

## ISTD Exam Structure and Expectation

The following information is given out to all parents, with your exam form and possible exam coaching times if required. We realise that this information may not be relevant if your child is young. However, it ensures that everybody understands the exam structure and system, whatever level your child may be at.

The ISTD is a worldwide organisation offering a comprehensive graded system in many dance genres. They promote and encourage excellence in all areas of teaching and learning, with the training of teachers a high priority and rigorous examinations and continual professional development, an expected part of a teachers career.

It is with these guide lines that we, as ISTD teachers, train and prepare our pupils for ISTD exams. We will only enter pupils for exams when we believe they will reach their personal best, ensuring they then have the satisfaction of success.

“Just scraping through” to ensure children stay with friends is not an approach that is conducive to building confidence, a sense of achievement or an enjoyment in taking exams.

The following grades apply to ISTD Ballet, Tap and Modern for children and then students in full time Vocational training.

**Grades:** Primary, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, Grade 4, Grade 5, Grade 6,

**Vocational Training:** Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced 1, Advanced 2.

When considering a child for an exam the teacher will consider the following areas:

**Physical:** This includes technique, flexibility, strength, balance, control, co ordination and posture.

**Knowledge of syllabus:** Do they know the syllabus work thoroughly?

**Response:** This is to free work given in the exam and the pupils general awareness and reaction to the examiner and exam conditions.

**Musicality and Sense of Timing:** Can they keep in time and show a musical approach when dancing?

**Style and sense of performance:** Are they confident to perform and to show the required maturity of style expected?

**Attitude in class and to home practice:** Is the pupil driven in class, determined and enthusiastic to learn and perfect?

Unlike academic exams, a child in a dance class may know all the work but does not have the physical ability to perform it to a high enough standard for an examination. This is often frustrating and upsetting for pupil and teacher, but staff always try to promote confidence about individuals physical capabilities, by explaining in detail, the differences in bodies and how that impacts on dance training, particularly at a high level.

All pupils are encouraged to understand the expectation of each level they study and a considerable amount of time is spent working on attitude to learning and consolidation of technique. Pupils could remain in a grade for more than two years. There is no rush to take exams as this will only prolong the time they are in a higher grade while they wait to mature in style and strength.

We want ALL children to love dance and have fun, alongside all of the above!! We hope this information is helpful but please speak to Miss Fleur if you need further advice.