment led by the teacher and observed (and not conducted) by the examiner.

The learning outcomes from these examinations are for candidates to demonstrate the following:

- An alert and enthusiastic response to the teacher's instructions throughout, accurately demonstrating the set syllabus as taught
- Commence the development of correct posture, poise and weight placement and an ability to show length and extension in arms, legs and feet where required
- Correct tap technique for the syllabus, developing the correct use of foot work, clarity of beating and tonal awareness
- Show a secure sense of rhythm, timing, and use of basic interpretation of the different types of music
- A natural sense of coordination and use of arm line when moving
- Demonstrate the syllabus with confidence, enjoyment and a positive eye-line
- Present the Set Amalgamation with assured knowledge, neat technique, correct rhythm and musical timing

Entry conditions

Entries must be submitted via a teacher who holds a Full Teaching membership with the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.

Minimum age

There is a lower age limit of five years.

Language

All exams and assessments are conducted in English.

Summary information

Examination	Number of candidates	Time allowances			
		1 or 2 candidates	3 candidates	4 candidates	5 candidates: only one set of 5 candidates permitted per timetable
Pre-Primary Class Examination	1–5	15 minutes	20 minutes	25 minutes	30 minutes
Primary Class Examination	1–5	15 minutes	20 minutes	25 minutes	30 minutes

Musical accompaniment

The official ISTD Tap Faculty set music or recommended playlist should be used for these examinations, depending on which examination is being entered.

A sound system capable of playing CDs/iPod or other digital audio equipment, at a volume suitable for the venue, should be provided. The music operator should be seated at a discreet distance from the examiner and must NOT be teachers, assistant teachers, parents of exam candidates or another exam candidate from the exam session.

The use of a music operator is optional for Pre-Primary and Primary Class examinations, it is permissible for teachers to operate the music, if necessary.

Clothing

For the examiner to give a true and accurate assessment, dance attire should be smart and give a clear view of the head, body, arm and leg lines.

Appropriate dancewear should be worn of any colour, for example, leotard and tights, dance shorts, straight-legged dance trousers, and tight-fitting t-shirt. Trousers, if worn, should not be too long or too wide as this could prove hazardous. Find out more about [our recommended ISTD uniform](#), designed in partnership with Dansez, to create a sustainable, inclusive and quality uniform range that allows for personal expression alongside practical pieces. Shoes must be well-fitted and have both toe and heel plates. The heel height should be appropriate for the age of the candidate.

Hair should be neat and securely held in place. Long hair should be tied back to allow a clear neck and head line. Long ponytails and plaits should be pinned back to ensure the ponytail/plait does not swipe the face/neck. Make-up is not required at these levels. Jewellery or body piercings, if they are unable to be removed, should be suitably secured and covered so as not to cause any injury.

Where possible, it is recommended that candidates wear clothing that contrasts the studio background, especially if filming for remote examinations.

Studio layout for the examination

Teachers should select the most suitable studio layout for the examination, to allow candidates to demonstrate fully.

Teachers should ensure mirrors are covered or made opaque. Examiners require a table and a comfortable chair.

Teachers should also provide a bell to be used to indicate when the Examiner is ready for candidates to enter the studio at the start of an examination.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Pre-Primary and Primary

This section sets out the required teaching and learning content and how they should be delivered. The learning and teaching content for each qualification in the specification is set out in a similar way.

Learners should take examinations only once the learning and teaching content have been covered in full.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Pre-Primary Class Test

Vocabulary of steps

- Bounce
- Jump
- Skip
- Stamp
- Ball Tap
- Ball Beat
- Toe Tap
- Step
- Step Ball Change
- Forward Tap
- Backward Tap
- Heel Beat
- Gallop

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>1. Warm Up – both seen together.</p> <p>a) Warm Up A
b) Warm Up B</p> <p>2. Technical Exercises – teacher's choice of either a) or b) seen individually, c) is seen together.</p> <p>a) Ball Taps/Beats
b) Toe Taps
c) Arms</p> <p>3. Rhythm – seen individually.</p> <p>a) Rhythm A
b) Rhythm B</p> | <p>4. Centre Exercises – teacher's choice – 1 exercise seen individually and the other exercise taken together.</p> <p>a) Forward and Backward Taps
b) Step Clap Stamp Clap</p> <p>5. Amalgamations – can be practiced together first before seen individually.</p> <p>a) Amalgamation A – seen individually on one side only in the examination.
b) Amalgamation B – seen individually on both sides in the examination.</p> <p>There is no Dance requirement.</p> | <p>6. Bow
Teacher's arrangement for exam group</p> |
|--|---|---|

Outline of syllabus content: Primary Class Test

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from previous syllabi plus:

- Bouncy Walk
- Ball Change
- Single Paradiddle/Paddle
- Gallop

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

1. Warm Up – both seen together.

- a) Warm Up Song
- b) Hop Scotch Warm Up

2. Technical Exercises – teacher's choice – 1 exercise seen individually, and the other 2 exercises seen together.

- a) Preparation for Shuffles
- b) Ball and Heel Beats
- c) Paradiddles

3. Rhythm – seen individually.

- a) 1/4 notes – Clapping taken together, sounding out taken individually
- b) Take a bite of the music – the first 16 counts are taken together, Improvisation section taken individually

4. Set Amalgamation – seen individually.

- a) Amalgamation.
Can be practiced together first before seen individually.

5. The Freeze – seen together.

There is no Dance requirement.

6. Bow

Scheme of assessment

Method of assessment

Examinations are assessed by an external examiner who is recruited, trained, and monitored by the ISTD.

ISTD examiners:

- are selected for their expertise and undergo rigorous training which continues throughout their career for marking both face-to-face and remote examinations
- create a welcoming and reassuring environment at the exam venue, ensuring a positive experience for candidates.
- complete a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (or equivalent body where available) and adhere to ISTD policies and procedures, including equality and diversity, safeguarding and data protection
- do not usually examine at the same exam venue within any two-year period

In the examination, the examiner awards a mark of between 0 and 10 for each component, shown on the accompanying grid below. A mark of 0 indicates that nothing was evidenced for assessment

The examination is divided into sections and each section consists of several components which are individually assessed and aggregated to give the section total. The total number of marks available in the examination is 100.

Pre-Primary and Primary Class Test

Title of component	Available marks
Technique	
Poise and Stance	10
Clarity of Beating	10
Precision of Footwork	10
Line and Coordination	10
Section total	40
Rhythm	
Timing	10
Rhythmic Interpretation	10
Section total	20
Presentation, Response and Knowledge	
Response	10
Knowledge of Syllabus	10
Sense of Performance	10
Set Amalgamations	10
Section total	40
Overall total	100

Determining a mark

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100. If all components are achieved, then the overall grade is indicated as follows:

Determining a grade

The marks 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 are detailed above.

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, e.g. 12 ½, the pass mark for the section is lowered to the nearest round figure, in this example, 12.

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100. If all sections are passed, then the overall result is indicated as follows:

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

Please note: Where a candidate is unsuccessful in one or more sections, 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.

Pre-Primary and Primary Mark Schemes

Each component of the assessment is shown on the grid as a column and broken down into mark bands, each of which has a descriptor.

The descriptor indicates the quality that is expected in the candidate's evidence for that mark band. The indicative content for each component of assessment is exemplified or stated at the bottom of each column/group of columns.

Mark bands

The lower mark in each band indicates that the student has just met the requirement described in the band, the upper mark indicates that the evidence is clear but that the student has not quite met the requirements set out in the next mark band. The candidate is marked against all components of the assessment.

Pre-Primary and Primary Mark Scheme

Section		Technique				Rhythm		'Presentation, Response and Knowledge			
Component		Poise and Stance	Clarity of Beating	Precision of Footwork	Line and Coordination	Timing	Rhythmic Interpretation	Response	Knowledge of Syllabus	Sense of Performance	Set Amalgamations
		10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks
Top of the Excellent band	9-10	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Excellent band											
Top of the Good band	7-8	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Good band											
Top of the Fair band	5-6	The candidate demonstrates Fair ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Fair band											
Top of the Limited band	3-4	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Limited band											
Top of the Weak band	1-2	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Weak band											
Not evidenced	0	Indicative content not evidenced									
Indicative content		Demonstrate an awareness of correct posture and weight distribution Demonstrate an ability to balance with use of eye focus.	Tap with clear sounds.	Precision of Footwork: Demonstrate well placed + neat footwork. Use relaxation through the knees and ankles and mobility through the feet. Alignment of legs and feet: Demonstrate the correct leg and foot alignments	Line: Demonstrate an awareness of arm lines in relation to the body Coordination: Use of relaxation to co-ordinate movements	Timing: Dance in time with the music.	Demonstrate correct rhythmic patterns and musical phrasing Demonstrate use of accent, and light and shade	Respond correctly to given instructions	Have a secure knowledge of the syllabus	Demonstrate a confident presentation with natural expression	Demonstrate with natural style expression Demonstrate assurance to perform as a solo

Tap Awards, Bronze, Silver & Gold Specification



8 Tap Awards

The Tap Awards syllabus aims to develop the skill and understanding of tap dance by developing the physical ability to communicate through movement, sound and rhythm in an expressive and artistic way. There are three Tap Awards: Bronze, Silver and Gold, designed to promote an appreciation and enjoyment of tap dance, through both understanding and performance. As the student progresses, there is the opportunity to interpret a variety of musical styles through sound, movement and expression.

Aims and objectives

The Tap Awards are designed to be used by those who wish to study tap dance for recreational purposes and to augment the training of the student who may wish to pursue a career in dance. Each award consists of a warm-up, close work time step, set amalgamations (teacher's/candidate's choice of two) and a dance.

All sections of the examination are danced as a solo and the candidate is given the opportunity to select their choice of tempo. No free work will be given at any level.

The objectives of these examinations are to learn, promote and demonstrate skills in:

- Correct posture
- Secure tap technique
- Awareness of tone
- Understanding and use of dance terminology
- Gain a good sense of line through body, arms and head
- Gain an understanding of rhythm and its development
- Awareness of the use of space
- Awareness of audience and sense of performance
- Artistic sense of self-expression
- Creative use of rhythm and movement
- Self-confidence in the performance of a solo

These examinations are divided into two sections:

- Technique
- Performance and Presentation

Technique

At all levels, good posture and correct alignment of the limbs is expected. The vocabulary and rhythm complexity increase at each successive level and there is a progressive combination of tap technique and dance movement. Good spatial awareness is encouraged at all times.

Performance and Presentation

The student should be able to present the syllabus with a natural sense of enjoyment and the self-confidence required to dance each section as a solo performance.

Entry conditions

Entries must be submitted via a teacher who holds a Full Teaching membership with the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing. These examinations should ideally be taken consecutively, however, a candidate who already holds the Intermediate examination may commence at Gold.

Minimum age

There is no lower or upper age limit.

Language

All exams and assessments are conducted in English.

Summary information

Examination	Number of candidates	Time allowances			
		1 candidate	2 candidates	3 candidates	4 candidates
Bronze/Silver/Gold	1–4	10 minutes	15 minutes	20 minutes	25 minutes

Musical accompaniment

The official ISTD Tap Faculty set music or recommended playlist should be used for these examinations. Members can access the recommended playlists to download **here**. Teachers may use their own choice of music for dance solos.

A sound system capable of playing CDs/iPod or other digital audio equipment, at a volume suitable for the venue, should be provided. The music system operator should be sat at a discreet distance from the examiner, and must NOT be teachers, assistant teachers, parents of exam candidates or another exam candidate from the exam session.

Clothing

For the Examiner to give a true and accurate assessment, dance attire should be smart and give a clear view of the head, body, arm and leg lines.

Appropriate dancewear should be worn of any colour, for example, leotard and tights, dance shorts, straight-legged dance trousers, and tight-fitting t-shirt. Trousers, if worn, should not be too long or too wide as this could prove hazardous. Find out more about [our recommended ISTD uniform](#), designed in partnership with Dansez, to create a sustainable, inclusive and quality uniform range that allows for personal expression alongside practical pieces. Shoes must be well-fitted and have both toe and heel plates. The heel height should be appropriate for the age of the candidate.

Hair should be neat and securely held in place. Long hair should be tied back to allow a clear neck and head line. Long ponytails and plaits should be pinned back to ensure the ponytail/plait does not swipe the face/neck. Make-up should only be worn where appropriate and should be natural. Jewellery or body piercings, if they are unable to be removed, should be suitably secured and covered so as not to cause any injury.

Where possible, it is recommended that candidates wear clothing that contrasts the studio background, especially if filming for remote examinations.

Studio layout for the examination

Teachers should select the most suitable studio layout for the examination, to allow candidates to demonstrate fully.

Teachers should ensure mirrors are covered or made opaque. Examiners require a table and a comfortable chair.

Teachers should also provide a bell to be used to indicate when the Examiner is ready for candidates to enter the studio at the start of an examination.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Bronze, Silver and Gold Tap Awards

This section sets out the required teaching and learning content and how they should be delivered. The learning and teaching content for each qualification in the specification is set out in a similar way. Learners should take examinations only once the learning and teaching content have been covered in full.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Bronze Tap Award

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1. Warm Up – seen individually.</p> <p>2. Close Work Time Step – seen individually.</p> <p>3. Amalgamations – seen individually.
Teacher's or candidate's choice of 2 Amalgamations. These can either be</p> | <p>2 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amalgamation A • Amalgamation B • Amalgamation C <p>Or 1 from the above and either the Grade 2 Gershwin or the Grade 3 Beat Box.</p> | <p>4. Dance – seen individually.
Not to exceed 1.5 minutes.</p> <p>5. Bow (or Grade 5 Shim Sham bow)</p> |
|--|---|--|

Outline of syllabus content: Silver Tap Award

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

Warm Up – seen individually.

Close Work Time Step –
seen individually.

Amalgamations – seen individually.

Teacher's or candidate's choice of 2
Amalgamations. These can either be

2 of the following:

- Amalgamation A
- Amalgamation B
- Amalgamation C

Or 1 from the above and either the
Grade 4 Funk or the Grade 5 Tango.

4. Dance – seen individually.

Not to exceed 2 minutes.

5. Bow (or Grade 5 Shim Sham bow)

Outline of syllabus content: Gold Tap Award

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

1. Warm Up – seen individually.

2. Close Work Time Step –
seen individually.

3. Amalgamations – seen individually.

Teacher's or candidate's choice of 2
Amalgamations. These can either be

2 of the following:

- Amalgamation A
- Amalgamation B
- Amalgamation C

Or 1 from the above and either the
Grade 6 Boogie or the Intermediate
Musical Theatre.

4. Dance – seen individually.

Not to exceed 2 minutes.

5. Bow (or Grade 5 or Intermediate
Shim Sham bow)

Scheme of assessment

Method of assessment

Examinations are assessed by an external examiner who is recruited, trained, and monitored by the ISTD.

ISTD examiners:

- are selected for their expertise and undergo rigorous training which continues throughout their career for marking both face-to-face and remote examinations
- create a welcoming and reassuring environment at the exam venue, ensuring a positive experience for candidates.
- complete a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (or equivalent body where available) and adhere to ISTD policies and procedures, including equality and diversity, safeguarding and data protection
- do not usually examine at the same exam venue within any two-year period

In the examination, the examiner awards a mark of between 0 and 10 for each component, shown on the accompanying grid below. A mark of 0 indicates that nothing was evidenced for assessment

The examination is divided into sections and each section consists of several components which are individually assessed and aggregated to give the section total. The total number of marks available in the examination is 100.

Bronze, Silver and Gold Tap Award

Title of component	Available marks
Technique	
Posture	10
Clarity of Beating	10
Precision of Footwork	10
Timing and Rhythmic Interpretation	10
Line and Style	10
Section total	50
Performance and Presentation	
Response and Knowledge	10
Sense of Performance	10
Set Amalgamation 1	10
Set Amalgamation 2	10
Dance	10
Section total	50
Overall total	100

Determining a mark

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100.

Determining a grade

The marks 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 are detailed above.

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 do not come to a round figure, e.g. 12 ½, the pass mark for the section is lowered to the nearest round figure, in this example, 12.

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100. If all sections are passed, then the overall result is indicated as follows:

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

Please note: Where a candidate is unsuccessful in one or more sections, 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.

Tap Awards Mark Scheme

Each component of the assessment is shown on the grid as a column and broken down into mark bands, each of which has a descriptor.

The descriptor indicates the quality that is expected in the candidate's evidence for that mark band. The indicative content for each component of assessment is exemplified or stated at the bottom of each column/group of columns.

Mark bands

The lower mark in each band indicates that the student has just met the requirement described in the band, the upper mark indicates that the evidence is clear but that the student has not quite met the requirements set out in the next mark band.

The candidate is marked against all components of the assessment.

Bronze, Silver and Gold Tap Awards mark scheme

Section		Technique				Performance and Presentation					
Component		Posture	Clarity of Beating	Precision of Footwork	Timing and Rhythmic Interpretation	Line and Style	Response and Knowledge	Sense of Performance	Set Amalgamation 1	Set Amalgamation 2	Dance
		10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks
Top of the Excellent band	9-10	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Excellent band											
Top of the Good band	7-8	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Good band											
Top of the Fair band	5-6	The candidate demonstrates Fair ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Fair band											
Top of the Limited band	3-4	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Limited band											
Top of the Weak band	1-2	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Weak band											
Not evidenced	0	Indicative content not evidenced									
Indicative content		Demonstrate with correct posture and weight transference. Control from the centre of the body. Use of eye focus.	Tap with clear sounds. Show definition in the beating.	Demonstrate with accurate footwork and mobility through the feet. Relaxation in the knees and ankles and correct alignment of the legs and feet.	Timing: Dance in time with the music. Rhythmic Interpretation: Demonstrate rhythmical beating with well defined use of accent to create tonal contrasts.	Line: Demonstrate extension through the body and arms Style: Demonstrate with ease of movement and rhythmic quality.	Response: An alert response to given instructions Knowledge: Demonstrate secure syllabus knowledge to enable assured demonstration.	Demonstrate with confidence, individually and vitality	Demonstrate clear rhythmic beating and secure technique Demonstrate with the style and expressive quality appropriate to the chosen amalgamation	Demonstrate clear rhythmic beating and secure technique Demonstrate with the style and expressive quality appropriate to the chosen amalgamation	Demonstrate a rhythmical and technically accurate performance Demonstrate with assurance and with style and presentation relevant to the music

**Popular Tap Test
Levels 1–6 &
Popular Tap Medals,
Bronze, Silver
& Gold
Specification**



9 Adult Popular Tap Tests and Medals

The Adult Popular Tap Tests and Medals are designed to promote an appreciation and enjoyment of tap dance in a recreational capacity. There are six levels of Popular Tap Tests and three medal examinations; Popular Tap Tests Levels 1-6 and Bronze, Silver and Gold medals.

Aims and objectives

The syllabus seeks to develop the skill and understanding of Tap dance by encouraging the ability to communicate through movement, sound and rhythm in an expressive and artistic way.

The syllabus aims to:

- Encourage correct posture
- Build a sound tap technique
- Develop an awareness of tone
- Promote the understanding and use of dance terminology
- Gain a good sense of line through body, arms and head
- Develop an understanding of rhythm
- Promote an appreciation of varying musical styles and their interpretation
- Develop an awareness of the use of space
- Develop an awareness of audience and sense of performance
- Encourage a sense of self-expression
- Encourage creative use of rhythm and movement
- Promote self-confidence in the performance of a solo

Each level is divided into two sections:

- Technique
- Presentation

Technique

Level 1 seeks to introduce a rudimentary tap technique of one and two sounds which is then progressively increased at each level so that by Level 6 the vocabulary includes more complex steps. An understanding of the use of tone is encouraged to develop the rhythmic quality at all levels and the medal tests offer the opportunity to explore a wide variety of musical styles. The emphasis is on co-ordinating the use of the head, body and arms to create a natural style.

Presentation

Initially, the student should be able to present the syllabus with a natural sense of enjoyment and an awareness of the audience, which is gained by developing the self-confidence to perform in front of others. As the student progresses, they have the opportunity to communicate a growing variety of moods through sound, movement and expression to develop an artistic performance.

Entry conditions

Entries must be submitted via a teacher who holds a Full Teaching membership with the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.

Minimum age

There is a minimum age requirement of 18 years.

Language

All exams and assessments are conducted in English.

Summary information

Examination	Number of candidates	Time allowances			
		1 candidate	2 candidates	3 candidates	4 candidates
Level 1 - 6	1–4	10 minutes	15 minutes	15 minutes	20 minutes
Bronze/Silver/Gold	1–4	10 minutes	15 minutes	15 minutes	20 minutes

Musical accompaniment

The official ISTD Tap Faculty set music or recommended playlist should be used for these examinations. Teachers may use their own choice of music for dance solos.

A sound system capable of playing CDs/iPod or other digital audio equipment, at a volume suitable for the venue, should be provided. The music system operator should be sat at a discreet distance from the examiner, and must NOT be teachers, assistant teachers, parents of exam candidates or another exam candidate from the exam session.

Clothing

In order for the Examiner to give a true and accurate assessment, dance attire should be smart and give a clear view of the head, body, arm and leg lines.

Appropriate dancewear should be worn of any colour, for example, leotard and tights, dance shorts, straight-legged dance trousers, and tight-fitting t-shirt. Trousers, if worn, should not be too long or too wide as this could prove hazardous. Shoes must be well-fitted and have both toe and heel plates. The heel height should be appropriate for the age of the candidate.

Hair should be neat and securely held in place. Long hair should be tied back to allow a clear neck and head line. Long ponytails and plaits should be pinned back to ensure the ponytail/plait does not swipe the face/neck. Make-up should only be worn where appropriate and should be natural. Jewellery or body piercings, if they are unable to be removed, should be suitably secured and covered so as not to cause any injury.

Where possible, it is recommended that candidates wear clothing that contrasts the studio background, especially if filming for remote examinations.

Studio layout for the examination

Teachers should select the most suitable studio layout for the examination, to allow candidates to demonstrate fully.

Teachers should ensure mirrors are covered or made opaque. Examiners require a table and a comfortable chair.

Teachers should also provide a bell to be used to indicate when the Examiner is ready for candidates to enter the studio at the start of an examination

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Adult Popular Tap Tests and Medals

This section sets out the required teaching and learning content and how they should be delivered. The learning and teaching content for each qualification in the specification is set out in a similar way. Learners should take examinations only once the learning and teaching content have been covered in full.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Level 1

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

Vocabulary of steps	
One Sound <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straight Tap • Forward Tap • Toe Tap • Ball Tap • Heel Beat • Toe Beat • Ball Beat • Forward Brush • Backward Tap • Heel Tap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backward Brush • Step • Stamp • Scuff • Hop • Spring • Drop • Jump • Ball Dig • Heel Dig
	Two Sounds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shuffle • Tap Step • Flap • Tap Spring • Ball Change

1. The Vocabulary

2. The Beat

3. The Shuffle

4. The Line

5. The Time

6. The Move

7. The Sequence – ‘Cane Routine’

The sequence may be replaced by teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.

Outline of syllabus content: Level 2

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

Vocabulary of steps

One Sound As for Level 1 plus:

- Stomp
- Pick Up

Two Sounds As for Level 1 plus:

- Pick Up Step
- Pick Up Spring
- Pick Up Hop

1. The Vocabulary

2. The Beat

3. The Shuffle

4. The Line

5. The Time

6. The Move

7. The Sequence – ‘Bowler Hat Blues’

The sequence may be replaced by the teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.

Outline of syllabus content: Level 3

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

Vocabulary of steps

All Vocabulary from Level 1 and 2 plus:

- 4 Beat Cramp Roll
- Pullback

1. The Vocabulary

2. The Beat

3. The Shuffle

4. The Line

5. The Time

6. The Move

7. The Sequence – ‘One Glove Boogie’

The sequence may be replaced by teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.

Outline of syllabus content: Level 4

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

Vocabulary of steps

All vocabulary from Levels 1, 2 and 3 plus:

- Pick Up on 1 Foot
- Pick Up Change

1. The Vocabulary

2. The Beat

3. The Shuffle

4. The Line

5. The Time

6. The Move

7. The Sequence – ‘Spanish Tango’

The sequence may be replaced by teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.

Outline of syllabus content: Level 5

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

Vocabulary of steps

All vocabulary from Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 plus:

- 3 Beat Ripples
- 4 Beat riffs

1. The Vocabulary

2. Footloose

3. Twister

4. Step in Time

5. Jive at Five

7. Dance – teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.

Outline of syllabus content: Level 6

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

Vocabulary of steps

All Vocabulary from Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 plus:

- 4 Beat Ripples
- 5 Beat Riffs
- Pick Up Changes
- 3 Beat Wing Preparation

1. The Vocabulary

2. Buffalo Shuffle Warm Up

3. Turning on 6

4. One More Time

5. Fast Finish

6. Dance – teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.

Adult Popular Tap Medal tests - Bronze, Silver and Gold

Outline of syllabus content: Bronze Medal

Vocabulary for Boogie Time

- 3 Beat Ripples
- Level 3 Shuffles
- Single, Double and Triple Pick Up Time Steps
- 4 Beat Riffs
- Astaire Open Break (not syncopated)
- 4 Beat Riff Time Step

Vocabulary for Twenties Sequence

- 5 Beat Cramp Roll
- Suzie Q
- Truckin'
- Charleston
- Black Bottom

1. Warm Up (Set)

2. Linking Step Forward

3. Linking Step Backward

4. Boogie Time

5. Twenties Sequence – Charleston

6. Dance – teacher's arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.

Outline of syllabus content: Silver Medal

Vocabulary for Warm Up

- Cutaways

Vocabulary for Ragtime

- Shuffle Time Steps with Pick Up Change
- 5 Beat Riff Time Step
- Single Time Step to Double Time Step Rhythm
- Astaire Break – Syncopated (Level 6)
- Syncopated Time Step (1&2&- &4&)

Vocabulary for Mambo

- 'Maraccas Bend' (Fwd 1-Bk 3)
- 'Mambo Knee Twist' (R-LR: L-RL: S-QQ: SQQ)

1. Warm Up (Set)

2. Linking Step Forward

3. Linking Step Backward

4. Rag Time

5. Mambo

6. Dance – teacher's arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.

Outline of syllabus content: Gold Medal

Vocabulary for Linking Steps

- Progressive Taps
- 6 Beat Riffs

Vocabulary for Tacet and Stop Time

- One Bar Wing Preparation Time Step
- Pick Up Time Step with Pick Up on 1 Foot
- Roll Time Steps
- Maxiford with Toe Taps and Maxiford with Step turning

Vocabulary for Slow Swing

- Pick Up Time Step with Pick Up on 1 Foot
- Cutaways

1. Warm Up (Set)

2. Linking Step Forward (3/4)

3. Linking Step Backward

4. Tacet & Stop Time

5. Slow Swing

6. Dance – teacher's arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.

Scheme of assessment

Method of assessment

Examinations are assessed by an external examiner who is recruited, trained, and monitored by the ISTD.

ISTD examiners:

- are selected for their expertise and undergo rigorous training which continues throughout their career for marking both face-to-face and remote examinations
- create a welcoming and reassuring environment at the exam venue, ensuring a positive experience for candidates.
- complete a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (or equivalent body where available) and adhere to ISTD policies and procedures, including equality and diversity, safeguarding and data protection
- do not usually examine at the same exam venue within any two-year period

In the examination, the examiner awards a mark of between 0 and 10 for each component, shown on the accompanying grid below. A mark of 0 indicates that nothing was evidenced for assessment

The examination is divided into sections and each section consists of several components which are individually assessed and aggregated to give the section total. The total number of marks available in the examination is 100.

Adult Popular Tap Tests Level 1-6 and Bronze, Silver and Gold

Title of component	Available marks
Technique	
Clarity of Beating	10
Precision of Footwork	10
Timing	10
Rhythmic Interpretation	10
Line and Coordination	10
Section total	50
Presentation	
Response	10
Knowledge of Syllabus	10
Spatial Awareness	10
Sense of Performance	10
Sequence/Dance	10
Section total	50
Overall total	100

Determining a mark

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100.

Determining a grade

The marks 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 are detailed above.

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 do not come to a round figure, e.g. 12 ½, the pass mark for the section is lowered to the nearest round figure, in this example, 12.

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100. If all sections are passed, then the overall result is indicated as follows:

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

Please note: Where a candidate is unsuccessful in one or more sections, 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.

Popular Tap Tests levels 1 – 6 and Bronze, Silver and Gold mark schemes

Each component of the assessment is shown on the grid as a column and broken down into mark bands, each of which has a descriptor.

The descriptor indicates the quality that is expected in the candidate's evidence for that mark band. The indicative content for each component of assessment is exemplified or stated at the bottom of each column/group of columns.

Mark bands

The lower mark in each band indicates that the student has just met the requirement described in the band, the upper mark indicates that the evidence is clear but that the student has not quite met the requirements set out in the next mark band.

The candidate is marked against all components of the assessment.

Popular Tap Test Levels 1-6 & Popular Tap Medals, Bronze, Silver & Gold Specification mark scheme

Section		Technique					Performance and Presentation				
Component		Clarity of Beating	Precision of Footwork	Timing	Rhythmic Interpretation	Line and Coordination	Response	Knowledge of Syllabus	Spatial Awareness	Sense of Performance	Sequence / Dance
		10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks
Top of the Excellent band	9-10	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Excellent band											
Top of the Good band	7-8	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Good band											
Top of the Fair band	5-6	The candidate demonstrates Fair ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Fair band											
Top of the Limited band	3-4	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Limited band											
Top of the Weak band	1-2	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Weak band											
Not evidenced	0	Indicative content not evidenced									
Indicative content		Tap with clear sounds. Demonstrate definition in the beating.	Precision of Footwork: Demonstrate neat footwork with mobility through the feet and relaxation through knees and ankles Alignment of legs and feet: Demonstrate correct alignment of legs and feet	Dance in time with the music.	Demonstrate use of accent and line and shade.	Line: Demonstrate extension through the body with awareness of arm lines. Coordination: Demonstrate relaxation and ease of movement.	An enthusiastic approach within the demonstration of the syllabus.	A secure knowledge of the syllabus.	Demonstrate the syllabus using maximum amount of space available.	Demonstrate with confidence and a natural sense of enjoyment.	Demonstrate clear rhythmic beating and secure technique. Demonstrate with style and expression relevant to the music.

Grades 1–6 Specification



10 Graded Examinations

Qualification purpose

A clearly defined structure in Tap Dance examinations 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. Also, a range of transferable skills to other dance genres becomes possible, as the candidate develops physically and learns common skills that can support a broader base of dance genres. The Graded Examinations also allow for those participating for recreational purposes to produce quality work in a safe dance context.

Aims and objectives

The aim of Graded Examinations is to provide an assessment scheme for dance. This 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, ordered with increased difficulty (6 represents the highest level of attainment).

The objectives of the Tap Dance graded examination syllabus are:

- To teach correct posture
- To build a secure tap technique
- To develop an awareness of tone
- To promote the understanding of dance terminology
- To gain a good sense of line through body, arms and head
- To gain an understanding of rhythm and its development
- To develop an appreciation and interpretation of various musical styles
- To develop spatial awareness
- To develop an awareness of audience and sense of performance
- To encourage a sense of self-expression
- To encourage creative use of rhythm and movement
- To promote self-confidence in the performance of a solo

Entry conditions

Entries must be submitted via a teacher who holds a Full Teaching membership with the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.

Minimum age

There is a lower age limit of 6 years for Grade 1. This ensures that the candidate has had sufficient physical development to meet the demands of the syllabus safely. Children and adults should not be entered in the same set.

Prior learning

The Graded Examinations are intended to be taken consecutively and most candidates will wish to progress through them, in sequence, to develop the requisite skills. Teachers are expected to use their professional judgement to commence training at an appropriate level for the individual, particularly with reference to safe dance practice.

Language

All exams and assessments are conducted in English.

Grades 1-6 Specification

Examination	Number of candidates	Time allowances			
		1 candidate	2 candidates	3 candidates	4 candidates
Grade 1	1-4	20 minutes	20 minutes	25 minutes	30 minutes
Grade 2	1-4	25 minutes	25 minutes	30 minutes	35 minutes
Grade 3	1-4	30 minutes	30 minutes	35 minutes	40 minutes
Grade 4	1-4	35 minutes	35 minutes	40 minutes	50 minutes
Grade 5	1-4	40 minutes	40 minutes	45 minutes	50 minutes
Grade 6	1-4	45 minutes	45 minutes	50 minutes	55 minutes

Musical accompaniment

The official ISTD Tap Faculty set music or recommended playlist should be used for these examinations. Members can access the recommended playlists [here](#) to download.

Teachers may use their own choice of music for dance solos.

A sound system capable of playing CDs/iPod or other digital audio equipment, at a volume suitable for the venue, should be provided. The music system operator should be sat at a discreet distance from the examiner, and must NOT be teachers, assistant teachers, parents of exam candidates or another exam candidate from the exam session.

Clothing

In order for the Examiner to give a true and accurate assessment, dance attire and grooming should be smart and give a clear view of the head, body, arm and leg lines.

Appropriate dancewear should be worn of any colour, for example, leotard and tights, dance shorts, straight-legged dance trousers, and tight-fitting t-shirt. Trousers, if worn, should not be too long or too wide as this could prove hazardous. Find out more about [our recommended ISTD uniform](#), designed in partnership with Dansez, to create a sustainable, inclusive and quality uniform range that allows for personal expression alongside practical pieces. Shoes must be well-fitted and have both toe and heel plates. The heel height should be appropriate for the age of the candidate.

Hair should be neat and securely held in place. Long hair should be tied back to allow a clear neck and head line. Long ponytails and plaits should be pinned back to ensure the ponytail/plait does not swipe the face/neck. Make-up should only be worn where appropriate and should be natural. Jewellery or body piercings, if they are unable to be removed, should be suitably secured and covered so as not to cause any injury.

Where possible, it is recommended that candidates wear clothing that contrasts the studio background, especially if filming for remote examinations.

Studio layout for the examination

Teachers should select the most suitable studio layout for the examination, to allow candidates to demonstrate fully.

Teachers should ensure mirrors are covered or made opaque. Examiners require a table and a comfortable chair.

Teachers should also provide a bell to be used to indicate when the Examiner is ready for candidates to enter the studio at the start of an examination.

Qualifications

This section sets out the required teaching and learning content and how they should be delivered. The learning and teaching content for each qualification in the specification is set out in a similar way.

Learners should take examinations only once the learning and teaching content have been covered in full.

Grade 1 Tap

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 1 (Tap Dance)	501/0755/0	60	70	7

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria Grade 1

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Grade 1

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from Pre-Primary and Primary plus:

- Tap Step
- Heel Tap
- Ball Dig
- Spring
- Forwards Shuffle
- Heel Dig
- Flaps to the Toe
- Standard Flap
- Basic Crawl
- Pick Up Step
- Tap Step Ball Change
- Shuffle Ball Change
- Sideways Crawl (both feet together)

1. Warm Up – both seen together.

- a) Bouncy Warm Up
- b) Close Work Warm Up

2. Technical Exercises – Examiner’s choice to see these exercises either together, in 2s or individually.

- a) Shuffles
- b) Flaps
- c) Close Work Crawl
- d) Paradiddles

3. Rhythm – as stated in syllabus.

- a) Accented Eighths & 1&2&3_ & 5&6&7_ & 1&2&3_ & 5&6&7&8
- b) Improvisation (examiners choice of music A or B)

4. Compound Steps – Examiner’s choice of 3 out of 5 exercises to be seen individually in examination.

- a) Rag – Step Heel Beat
- b) Jazz – Pick Up Steps
- c) Boogie – Tap Step Heels and Tap Step Ball Change
- d) Swing – Shuffle Ball Changes
- e) Blues – Ball Changes

5. Amalgamations – seen individually.

Teacher’s choice of:

- a) Boogie or
- b) Reggae

Can be practiced together first before seen individually.

6. Dance Composition – seen individually.

Teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1 minute.

7. Bow

Grade 2 Tap

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 2 (Tap Dance)	501/0753/7	60	70	7

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria Grade 2

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Grade 2

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from previous syllabi plus:

- Stomp
- Drop
- Side Shuffle
- 4 Beat Cramp Roll
- Pick Up on 2 Feet
- Separated Crawl sideways
- Crawl with 1 foot
- Pick Up Spring
- Pick Up Hop
- Shuffle Hop Step
- 4 Beat Riff
- Single Time Step
- Double Paradiddle/Paddle

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1. Warm Up – both seen together.</p> <p>a) Bouncy Warm Up
b) Close Work Warm Up</p> <p>2. Technical Exercises – Examiner’s choice to see these exercises either together, in 2s or individually.</p> <p>a) Shuffles ‘round the side’
b) 4 Beat Cramp Rolls
c) Pick Ups on 2 Feet
d) Close Work Crawl
e) Paradiddles</p> <p>3. Rhythm – as stated in syllabus.</p> <p>a) Twelfth Notes
&a1_&a3_&a5&a6&a7_
b) Rhythmic Response</p> | <p>Examiner gives a 1 bar rhythm of either quarter notes or accented eighths, optional use of 1 missed beat. Candidates clap it back all together. Examiner will then clap the rhythm to each candidate individually, they will respond with audible sound.</p> <p>4. Compound Steps – Examiner’s choice of 2 out of 4 exercises to be seen individually in examination.</p> <p>a) Celtic – Travelling Pick Ups
b) Jazz – Shuffles
c) Percussive – Tap Step Heels
d) Double Bass – 4 Beat Riffs</p> <p>5. Turning Step on the diagonal – seen on both sides individually.</p> | <p>6. Single Time Steps – Examiner’s choice to see this exercise either together, in 2s or individually.</p> <p>7. Amalgamations – seen individually. Teacher’s choice of:</p> <p>a) Tacet and Stop Time or
b) Gershwin
Can be practiced together first before seen individually.</p> <p>8. Dance Composition – seen individually. Teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1 minute.</p> <p>9. Bow</p> |
|---|---|--|

Grade 3 Tap

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 3 (Tap Dance)	501/0754/9	60	70	7

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria Grade 3

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Grade 3

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from previous syllabi plus:

- Toe Flam
- Back Shuffle
- 5 Beat Cramp Roll
- 3 Beat Riff forward
- Pick Up on 1 Foot
- Shuffle Spring
- Pick Up Ball Change
- Pick Up Change
- 5 Beat Riff
- Basic Waltz Step
- Single Waltz Step
- Double Waltz Step
- Double Time Step

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>1. Warm Up – both seen together.</p> <p>a) Bouncy Warm Up
b) Close Work Warm Up</p> <p>2. Technical Exercises – Examiner’s choice to see these exercises either together, in 2s or individually.</p> <p>a) Shuffles ‘round the side’
b) 5 Beat Cramp Rolls
c) 3 Beat Riffs
d) Preparation and Pick Ups on 1 Foot
e) Close Work Crawl
f) Paddles</p> <p>3. Rhythm – both seen individually.</p> <p>a) $\frac{3}{4}$ Even rhythm 12&3 45&6 1&2&3&4&-&6</p> | <p>b) Rhythmic Response
Examiner gives a 1 bar rhythm using a mixture of quarter notes and accented eighths, with the optional use of a missed beat. Candidates clap it back all together. The Examiner will then clap the rhythm to each candidate individually, they will respond with audible sound.</p> <p>4. Compound Steps – Examiner’s choice of 2 out of the 4 compound steps seen individually in examination.</p> <p>a) Celtic – Pick Ups and Shuffle Springs
b) Indian – Pick Up Change
c) Swing – Riffs
d) Waltz – Waltz Step</p> | <p>5. Turning Step on the diagonal – seen on both sides individually.</p> <p>6. Double Time Steps – Examiner’s choice to see this exercise either together, in 2s or individually.</p> <p>7. Amalgamations – seen individually.
Teacher’s choice of:
a) Beat Box
b) Percussive 3/4
Can be practiced together first before seen individually.</p> <p>8. Dance Composition – seen individually.
Teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.</p> <p>9. Bow</p> |
|---|--|---|

Grade 4 Tap

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 4 (Tap Dance)	501/0756/2	75	95	10

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria Grade 4

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Grade 4

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from previous syllabi plus:

- Double Shuffle
- Flap to Toe sideways
- 3 Beat Riff forwards and backwards
- 3 Beat Ripple
- Shuffle Pick Up Change
- Pullback
- Bufalino Crawl
- Triple Time Step

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>1. Warm Up – both seen together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Bouncy Warm Up b) Close Work Warm Up 3/4 <p>2. Technical Exercises – Examiner’s choice to see these exercises either together, in 2s or individually.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Shuffles b) Riffs and Cramp Rolls 3/4 c) Ripples and Shuffle Pick Up Change d) Pullbacks e) Close Work Crawl f) Paddles | <p>3. Rhythm – as stated in syllabus.</p> <p>16th Note Improvisation.</p> <p>The Examiner sets first 2 counts of footwork (&a1&a2). Each candidate dances this, then continues to improvise continuous 16ths across the room to complete 8 counts, showing a rhythmic change on the last 2 counts.</p> <p>4. Turning Step – seen on both sides individually.</p> <p>Teacher’s choice of 1 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Turning Step A b) Turning Step B | <p>5. Triple Time Steps – Examiner’s choice to see this exercise either together, in 2s or individually.</p> <p>6. Amalgamations – seen individually.</p> <p>Teacher’s choice of 2 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Soft Shoe b) Musical Theatre c) Funk (formerly known as Urban) <p>Can be practiced together first before seen individually.</p> <p>7. Dance Composition – seen individually.</p> <p>Teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 1.5 minutes.</p> <p>8. Bow</p> |
|---|--|--|

Grade 5 Tap

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 2 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 5 (Tap Dance)	501/0757/4	75	95	10

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria Grade 5

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Grade 5

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from previous syllabi plus:

- 3 Beat Paddle
- Double Shuffle to side
- Flam
- Maxiford with Toe Tap
- 3 Beat Wing Preparation
- 4 Beat Wing Preparation
- Separated Crawl with Double Heel Beats
- Toe Beat Crawl
- Round the Sides
- 4 Beat Ripple
- Single, Double and Triple Pick Up Time Steps
- Sugars
- Basic Shim Sham

Optional:

- Double Wings

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

1. Warm Up – both seen together.

- Bouncy Warm Up
- Close Work Warm Up

2. Technical Exercises – Examiner's choice to see these exercises either together, in 2s or individually.

- Shuffles 3/4
- Wings 5/4
- Double Wings (optional)
- Close Work Crawl
- Paddles

3. Rhythm – seen individually.

Rhythmic Response (taken unaccompanied).

A 2 bar rhythm using 1 full bar of 12th notes beginning on the &, (first or second bar) and a bar of unset rhythm given by the examiner which could include syncopation, quarter notes, accented eighths and one missed beat.

4. Compound Steps – Examiner's choice of 2 out of the 4 compound steps performed individually in examination.

- Ripples
- Pullbacks
- Shuffle Pick Up Changes
- Maxiford

5. Turning Sequence – seen on both sides individually.

6. Time Steps – Examiner’s choice of 1 timestep together and 1 performed individually.

- a) Shuffle
- b) Pick Up

7. Amalgamations – seen individually.

Teacher’s choice of 2 of the following:

- a) Beguine

b) Quick Jazz

c) Tango

d) Swing

Can be practiced together first before seen individually.

8. Dance Composition – seen individually.

Teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 2 minutes.

9. Shim Sham Bow

Grade 6 Tap

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 6 (Tap Dance)	501/0758/6	90	130	13

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria Grade 6

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Grade 6

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from previous syllabi plus:

- 4 Beat Progressive Tap
- Criss Cross Shuffle
- Progressive Shuffle
- 4 Beat Cramp Roll Change
- Double Scuffle
- Twist Scuffle
- 5 Beat Open Riff

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

1. Warm Up

Warm Up

2. Technical Exercises – Examiner’s choice to see these exercises either together, in 2s or individually.

- Progressive Shuffles
- Double Scuffles
- Wing Preparations
- Riffs

3. Rhythm – seen individually.

Examiner gives a 2 bar free rhythm, using note values up to and including 12th notes, syncopation and missed beats.

4. Turning Step – both steps seen individually on each side.

- On the Spot
- Travelling on the Diagonal

5. Time Steps – seen individually. Task set by the examiner. Single, double and triple shuffle time steps and breaks, single, double and triple half breaks and/or last half of a break – straight or turning, starting on 8 or 1 and with the use of dancer’s tacet.

6. Set Sequence

- Teacher’s/Candidate’s choice of 1 of the following:
- Unaccompanied
 - Alternative Unaccompanied

Can be practiced together first before seen individually.

7. Amalgamations – seen individually.

Teachers/Candidate’s choice of 1 of the following:

- Blues
- Boogie

Can be practiced together first before seen individually.

8. Dance Composition – seen individually.

Teacher’s arrangement not to exceed 2 minutes.

9. Bow (or Grade 5 Shim Sham Bow)

Scheme of assessment

Method of assessment

Graded Examinations are assessed by an external examiner who is recruited, trained, and monitored by the ISTD.

ISTD examiners:

- are selected for their expertise and undergo rigorous training which continues throughout their career for marking both face-to-face and remote examinations
- create a welcoming and reassuring environment at the exam venue, ensuring a positive experience for candidates.
- complete a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (or equivalent body where available) and adhere to ISTD policies and procedures, including equality and diversity, safeguarding and data protection
- do not usually examine at the same exam venue within any two-year period

In the examination, the examiner awards a mark of between 0 and 10 for each component, shown on the accompanying grid below. A mark of 0 indicates that nothing was evidenced for assessment.

The examination is divided into sections and each section consists of several components which are individually assessed and aggregated to give the section total. The total number of marks available in the examination is 100.

Grades 1 and 2

Title of component	Available marks
Technique	
Poise and Stance	10
Clarity of Beating	10
Precision of Footwork	10
Line and Coordination	10
Section total	40
Rhythm	
Timing	10
Rhythmic Interpretation	10
Section total	20
Presentation, Response and Syllabus Knowledge	
Response and Knowledge of Syllabus	10
Sense of Performance	10
Set Amalgamation	10
Dance	10
Section total	40
Overall total	100

Grades 3, 4, 5 and 6

Title of component	Available marks
Technique	
Posture	10
Clarity of Beating	10
Precision of Footwork	10
Line and Style	10
Section total	40
Rhythm	
Timing	10
Rhythmic Interpretation and Tonal Quality	10
Section total	20
Presentation, Response and Syllabus Knowledge	
Response and Knowledge of Syllabus	10
Sense of Performance	10
Set Amalgamation	10
Dance	10
Section total	40
Overall total	100

Determining a mark

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100.

Determining a grade

The marks 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 are detailed above.

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, e.g. 12 ½, the pass mark for the section is lowered to the nearest round figure, in this example, 12.

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100. If all sections are passed, then the overall result is indicated as follows:

Grade	Total marks
Distinction	80-100 marks
Merit	60-79 marks
Pass	40-59 marks
Not attained	0-39 marks

Please note: Where a candidate is unsuccessful in one or more sections, 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.

Graded mark schemes

Each component of the assessment is shown on the grid as a column and broken down into mark bands, each of which has a descriptor.

The descriptor indicates the quality that is expected in the candidate's evidence for that mark band. The indicative content for each component of assessment is exemplified or stated at the bottom of each column/group of columns.

Mark bands

The lower mark in each band indicates that the student has just met the requirement described in the band, the upper mark indicates that the evidence is clear but that the student has not quite met the requirements set out in the next mark band.

The candidate is marked against all components of the assessment.

Tap Dance: Grades 1 and 2 mark scheme

Section		Technique				Rhythm		Presentation, Response and Syllabus Knowledge			
Component		Poise and Stance	Clarity of Beating	Precision of Footwork	Line and coordination	Timing	Rhythmic Interpretation	Response and Knowledge of Syllabus	Sense of Performance	Set Amalgamation	Dance
		10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks
Top of the Excellent band	9-10	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Excellent band											
Top of the Good band	7-8	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Good band											
Top of the Fair band	5-6	The candidate demonstrates Fair ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Fair band											
Top of the Limited band	3-4	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Limited band											
Top of the Weak band	1-2	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Weak band											
Not evidenced	0	Indicative content not evidenced									
Indicative content		Demonstrate with correct posture using weight transference and control from the centre of the body. Positive use of eye focus	Tap with clear sounds. Demonstrate definition in the beating.	Precision of Footwork: Demonstrate neat footwork with mobility through the feet and relaxation through knees and ankles. Demonstrate accuracy in Close Work. Alignment of legs & feet: Demonstrate correct alignment of legs and feet.	Line: Demonstrate extension through the body with awareness of arm lines Coordination: Demonstrate relaxation and ease of movement.	Timing: Dance in time with the music.	Demonstrate use of accent and light and shade. Demonstrate a spontaneous response to given rhythms and/or improvisations.	Response: Demonstrate an alert response to given instructions. Knowledge: A secure knowledge of the syllabus.	Demonstrate with confidence and a natural sense of enjoyment.	Demonstrate neat technique and rhythmical accuracy. Demonstrate with natural style and expression with sufficient assurance to dance as a solo.	Perform confidently alone Demonstrating individual style and expression.

Tap Dance: Grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 mark scheme

Section		Technique				Rhythm		Presentation, Response and Syllabus Knowledge			
Component		Posture	Clarity of Beating	Precision of Footwork	Line and Style	Timing	Rhythmic Interpretation and Tonal Quality	Response and Knowledge of Syllabus	Sense of Performance	Set Amalgamation	Dance
		10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks
Top of the Excellent band	9-10	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Excellent band											
Top of the Good band	7-8	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Good band											
Top of the Fair band	5-6	The candidate demonstrates Fair ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Fair band											
Top of the Limited band	3-4	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Limited band											
Top of the Weak band	1-2	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Weak band											
Not evidenced	0	Indicative content not evidenced									
Indicative content		Demonstrate with correct stance and weight distribution with use of core control. Positive use of eye focus.	Tap with clear sounds. Demonstrate definition in the beating.	Precision of Footwork: Demonstrate accurate footwork with mobility through the feet; Relaxation of the knees and ankles; Demonstrate Close Work with precision. Alignment of legs & feet: Demonstrate correct alignment of legs and feet.	Line: Demonstrate an awareness of arm placement. Show extension through the body and arms. Style: Demonstrate ease of movement and rhythmic quality	Timing: Dance in time with the music showing the correct rhythmic patterns. Maintain Tempo when dancing unaccompanied.	Rhythm interpretation: Demonstrate clear rhythmical beating with well-defined use of accent. Tonal Quality: Demonstrate variation of sound using light and shade to create tonal contrasts.	Response: Alert and enthusiastic response to given instructions. Knowledge: Demonstrate secure syllabus knowledge to enable assured performance.	Demonstrate with confidence, individuality and vitality.	Demonstrate clear rhythmic beating and secure technique. Demonstrate with style and expression relevant to the music.	Demonstrate technical accuracy and clear rhythmical beating. Style and expression should reflect the chosen music.

Classification of results

Candidates receive both a final mark and an attainment grade. It is not expected that a candidate in a particular attainment grade will necessarily demonstrate all of the characteristics listed in that band, but will demonstrate most.

Attainment grade descriptors

Distinction: 80-100 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Distinction**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- extremely strong technique
- high clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- excellent precision in the technique of the genre
- excellent use of dynamics and spatial elements
- very confident and accurate responses to instructions, questions asked and/or tasks set
- very strong performing skills.

Merit: 60-79 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Merit**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- well established technique
- good clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- good precision in the technique of the genre confident use of dynamics and spatial elements
- confident and accurate responses to instructions, questions asked and/or tasks set
- strong performing skills.

Pass: 40-59 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Pass**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- generally established technique
- some clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- some precision in the technique of the genre
- fair understanding of the use of dynamics and spatial elements
- broadly relevant and mostly appropriate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set
- secure performing skills.

Not attained: 00-39 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Not attained**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- poor or limited technical accomplishment
- limited clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- poor or limited grasp of the technique of the genre
- limited understanding of the use of dynamics and spatial elements
- weak or limited response to questions asked and/or tasks set
- weak or limited performing skills.

Intermediate, Advanced 1 & 2 Specification



11 Vocational Examinations

Qualification purpose

In this section, you will find information on the purposes of the following qualifications in this specification:

Level 3: Intermediate in Tap Dance

Level 4: Advanced 1 in Tap Dance

Level 4: Advanced 2 in Tap Dance

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

These examinations offer a vocational path, requiring a higher level of commitment and with an increasing emphasis on safe dance practice and increasing technical ability. Successful candidates at this level should show virtuosity in performance, and a sound knowledge and understanding of the Tap Dance genre, including an understanding of reference and context.

Candidates undertaking a study of the vocational graded syllabus should display a sense of self awareness and be self-motivated in terms of 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 studying independently.

Aims and objectives

Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing Vocational Graded Examinations in Tap Dance provide an assessment scheme, which give the basis for the measurement of an individual candidate's progress and development, in preparing for professional dance performing or teaching careers. The practical, vocational examinations are graded to measure appropriate stages of development from a general standard of Tap Dance education to that of professional competence and readiness.

The syllabus objectives of the Vocational Graded Examinations in Tap Dance are to:

- Teach correct posture
- Develop a thoroughly comprehensive tap technique
- Develop the use of tone
- Promote understanding and use of dance terminology
- Develop the sense of line through arms, body and head
- Promote understanding of rhythm and its development
- Promote appreciation of varying musical styles and their interpretation
- Develop awareness of the use of space
- Develop awareness of audience with a sense of performance
- Encourage an artistic sense of self-expression
- Encourage creative use of rhythm and movement
- Promote self-confidence in the performance of a solo

Minimum age

There is a recommended minimum age of 13 years for Intermediate and above. This is to ensure that candidates are physically and artistically mature and able to safely meet the demands of the syllabus.

Entry conditions

Entries must be submitted via a teacher who holds a Full Teaching membership with the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.

Prior learning

There are no prior examination requirements for Intermediate. However, candidates will need to have knowledge of the content of the ISTD Tap Grades. Candidates are required to achieve the Intermediate qualification prior to entry for Advanced 1 and the Advanced 1 qualification is required prior to entry for Advanced 2.

Exemption from the Intermediate and Advanced 1 examinations may be obtained if the candidate is a student who already holds an equivalent Intermediate or Advanced 1 Tap certificate from an Ofqual approved dance awarding body. Application for exemption must be made in writing to the UK Examinations department prior to the examination session.

Language

All exams and assessments are conducted in English.

Summary information

Examination	Number of candidates	Age	Time allowances		
			1 candidate	2 candidates	3 candidates
Intermediate	1–3	13+	55 minutes	60 minutes	75 minutes
Advanced 1	1–3	13+	75 minutes	75 minutes	90 minutes
Advanced 2	1–3	13+	75 minutes	90 minutes	90 minutes

Musical accompaniment

The official ISTD Tap Faculty set music or recommended playlist should be used for these examinations. Members can access the recommended playlists [here](#) to download.

Teachers may use their own choice of music for dance solos.

A sound system capable of playing CDs/iPod or other digital audio equipment, at a volume suitable for the venue, should be provided. The music system operator should be sat at a discreet distance from the examiner, and must NOT be teachers, assistant teachers, parents of exam candidates or another exam candidate from the exam session.

Clothing

In order for the Examiner to give a true and accurate assessment, dance attire and grooming should be smart and give a clear view of the head, body, arm and leg lines.

Appropriate dancewear should be worn of any colour, for example, leotard and tights, dance shorts, straight-legged dance trousers, and tight-fitting t-shirt. Trousers, if worn, should not be too long or too wide as this could prove hazardous. Find out more about our [recommended ISTD uniform](#), designed in partnership with Dansez, to create a sustainable, inclusive and quality uniform range that allows for personal expression alongside practical pieces. Shoes must be well-fitted and have both toe and heel plates. The heel height should be appropriate for the age of the candidate.

Hair should be neat and securely held in place. Long hair should be tied back to allow a clear neck and head line. Long ponytails and plaits should be pinned back to ensure the ponytail/plait does not swipe the face/neck. Make-up should only be worn where appropriate and should be natural. Jewellery or body piercings, if they are unable to be removed, should be suitably secured and covered so as not to cause any injury.

Where possible, it is recommended that candidates wear clothing that contrasts the studio background, especially if filming for remote examinations.

Studio layout for the examination

Teachers should select the most suitable studio layout for the examination, to allow candidates to demonstrate fully.

Teachers should ensure mirrors are covered or made opaque. Examiners require a table and a comfortable chair.

Teachers should also provide a bell to be used to indicate when the Examiner is ready for candidates to enter the studio at the start of an examination.

Qualifications

This section sets out the required teaching and learning content and how they should be delivered. The learning and teaching content for each qualification in the specification is set out in a similar way.

Learners should take examinations only once the learning and teaching content have been covered in full.

Intermediate

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 3 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Intermediate	501/0728/8	150	275	28

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria Intermediate

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Intermediate

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from previous syllabi plus:

- Stamp
- Slam
- Slap
- Splat
- Snatch
- Flams: Inside Flam and Outside Flam
- Preparation for Undercut Shuffle
- 3 Beat Shuffles
- 3 Beat Criss-Cross Shuffle
- 3 Beat Progressive Shuffle
- 3 Beat Flaps
- 3 Beat Preparation Press Cramp Roll
- Drum Cramp Roll
- 4 Beat Cramp Roll Change Turning
- Shuffle Cramp Roll 5 Beats
- Standing Cramp Roll (version 1)
- Standing Cramp Roll (version 2)
- 6 Beat Cramp Roll
- 6 Beat Riff
- 7 Beat Riff
- 11 Beat Criss-Cross Riff
- 5 Beat Paddle
- Double Tap Step
- 3 Beat Pullback
- Double Shuffle Pick Up Change
- Ripple Down
- Maxiford with Step
- Shuffle off to Buffalo
- Suzie Q
- Cahito
- Rhythm Turn with Shuffle
- Compass Turn

Optional steps:

- 3 Beat Wing Change
- Separated Wing
- Slides

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

1. **Warm Up** – taken together.
2. **Vocab Drills** – candidates will demonstrate a total of 7 Drills, as specified in the 4 categories below – seen individually.
3. **Grounded Drills** – seen individually.
Teachers' choice of 2 out of the 4.
 - a) Shuffles
 - b) Riffs
 - c) Cramp Rolls
 - d) Slides
4. **Close work Drills** – seen individually.
Teachers' choice of 1 out of the 2
 - a) Crawls
 - b) Paddles
5. **Elevated Drills** – seen individually.
Teachers' choice of 3 out of the 7
 - a) Pullbacks
 - b) Pick Up Drill
 - c) Ripples and Ripple Down
 - d) Shuffle Pick Up Changes
 - e) Shuffle Pick Up on 1 foot
 - f) Maxifords
 - g) Wings
6. **Turning Drills** – seen individually.
Teachers' choice of 1 out of the 3
 - a) Turns on the spot
 - b) Turns to side or on diagonal
 - c) Turns in circle
7. **Technical Sequences** – seen individually.
All 3 of the following 3 Sequences
 - Blues
 - Up Tempo
 - Elevated
 Teachers' choice of either:
 - a) Close Work (straight time)
 - b) Close Work (swing time)
 Taken individually.
8. **Interpretive Section** – seen individually.
 - Improvisation Drill (for introduction to full improvisation)
 - Cross Accent exercise
 - Light and Shade exercise
9. **Turning Sequences** – seen individually.
Teachers' choice of 1 from the 2 sequences:
 - a) Elevated Turning Sequence
 - b) Close Work Turning Sequence
10. **Time Steps** – seen individually.
Teacher's choice of 2 from the 3 Time Step sequences:
 - a) Rhythm Time Step
 - b) Travelling Time Step
 - c) Preparation Wing Time Step
11. **Dance Sequences** – seen individually.
Both sequences to be demonstrated:
 - Theatre Tap
 - Commercial Tap
12. **Dance** – seen individually.
Not to exceed 2 minutes duration.
13. **Shim Sham Bow**
Set arrangement.

Advanced 1

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1	501/0760/4	150	325	33
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1 Analysis	603/2667/0	150	325	33

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria Advanced 1

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Advanced 1

The final examination date for this version of the syllabus, including any resits, will be 30th September 2026. The revised version of this syllabus (please see separate syllabus specification) will then replace this version from 1st October 2026.

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from previous syllabi plus:

- Progressive Taps
- 12 Beat Criss-Cross Riffs
- Closed Pullbacks
- Mixed Maxiford
- 2 Bar Single, Double and Triple Wing Preparation Time Steps
- Roll Time Steps

Optional steps:

- Wing on 1 Foot – 3, 4 or 5 Beat
- Wing Change – 3, 4 or 5 Beat

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

1. **Warm Up** – seen together.
2. **Technical Exercises** – seen individually.
 - Shuffles and Progressive Taps
 - Riffs
 - Shuffle, Pick-Up Change and Pullback
 - Turning Step with Maxiford
 - Turning Step (Close work)
 - Suzie Q
3. **Time Steps** – seen individually.
 - Roll Time Steps
 - Wing Preparation Time Steps
 - Time Steps given by the examiner which could include elevated pick-ups, tacet and change of rhythm (including syncopation)
4. **Rhythm Section** – seen individually.
 - Rhythmic Response (as set in the syllabus specification)
 - Free rhythm to be given by the examiner to be improvised (a 2 bar phrase in 4/4 time consisting of note values up to and including 16ths and could include syncopation and missed beats)
5. **Dance Sequences** – seen individually.

Both sequences to be demonstrated:

 - Blues
 - Quick Jazz
6. **Free Work** – seen individually.

Examiner's choice of 2 pieces of free work from the following 3 sections; Time steps, Rhythm and / or Free Amalgamations, to include vocabulary up to and including Advanced 1.
7. **Dance** – seen individually.

Not to exceed 2 minutes.
8. **Bow** (or Intermediate Shim Sham Bow).

Advanced 2

Qualification title	Qualification number	Guided learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)	Credits
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 2	501/0761/6	150	375	37
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 2 Analysis	603/2669/4	150	375	37

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria Advanced 2

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
LO1 Apply and demonstrate through performance a range of fundamental and relevant knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and technique of Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate physical and technical competence safely
LO2 Perform a range of movement sequences showing sound and secure technical skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises, sequences, and dances
LO3 Perform a range of movement sequences showing an understanding of musicality in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exercises and dances to music
LO4 Apply and demonstrate a range of performance skills in Tap Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall, perform and present exercises and dances to an audience using a range of performance and presentational skills • Demonstrate an understanding of style and theme

Outline of syllabus content: Advanced 2

Vocabulary of steps

All steps from previous syllabi plus:

- Single, Double, Triple and Double Triple Cramp Roll Time Steps
- Syncopated Shuffle Pick Up Change
- Open and Closed Pullbacks
- Eddie's Riff
- Eddie's Travel
- Rattle (Basic, Progressive and Double Toe Tap Rattle)
- 4 Beat Press Cramp Roll
- Back Travel
- Side Travel

Optional steps:

- Pendulum Wings

If any exercises are seen individually, these can be practiced together initially, as required.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Warm Up – seen together.2. Technical Exercises – seen individually.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shuffle Pick Up Change and Pullbacks• Wings or Ripples turning• Close Work Sequence3. Rhythm Section – seen individually.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rhythmic Response• Improvisation4. Set Amalgamations – seen individually. (both amalgamations to be demonstrated)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turning Sequence | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spanish Waltz <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Dance Sequences – seen individually.
Candidate's choice of 2:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) The Bluesb) Quick Jazzc) Seven Fourd) Rag Time6. Free Amalgamations – seen individually.
Set by the examiner.7. Dance – seen individually.
Not to exceed 2 minutes.8. Bow (or Intermediate Shim Sham Bow). |
|--|---|

Scheme of assessment

Method of assessment

Examinations are assessed by an external examiner who is recruited, trained, and monitored by the ISTD.

ISTD examiners:

- are selected for their expertise and undergo rigorous training which continues throughout their career for marking both face-to-face and remote examinations
- create a welcoming and reassuring environment at the exam venue, ensuring a positive experience for candidates.
- complete a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (or equivalent body where available) and adhere to ISTD policies and procedures, including equality and diversity, safeguarding and data protection
- do not usually examine at the same exam venue within any two-year period

In the examination, the examiner awards a mark of between 0 and 10 for each component, shown on the accompanying grid below. A mark of 0 indicates that nothing was evidenced for assessment

The examination is divided into sections and each section consists of several components which are individually assessed and aggregated to give the section total. The total number of marks available in the examination is 100.

Intermediate, Advanced 1 and Advanced 2

Title of component	Available marks
Technique	
Clarity of Beating	10
Timing and Rhythm	10
Rhythmic Interpretation and Tonal Quality	10
Weight Distribution	10
Precision and Alignment of Footwork	10
Section total	50
Presentation	
Response and Knowledge	10
Style	10
Sense of Performance	10
Dance Sequences	10
Dance	10
Section total	50
Overall total	100

Determining a mark

The marks for each component of assessment are added together and an overall mark is given out of 100.

Determining a grade

To reflect the need for competence across the range of components, a candidate will not attain a grade if:

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

If all components are achieved, then the overall grade is indicated as follows:

Grade	Total marks
Distinction	80-100 marks
Merit	65-79 marks
Pass	50-64 marks
Not attained	0-49 marks

Vocational Mark schemes

Each component of the assessment is shown on the grid as a column and broken down into mark bands, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor indicates the quality that is expected in the candidate's evidence for that mark band. The indicative content for each component of assessment is exemplified or stated at the bottom of each column/group of columns.

Mark bands

The lower mark in each band indicates that the student has just met the requirement described in the band, the upper mark indicates that the evidence is clear but that the student has not quite met the requirements set out in the next mark band.

The candidate is marked against all components of assessment.

Tap Dance: Intermediate mark scheme

Section		Technique				Presentation					
Component		Clarity of Beating	Timing and Rhythm	Rhythmic Interpretation and Tonal Quality	Weight Distribution	Precision and Alignment of Footwork	Response and Knowledge	Style	Sense of Performance	Dance Sequences	Dance
		10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks
Top of the Excellent band	9-10	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Excellent band											
Top of the Good band	7-8	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Good band											
Top of the Fair band	5-6	The candidate demonstrates Fair ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Fair band											
Top of the Limited band	3-4	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Limited band											
Top of the Weak band	1-2	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Weak band											
Not evidenced	0	Indicative content not evidenced									
Indicative content		Tap with clear sounds. Demonstrate definition in the beating.	Timing: Maintain correct timing throughout. Rhythm: Demonstrates the correct rhythmic patterns.	Rhythmic Interpretation: Demonstrate clear rhythmic beating with well-defined use of accent, syncopation & missed beats. Tonal Quality: Demonstrate variation of sound using light & shade to create tonal contrasts. Demonstrate ease and relaxation of the ankles and knees and flexibility through the feet.	Demonstrate variation of weight adjustment and distribution relevant to the steps being demonstrated. Demonstrate the strength and core control necessary to facilitate the technical requirements of the syllabus.	Precision: Demonstrate accurate footwork. Articulate through, and work on the balls of the feet where relevant. Demonstrate Close Work with precision. Alignment: Demonstrate accurate foot and leg lines.	Response: Demonstrate an enthusiastic and quick response to given instructions. Knowledge: Secure knowledge of the syllabus.	Demonstrate ease of movement and rhythmic quality through arms and body. Demonstrate extension through the arms and upper body to create breadth of line where relevant. Demonstrate variation in line, style and dynamics relevant to the music and choreography.	Demonstrate an innate and sincere sense of performance using eye focus and appropriate expression. Demonstrate with assurance and individuality.	Dance each sequence as a solo. Demonstrate technical accuracy and clear rhythmic beating. Demonstrate each sequence with style and expression relevant to the music and choreography.	Demonstrate a rhythmically and technically secure performance. Present a musical interpretation with appropriate style and expression.

Tap Dance: Advanced 1 mark scheme

Section		Technique				Presentation					
Component		Clarity of Beating	Timing and Rhythm	Rhythmic Interpretation and Tonal Quality	Weight Distribution	Precision and Alignment of Footwork	Response and Knowledge	Style	Sense of Performance	Dance Sequences	Dance
		10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks
Top of the Excellent band	9-10	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Excellent band											
Top of the Good band	7-8	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Good band											
Top of the Fair band	5-6	The candidate demonstrates Fair ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Fair band											
Top of the Limited band	3-4	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Limited band											
Top of the Weak band	1-2	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Weak band											
Not evidenced	0	Indicative content not evidenced									
Indicative content		Tap with clear sounds. Demonstrate definition in the beating.	Timing: Maintain correct timing throughout. Rhythm: Demonstrate correct rhythmic patterns; Demonstrate the musical highlights of the set of the set Rhythmic Response. Demonstrate a rhythmically accurate response to free work and/ or improvise to a given rhythm.	Rhythmic Interpretation: Demonstrate clear rhythmic beating with well-defined use of accent, syncopation & missed beats. Show an awareness of musical phrasing. Tonal Quality: Demonstrate variation of sound using light & shade to create tonal contrasts. Demonstrate ease and relaxation of the ankles and knees and flexibility through the feet.	Demonstrate variation of weight adjustment and distribution relevant to the steps being demonstrated. Demonstrate the strength and core control necessary to facilitate the technical requirements of the syllabus.	Precision: Demonstrate accurate footwork. Articulate through, and work on the balls of the feet where relevant. Demonstrate Close Work with precision. Alignment: Demonstrate accurate foot and leg lines.	Response: Demonstrate an enthusiastic and quick response to given instructions. Respond confidently to free work, translating verbal instructions with technical and stylistic accuracy. Knowledge: Secure knowledge of the syllabus.	Demonstrate ease of movement and rhythmic quality through arms and body. Demonstrate extension through the arms and upper body to create breadth of line where relevant. Demonstrate variation in line, style and dynamics relevant to the music and choreography.	Demonstrate an innate and sincere sense of performance using eye focus and appropriate expression. Demonstrate with assurance and individuality.	Dance each sequence as a solo. Demonstrate technical accuracy and clear rhythmic beating. Demonstrate each sequence with style and expression relevant to the music and choreography.	Demonstrate a rhythmically and technically secure performance. Present a musical interpretation with appropriate style and expression.

Tap Dance: Advanced 2 mark scheme

Section		Technique				Presentation					
Component		Clarity of Beating	Timing and Rhythm	Rhythmic Interpretation and Tonal Quality	Weight Distribution	Precision and Alignment of Footwork	Response and Knowledge	Style	Sense of Performance	Dance Sequences	Dance
		10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks
Top of the Excellent band	9-10	The candidate demonstrates Excellent ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Excellent band											
Top of the Good band	7-8	The candidate demonstrates Good ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Good band											
Top of the Fair band	5-6	The candidate demonstrates Fair ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Fair band											
Top of the Limited band	3-4	The candidate demonstrates Limited ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Limited band											
Top of the Weak band	1-2	The candidate demonstrates Weak ability in the indicative content									
Bottom of the Weak band											
Not evidenced	0	Indicative content not evidenced									
Indicative content		Tap with clear sounds. Demonstrate definition in the beating.	Timing: Maintain correct timing throughout. Rhythm: Demonstrate the correct rhythmic patterns; Demonstrate the musical highlights of the set rhythmic response	Rhythmic Interpretation: Demonstrate clear rhythmic beating with well-defined use of accent, syncopation & missed beats. Demonstrate an awareness of musical phrasing. Improvise to free music given by the examiner, showing rhythmicity, technical accuracy & spatial awareness. Tonal Quality: Demonstrate variation of sound using light & shade to create tonal contrasts. Demonstrate ease & relaxation of the ankles & knees & flexibility through the feet.	Demonstrate variation of weight adjustment and distribution relevant to the steps being demonstrated. Demonstrate the over all strength and core control necessary to facilitate the technical requirements of the syllabus.	Precision: Demonstrate accurate footwork. Articulate through, and work on the balls of the feet where relevant. Demonstrate Close Work with precision. Alignment: Demonstrate accurate foot and leg lines.	Response: Demonstrate an enthusiastic and quick response to given instructions. Respond confidently to free work, translating verbal instructions with technical and stylistic accuracy. Knowledge: Secure knowledge of the syllabus.	Demonstrate ease of movement and rhythmic quality through arms and body. Demonstrate extension through the arms and upper body to create breadth of line where appropriate. Demonstrate variation in line, style and dynamics relevant to the music and choreography.	Demonstrate an innate and sincere sense of performance throughout. Demonstrate with assurance and individuality.	Dance each sequence as a solo. Demonstrate technical accuracy and clear rhythmic beating. Demonstrate each sequence with style and expression relevant to the music and choreography.	Demonstrate a rhythmically and technically secure performance. Interpret the chosen accompaniment with artistry and musicality.

Classification of results

Candidates receive both a final mark and an attainment grade. It is not expected that a candidate in a particular attainment grade will necessarily demonstrate all of the characteristics listed in that band but will demonstrate most.

Attainment grade descriptors

Distinction: 80-100 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Distinction**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- extremely strong technique
- high clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- excellent precision in the technique of the genre
- excellent use of dynamics and spatial elements
- very confident and accurate responses to instructions, questions asked and/or tasks set
- very strong performing skills.

Merit: 65-79 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Merit**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- well established technique
- good clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- good precision in the technique of the genre confident use of dynamics and spatial elements
- confident and accurate responses to instructions, questions asked and/or tasks set
- strong performing skills.

Pass: 50-64 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Pass**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- generally established technique
- some clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- some precision in the technique of the genre
- fair understanding of the use of dynamics and spatial elements
- broadly relevant and mostly appropriate responses to questions asked and/or tasks set
- secure performing skills.

Not attained: 00-49 marks

A candidate who achieves a '**Not attained**' will demonstrate the following attributes in performance:

- poor or limited technical accomplishment
- limited clarity of intention in execution of the movement
- poor or limited grasp of the technique of the genre
- limited understanding of the use of dynamics and spatial elements
- weak or limited response to questions asked and/or tasks set
- weak or limited performing skills.

Examination Information, Quality Assurance, Appendix & Resources



12 Examinations and quality assurance

This section focuses on the administrative requirements for delivering the examinations and related quality assurance processes.

ISTD examiners:

- are selected for their expertise and undergo rigorous training which continues throughout their career for marking both face-to-face and remote examinations
- create a welcoming and reassuring environment at the exam venue, ensuring a positive experience for candidates.
- complete a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (or equivalent body where available) and adhere to ISTD policies and procedures, including equality and diversity, safeguarding and data protection
- do not usually examine at the same exam venue within any two-year period

In the examination, the examiner awards a mark of between 0 and 10 for each component, shown on the accompanying grid below. A mark of 0 indicates that nothing was evidenced for assessment

The examination is divided into sections and each section consists of several components which are individually assessed and aggregated to give the section total. The total number of marks available in the examination is 100.

Exam booking information

Exam bookings are only permitted to be made by the registered members of the Society who conduct themselves in accordance with the Member Agreement/Professional Code of Conduct.

The examinations take place either at the exam venues hosted by the registered members such as the teacher's dance studio or at the ISTD Exam Centre sessions. Details of how to book an exam, cancellation fees, guidance, and exam regulations are available on:

UK Examinations

Website: istd.org/examinations/uk-examinations/

Email: ukdanceteachers@istd.org

International Examinations

Website: istd.org/examinations/international-examinations/

Email: InternationalTeachers@istd.org

Quality assurance

Quality assurance is a set of policies and procedures the Society have in place to ensure that our examinations and assessments are inclusive and accessible, and students completing our qualifications are issued a fair grade based on their performance. Our quality assurance processes are there to safeguard the integrity of our qualifications by ensuring that high standards are always delivered.

The detailed information about the quality assurance of our qualifications and the related policies can be found at istd.org/examinations/quality-assurance/.

For further guidance, please contact the Quality Assurance department at csqa@istd.org.

Inclusivity and accessibility of examinations and assessments

The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing is fully committed to promoting an environment where all individuals are encouraged to achieve their full potential and develop their skills in dance and in examinations and we encourage teachers to maintain an open approach towards the different abilities offered by all their students.

Reasonable adjustments

We are committed to providing fair access to our assessments for candidates with specific needs by putting in place access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. A reasonable adjustment is a process that is made before a learner takes an assessment. It ensures that they have fair access to demonstrate the requirements of the assessments taking account the needs of individual learners. However, it would also not be deemed reasonable to make changes to assessment standards or requirements as this would undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indicator of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the candidate. More information can be found at www.istd.org/ara

Special consideration

Special consideration is given after an assessment has taken place for learners who have been affected by adverse circumstances. The Society has a process in place for special consideration for candidates who participated in an examination but may have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury or indisposition, or adverse circumstances which arose immediately before or during the examination.

Enquiries

The Society endorses the principle of the right to enquire about a learner result. These enquiries may relate to an unexpected exam result, assessment decisions being incorrect, or assessment not being conducted fairly. We ensure that enquiries are dealt with swiftly and fairly within the specified timescales.

Malpractice

Malpractice refers to acts that undermine the integrity and validity of the assessment, the certification of qualifications, and/or actions that may damage the authority of those responsible for delivering the assessment and certification.

We take any form of malpractice very seriously. Registered members and candidates must follow the requirements set out in this specification, exam regulations and all other ISTD policies about the delivery of our exams. In cases where Registered Members or candidates have committed malpractice, a sanction or penalty may be given.

Results and certification

Quality Assurance will issue learner results and certificates direct to the primary organiser unless requested otherwise. All learners will be issued with a report sheet containing the marks for each component; successful candidates also receive a certificate that shows the qualification title as well as the subject and level that they have been examined in. We aim to release results and issue the qualification documents in line with the schedules on our Customer Service Policy on our website: istd.org/examinations/quality-assurance/policies-and-related-documents/.

13 Appendix

Syllabus books, music and videos

The ISTD has produced books music and video products to support the learning and understanding of the teacher. Syllabus books, CDs and DVDs are available to buy on the ISTD website: <https://shop.istd.org/shop/>

- A selection of our audio and video products are available to purchase and download from our digital shop: <https://istddance.sellfy.store/>

Written resources

- Bufalino, B. Tapping the Source: Tap Dance Stories, Theory and Practice. New York: Codhill Press 2004
- Duffy, B. Tap into Improv: A Guide to Tap Dance Improvisation. Published by author. 2017
- Fletcher, B. Tapworks: A Tap Dance Dictionary and Reference Manual Second Edition. New Jersey: Princeton Book Company. 2002
- Frank, R. Tap!: The Greatest Tap Dance Stars and their Stories 1900-1955. Revised Edition, New York: Da Capo Press. 1994
- Feldman, A. Inside Tap: Technique and Improvisation for Today's Tap Dancer. New Jersey: Princeton Book Company. 1996
- Glover, S. Savion: My Life in Tap. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc. 2000
- Gray, A. The Souls of Your Feet. Austin: Grand Weaver's Publishing. 1998
- Haskins, J. and Mitgang, N.R Mr. Bojangles. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc. 1988
- Knowles, M. The Tap Dance Dictionary. North Carolina: McFarland and Co. 1998
- Knowles, M. Tap Roots: The Early History of Tap Dancing. North Carolina: McFarland and Co. 2002
- Rees, H. Tap Dancing: Rhythm in their Feet. Wiltshire: The Crowood Press. 2003
- Seibart, B. What the Eye Hears: A History of Tap Dancing. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 2015
- Vallis Hill, C. Brotherhood in Rhythm: The Jazz Tap Dancing of the Nicholas Brothers, New York: Cooper Square Press. 2002
- Vallis Hill, C. Tap Dancing America: A Cultural History. London: Oxford University Press. 2010
- Pugh, M. America Dancing: From the Cake-walk to the Moon-walk. London: Yale University Press. 2015
- Guarino, L. and Oliver, W. Jazz Dance: A History of the Roots and Branches. Florida: University Press of Florida. 2014
- Stearns, M. and J. Jazz Dance: The Story of the American Vernacular Dance. Updated Edition, New York: Da Capo Press. 1994
- Edited by Lorna Sanders. Dance Teaching and Learning: Shaping Practice. Third Edition One Dance UK. 2016
- Rafferty, S. Quin, E. and Tomlinson Safe Dance Practice. Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetic. 2015
- Howse, J. and McCormack, M. Anatomy, Dance Technique, and Injury Prevention. Fourth Edition Methuen Drama. 2009

Resource sheets

- [Influential Tap Dancers Past....docx](#)
- [Present Day Tap Inspirations.docx](#)

Video resources

Documentaries & performances:

- About Tap (1985)
- American Tap (2018)
- By Word of Foot (1980)
- Dancin' Man: Peg Leg Bates (1992)
- Dancing Is a Man's Game (1958)
- Fascinating Rhythm: The Story of Tap (2001)
- Gene Kelly: Anatomy of a Dancer (2002)
- Great Feats of Feet (1977)
- Jazz Hooper: Baby Laurence (1981)
- Jazz Tap Ensemble (1983)
- Jeni LeGon: Living in a Big Way (2005)
- Leonard Reed's Shim Sham Shimmy (2004)
- Maurice Hines: Bring Them Back (2020)
- Nicholas Brothers: We Sing and We Dance (1992)
- No Maps on My Taps (1979)
- Tapdancin' (1980)
- Tap Dogs (1997)
- Tap Dance in America (1989)
- Tap Heat (2004)
- Two Takes on Tap (1993)
- Uprooted (2020)

Musicals (recorded):

- 42nd Street (1986 and 2017)
- Black and Blue (1989)
- Crazy for You (1998)
- Eubie! (1981)
- Hot Shoe Shuffle (1994)
- Sophisticated Ladies (1982)

Films:

- Swing Kids (2018)
- Tap (1988)
- White Nights (1985)
- Singin' In The Rain (1952)
- An American in Paris (1951)
- Anchors Aweigh (1945)
- Damsel in Distress (1937)
- Top Hat (1935)

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