

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR TEACHERS

The Regional Finals Adjudicating Panels will be looking for outstanding and complete theatrical performance when awarding dancers Honours for entry to the National Finals. The following notes have been compiled in conjunction with the Regional and National Finals judges and it is hoped that teachers will find them helpful.

Adjudication: The three adjudicators on the panel will be judging separately, without conferring. Their individual assessments, supported by their knowledge and experience, are combined and the announced result represents a majority response to the performance witnessed.

Performance: The adjudicators will be looking for a complete performance. It should display exceptional technique for the age group concerned and be strong, confident, theatrical and entertaining, with a good standard of body basics, superb costuming and of an excellent musical standard. Interest must be engaged at the outset and sustained until the very end.

Music: Avoid using popular music because unavoidable comparisons with professional performances will be inevitable. The quality of musical recordings is crucial. They should be of a suitable length and without cuts that destroy the shape, development and ending of the music, spoiling the performance. CD recordings are not always reliable and, if used, it is essential to have a tape or mini-disc backup for use in an emergency.

Make-up: Theatrical make-up should be subtle, enhancing the features to replace the colour the lights have removed. Avoid heavy make-up, blue and green eye shadows (which “close” the eyes), heavy brown blusher and pink, purple or brown lipsticks (which become grey under the lights) and the inappropriate use of face and body glitter, unless relevant to the theme of the dance.

Costumes: Costumes of the correct length should be well fitting with head-dresses and hairstyles that compliment the dancer. Choose a simple well-fitted tutu that sits on the hips. Elaborate tutus, large head-dresses, “flashy” tiaras, arm cuffs, ear-studs, tattoos and body piercings are unsuitable, unless relevant to the theme of the dance. Loss of an item of costume, or loose shoe ribbons, will mark down the performance. The correct underwear is essential in all sections.

Props: If props are to be used at all, they should be flame-resistant, not exceed 20 kg, be appropriate and be a fully integrated part of the performance. Hand props should be relevant to the situation showing appropriate size, shape, period, weight and texture of the article: judged by the way they are handled, they should be convincing. Dangerous props, such as naked flame, glass, talc, rice and real flowers must not be used. Any props that require the stage to be swept after use are discouraged.

Dance techniques:

Classical Ballet. Dances should include *adage* and *allegro*. Titles, characterisations and hand-held props are not allowed. The use of well-known repertoire, choreography or music is discouraged. Particular attention should be paid to the note about costumes above and it is stressed that for Classical Ballet, they should be simple without ornamentation so that every aspect of the classical technique is clearly visible.

Stylised Ballet. The communication of an idea through movement, danced with Classical Ballet technique when using hand props or with traditional style, such as Hornpipe, Spanish, Scottish, Tarantella.

Modern Ballet. A fusion of Modern and Ballet genres combining the classical technique with contemporary movement. This form usually requires the use of soft ballet shoes or pointe work and dances can depict abstract or narrative themes.

Classical Greek. Performed barefoot and essentially showing the use of opposition and relaxation through the movements. Dances should reflect the title. Myths and Nature Themes are acceptable provided the movements are given their appropriate interpretation that relates to one or more of the seven different styles in this technique.

National. All traditional music, songs and technique appropriate to the country of choice are acceptable. Younger competitors are expected to demonstrate traditional performances. Seniors may introduce theatrical performances that are clearly based on a national tradition.

Contemporary. Dances should be based on the techniques developed by Graham, Cunningham and recognised contemporary dance leaders, showing strength and mobility and use of gravity.

Character. A dramatic and sometimes humorous presentation of

- A story from any book, play, film, cartoon etc, historical characters
- The mannerisms and essential features of a person, animal, bird, reptile, insect, virus etc.

Competitors are permitted to interpret the words of a song or spoken word. Classical Ballet is the traditional dance technique used in Character, although any Classical dance technique is acceptable, including Free Movement and Modern Ballet.

Modern is an all-inclusive term applied to an ever-evolving performing art. It includes lyrical modern, jazz, stage contemporary, hip-hop and all styles of modern theatre dance are acceptable. Acrobatic, gymnastic and street dance are acceptable only when combined with a strong dance technique.

Tap All styles and developments in technique, including characterisation and humour, are encouraged providing the projection, beating and presentation of the routine is fully sustained and appropriate.

Song & Dance. The song should set the scene, mood and style of the dance. Pitch and accuracy whilst singing are essential and the focus will be on the interpretation of the song. The dance should provide continuity and reflect the words and the mood of the song, which should be sustained throughout. If a well-known show song is used, the dancer must give an exceptional individual interpretation that will stand alongside the memory of well-known professional performers.