



Reporting & Assessment Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines the School's approach to the assessment of student progress, and the reporting of that progress, to parents and students, both artistically and academically.

The key underlying principles are openness, equity and timeliness. The process is intended to avoid the delayed communication of any significant issues so that parent meetings and reports do not contain unwelcome surprises. Parents (and indeed students) should feel able, at any time, to contact the relevant ballet or academic teacher about any concerns affecting progress. Likewise, staff will speak with a student and contact parents, if necessary, when they do not feel it is appropriate to delay a discussion until the next formal meeting or report.

It is the intention of The Royal Ballet School to assess progress based on clear criteria and with due regard to performance in the studio, in class and in prep (homework) as well as in formal assessments (exams/tests) in both ballet and academics.

It is, at all times, the aim of the School to use reporting and assessment as a means to guide students and parents in making the correct choices in terms of ongoing artistic training and academic education. There will always be an element of professional judgment involved in this process but parents and students should be reassured that it is our goal to enable every student to continue with us, if it is right for that young person to do so.

The Assessment Process

The assessment of a student's artistic or academic progress, is ongoing. It takes place in class and in prep, or in the studio on a daily and weekly basis. This is known as formative assessment and is about the continuous process of a teacher providing feedback to a student on what is going well and what requires further work. At certain points in the school year this formative assessment is underpinned by a summative assessment, or what might be called a 'test' or 'exam' or a 'quantifiable' record of the standard of a student's work at that point in time, perhaps in the form of a written report.

The annual summative artistic Assessment for all students at The Royal Ballet School (formerly referred to as 'Appraisal') takes place in the spring term. Academically the key summative assessment points (whether external, such as GCSEs, or internal) tend to be in the summer term. For the Btec which forms the core of the academic programme at Upper School, there are termly assessment deadlines and many subjects will have termly or half-termly tests to measure progress when written reports are due.

Academically, students are taught by following Schemes of Work that facilitate progress and enable students to meet the relevant assessment requirements throughout their education. The standard of work in each year will become more demanding. For example, the work undertaken in Year 8 will be harder than that in Year 7. Some years will have a bigger 'step-up' in standard than others. A good example of this would be a student who works very hard and does really well to get a B grade pass at GCSE Maths but who would still not meet the desired requirement for studying Maths at A Level. To be successful at A Level Maths a student needs at least an A grade at GCSE.

The process is very similar for artistic training. The school's System of Training sets out the requirements of the artistic programme for each year group. As with an academic subject the demands will be greater as a student moves up the school. This may mean that a student will meet the required standard in Year 9 but may not be

able to cope with the technical demands of training in Years 10 and 11. Similarly a student who meets the standards of Year 11 may still not be successful in the audition for Upper School, where the standard will be significantly greater.

This can be very difficult news to hear when it happens, and we would stress that we have no reason to wish to assess a young person out of the school: quite the contrary. If a student meets the standard required for **ongoing** artistic training (i.e. they will be able to cope with the demands and requirements of the next stage of training) and it is right for them to continue that training (taking into account their motivation, physical capability and wishes), then we would very much want to keep them in the school.

The annual artistic assessment is based on the criteria listed below which are measured to the standard of The Royal Ballet School.

Artistic Assessment

The annual artistic assessment is based on the criteria listed below.

1. Technical Application:
 - a. Achievement of vocabulary
 - b. Correct posture and alignment
 - c. Correct weight placement/balance
 - d. Transfer of weight
 - e. Use of turn-out

2. Physical Application:
 - a. Strength
 - b. Stamina
 - c. Appropriate use of muscles
 - d. Appropriate intensity
 - e. Spatial Awareness

3. Musicality and Coordination:
 - a. Phrasing
 - b. Synchronicity with accompanist
 - c. Musical interpretation
 - d. Effective and integrated use of the body
 - e. Flow of movement

4. Artistry and Dynamics
 - a. Interpretation
 - b. Presentation
 - c. Projection
 - d. Stage Presence
 - e. Appropriate use of dynamics
 - f. Clear understanding of dynamic phrasing

5. Aesthetics Currently Observed for Classical Ballet
 - a. Aesthetics necessary to produce purity of balletic line
 - b. Flexibility
 - c. Natural hip rotation (turn-out)
 - d. Natural elevation

These criteria will be graded by each member of the Assessment Panel and by the relevant teacher against the standards set by The Royal Ballet School. The marks will be combined using the weightings outlined in the table

below. In the early years of training the mark is weighted in favour of the teacher's assessment. They are aware of the quality of a students' work on an ongoing basis and so can mitigate the effect of performance nerves or other factors negatively affecting the assessment class itself. As the years progress, greater emphasis will be placed on the assessment class itself as the ability to meet expectations in performance conditions is very much part of the dancer's skill set.

Year Group	Teacher's Mark	Combined Panel Mark
7 - 9	60%	40%
10 - 11	50%	50%
1 st	40%	60%
2 nd	20%	80%
3 rd		100%

All teachers' assessments are moderated throughout the year by the Artistic Director, often in combination with the Head of Outreach & Access, the Artistic Programme Managers and other experienced guest teachers who observe and work with the classes.

If a child is ill or injured at the time of the assessment and unable to complete any, or only part of the class, alternative arrangements will be made for the assessment to be completed at another time. There may be some circumstances in which this would not be the case, such as a student no longer wishing to continue their artistic training, a very long-term injury that will fundamentally affect a student's artistic progress, the risk of assessment affecting recovery from injury and so on.

For the written reports the following additional criteria will be assessed by the teacher.

1. Professional Behaviour
 - a. Ability to effectively work with others
 - b. Ability to process feedback in a constructive manner
 - c. Ability to maintain respectful working relationships with the teacher, pianist and peers
 - d. Ability to maintain respect for the working environment (studio/theatre)
 - e. Punctuality
 - f. Being prepared for lessons and rehearsals
 - g. Attendance

2. Professional Application (*the ability to translate instruction into effective action*)
 - a. Application of technical and artistic information and corrections
 - b. Retention of technical and artistic information
 - c. Self-motivation and drive
 - d. Self-discipline
 - e. Active participation in training
 - f. Appropriate personal presentation

These criteria will also be considered, together with the technical criteria above, when making decisions about the offer of continued training at the school. Classical ballet is a demanding and disciplined career and success requires not simply technical accomplishment but also full commitment and motivation.

Staff must consider not only the standard currently attained but also the potential to meet the requirements at the next stage of training when making these decisions. Other factors will also need to be considered such as injury, illness, recent growth etc. and so the professional judgement of the artistic team will always be an important element of the decision-making process.

The assessment process also includes regular half-termly Tutorials for the student and teacher to ensure that your son or daughter understands what areas are going well and what areas they should be working on.

Each of the criteria is measured against the following Grade Descriptors:

Level	Grade Descriptor
9	The student has achieved the technical and artistic requirements of this level of training to an outstanding level.
8	The student has achieved the technical and artistic requirements of this level of training to an excellent standard.
7	The student has achieved the technical and artistic requirements of this level of training to a very good standard.
6	The student has achieved the technical and artist requirements of this level of training to a good standard.
5	The student has achieved the technical and artistic requirements of this level of training to a satisfactory standard.
4	The student's technical and artistic standard is less than satisfactory.
3	The student's technical and artistic standard is unsatisfactory.
2	The student's technical and artistic standard is poor.
1	The student has not met any of the basic requirements of this level of training.

The table overleaf outlines the cycle of assessment for each year group.

The Royal Ballet School Diploma

Admission to the 3rd Year at Upper School is by invitation only. At the end of the 3rd Year the award of the Diploma to graduating students will be based on the following criteria:

- a. Assessment results
- b. Professional Application
- c. Professional Behaviour
- d. Successful completion of the 3rd Year Careers Module
- e. Attendance
- f. Academic effort
- g. Meeting the School's expectations in terms of attitude, motivation and behaviour.

A Diploma Committee, which would typically consist of the following and/or their nominated deputies: the Artistic Director, the Academic & Pastoral Principal and other senior artistic and academic staff and teachers and they will assess each student against the above criteria and either award the Diploma or a Certificate of Completion.

An explanation of the artistic criteria and a short glossary of relevant artistic terms is included at the end of this document.

Year Group	October	December	February	March/April	May
7	Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Ballet Report followed by parent meeting Tutorial - before end of term	Assessment & assessment result letter Tutorial - after 1/2 term	Tutorial - before end of term	Ballet Report Tutorial - before 1/2 term
8	Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Ballet Report followed by parent meeting Tutorial - before end of term	Assessment & assessment result letter Tutorial -after 1/2 term	Tutorial - before end of term	Ballet Report Tutorial - before 1/2 term
9	Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Ballet Report followed by parent meeting Tutorial - before end of term	Assessment & assessment result letter Tutorial - after 1/2 term	Tutorial - before end of term	Ballet Report Tutorial - before 1/2 term
10	Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Ballet Report followed by parent meeting Tutorial - before end of term	Assessment & assessment result letter Tutorial - after 1/2 term	Tutorial - before end of term	Ballet Report & Future Planning Open Meeting Tutorial - before 1/2 term
11	Tutorial - before 1/2 term Future Planning parent meeting	Ballet Report followed by parent meeting Tutorial - before end of term	Assessment & assessment result letter Tutorial - after 1/2 term	Upper School Audition Tutorial - before end of term	Ballet Report Tutorial - before 1/2 term
1st	Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Ballet Report followed by parent meeting Tutorial - before end of term	Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Assessment & assessment result letter Tutorial - before end of term	Ballet Report Tutorial - before 1/2 term
2nd	Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Ballet Report followed by parent meeting Tutorial - before end of term	Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Assessment & assessment result letter Tutorial - before end of term	Ballet Report & letter regarding offer of training for the 3 rd Year Tutorial - before 1/2 term
3rd	Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Ballet Report Tutorial - before end of term	Parent Meeting (Optional) Tutorial - before 1/2 term	Assessment & assessment result letter Tutorial - before end of term	Ballet Report & Diploma decision Tutorial - before 1/2 term

Academic Assessment

The academic assessment process is based on the regular measurement of *Attainment* (the achievement of appropriate academic standards at each stage of a student's education) and *Effort* (the focus, determination and level of independent study given to the completion of academic tasks).

In both cases the grades awarded will be a combined measurement of ongoing work in both class and prep (homework). After the internal exams in the summer the % mark obtained by the student in each subject will also be given.

It is important to remember that even when Effort grades are high a student may still not achieve the top grade for attainment. Although high levels of effort will generally improve attainment grades, and although good teaching will also help enable students to do better than they might otherwise, still, not every student will be able to get to get a top attainment grade. We aim to ensure that every student gets the best possible grade that they can, to reflect their hard work and the high quality of teaching provided.

When a student joins the School in Years 7 to 9 we undertake a form of baseline testing called, MidYis. This is a national standardised test (for which there is no need to prepare) that provides an indication of likely GCSE outcomes based on a student's ability at that point in time. Schools use this baseline data to measure what is called 'Value Added'. When GCSE results are published, these are compared to the MidYis predictions and the Value Added calculated. In recent years the Value Added at GCSE for The Royal Ballet School has been approximately 0.75 of a grade. What this means is that, on average, a student here will achieve $\frac{3}{4}$ of a grade better than a person of their ability would have done at another, similar school.

All academic assessment and teaching will take account of any specific learning needs of a student. Please advise us of any concerns that you may have or any previous assessment of learning needs so that we may make appropriate provision to support your son or daughter. If we observe any concerns in this regard we will speak to parents in order to assess any future need for additional support, special access arrangements for exams and so on. Parents, and students, are encouraged to speak with a teacher about any academic matter of concern. Staff are always happy to help.

All students at The Royal Ballet School are highly talented and they are offered a place at the school purely based on their ability and potential in classical ballet. Some of our students also have very high academic ability in some or all subjects, and other students may find conventional academic study a challenge. Academically, therefore, we are a truly all-ability school. All academic departments are experienced at teaching across this all-ability spectrum with suitable provision being made for both the least and most academically able in each subject. Highly able and gifted students will be stretched in the classroom and those less so, will be supported in making the best possible progress.

Grade expectations

Effort

Level	Grade Descriptor
<i>a</i>	An exceptional level of effort in class and prep, if applicable.
<i>b</i>	A very high standard of effort in class and prep, if applicable.
<i>c</i>	A good level of effort in class and prep, if applicable.
<i>d</i>	A level of effort that is below expectations in class or prep, if applicable, or both.
<i>e</i>	An unacceptable level of effort in class or prep, if applicable, or both.

All students are expected to achieve an Effort Grade of *c* or above.

Attainment

Level	Grade Descriptor
9	A student consistently achieves an outstanding standard of work, in class and prep, if applicable.
8	A student consistently achieves an excellent standard of work in class and prep, if applicable.
7	A student routinely achieves a very good standard of work in class and prep, if applicable.
6	A student routinely achieves a good standard of work, with few errors, in class and prep, if applicable.
5	A student regularly achieves a satisfactory standard of work in class and prep, if applicable.
4	A student occasionally achieves a satisfactory standard of work but there may be some limitations in class or prep, if applicable, or both.
3	A student is rarely achieving a satisfactory standard of work in class or prep, if applicable, or both.
2	A student is very rarely achieving a satisfactory standard of work in class or prep, if applicable, or both.
1	A student's level of achievement in class or prep, if applicable, or both, is unsatisfactory.

A student who is achieving a Grade 4 or 5 is likely to be reaching the expected attainment standard at that point in their education. This might mean, therefore, that a student who has achieved a Grade 8 in History in the summer of Year 9 might only achieve a Grade 4 at the start of Year 10 when the demands of GCSE mean that the standard has been raised significantly. Attainment grades will, therefore, vary over time.

Although the numbering of these grades is linked to the new GCSE 9 point grading structure, in the context of a School report they should **not be read as a predictor** of an eventual GCSE grade. The grades awarded in a report reflect attainment in **the previous reporting period**: they are not a **prediction** of what might be achieved in the future. In the summer term, grades will reflect attainment and effort over the **WHOLE academic year**.

A student may have done particularly well in an English topic in the Spring Term of Year 10 that will earn them a Grade 7, but when considering their overall attainment in the subject by the end of Year 11, they may expect to achieve a Grade 6 in the final examination. Conversely, a student in Year 11 may achieve only a Grade 4 in the October report, but still be capable of a Grade 8 in the summer, if the right amount of effort is put in.

In the Autumn Term of Year 11 all students will be issued with Current Anticipated Grades based on the evidence of attainment and effort up to that point. It will also include an assessment on the part of the teacher of what a student is capable of if they put in maximum effort, and the examination itself does not throw up any unexpected surprises. After the GCSE mocks in January of Year 11, the students will be given Predicted Grades. These grades are used for references to other schools. It is, therefore, vital that students understand the importance of revising and preparing thoroughly for these mock examinations.

If a student is achieving Grades 3 or below, the member of staff will be in touch to discuss their concerns and the proposed strategies for enabling the student to make improved progress.

Tutors will review academic progress formally with each student on a half-termly basis.

The cycle of academic, tutor and house reports is outlined in the table below.

Academic Report timings and Parent Meetings

	Oct	Nov exeat	Dec	Feb	Mar/Apr	Jun	Jul
Year 7	Short Report <i>Parent Meeting</i>			Short Report		Full Report	
Year 8	Short Report	<i>Parent Meeting</i>		Short Report		Full Report	
Year 9		Short Report		Short Report	<i>Parent Meeting</i>		Full Report
Year 10			Short Report	<i>Parent Meeting</i>	Short Report		Full Report
Year 11	Short Report		<i>Parent Meeting</i>	Full Report		Valedictory Report	
1st Year			Short Report <i>Parent Meeting</i>		Full Report		
2nd Year			Short Report <i>Parent Meeting</i>		Full Report		

Full Report – Attainment & Effort grades, Subject, Tutor (WL only) & House comments & Principal’s remarks.

Short Report - Attainment & Effort grades, optional Subject comments, short Tutor (WL only) & House comments.

Full and Short Reports will both include Instrumental/Voice reports.

Valedictory Report – Tutor & House Comments & Principal’s remarks only.

Reports will not be written for the PE and Healthy Performer Programmes as these are co-curricular activities.

Artistic Terminology

Students are assessed in the following sections of the ballet lesson/assessment:

Barre Work

Barre work prepares a student for all that comes in the centre. Repetition of the same exercises and movement allows students to gain strength and to focus on body alignment, turn-out, flexibility, head positioning and balance. Students should develop a clear understanding of vocabulary and how it is executed, posture, alignment, port de bras, extensions, stability and balance.

Centre Work

In the Centre, a student should be able to transfer the vocabulary and skills learnt at the barre in dance combinations/exercises of ever increasing complexity as the years progress.

Allegro

Allegro is the term we use to describe the technique of jumping. The use of coordination, strong footwork and dynamics are essential, alongside a natural ability to jump (ballon).

Pointe Work

For the female ballet dancer, pointe work is the defining element of classical and contemporary ballet choreography. The learning of this technique can only start after a child has acquired the necessary strength in her feet and awareness of core stability.

All of the above areas of the lesson are assessed in the following categories:

Technical Application

Classical ballet requires a high level of technical application in order to meet the requirements of the dance profession. In each area of the lesson students should demonstrate the achievement of vocabulary, correct posture and alignment, correct weight placement/balance, transfer of weight, and use of turn-out relevant to the level of training undertaken.

Physical Application

Classical ballet demands of the professional dancer a high level of physicality. In each area of the lesson students should demonstrate physical strength, stamina, appropriate use of muscles, appropriate physical intensity, and spatial awareness.

Musicality and Coordination

The combination of musicality and coordination embodies the natural grace and elegance of the classical ballet dancer, and the awareness of music and rhythm is intrinsic to dance. Musicality includes phrasing, musical interpretation, and synchronicity with the accompanist. Coordination includes the effective and integrated use of the body, and the flow of movement.

Artistry and Dynamics

As a profession, classical ballet is an expressive artistic pursuit. For the student the development of technique should always be matched by the development of individual artistic interpretation and dynamics. Artistry includes appropriate interpretation and style, conveyance of character to an audience, presentation, projection, and stage presence. Dynamics includes its appropriate use, and a clear understanding of phrasing.

Aesthetics Observed for Classical Ballet

“Aesthetics Currently Observed for Classical Ballet” is the way in which a student currently uses their physical ability and attributes to produce the necessary aesthetic lines and technique of classical ballet to the standard required for The Royal Ballet School.

In addition the ballet teacher assesses the following:

Professional Behaviour

Throughout their training students should demonstrate behaviour that is appropriate to the profession of classical ballet. The attributes of professional behaviour include the ability to work effectively with others, process feedback in a constructive manner, maintain respectful working relationships with the teacher, pianist and peers, and maintain respect for the working environment (studio/theatre). Also taken into consideration is punctuality, being prepared for lessons and rehearsals, and attendance.

Professional Application

In order to apply themselves effectively to their training students should demonstrate the ability to apply and retain technical and artistic information and corrections, self-motivation and drive, self-discipline, and active participation in, and a responsibility for, their training.

Glossary

These descriptions are illustrative and not exhaustive.

<i>Alignment:</i>	Relates to the arrangement of the limbs in space relative to the body.
<i>Ballon:</i>	A jump demonstrating ease and lightness with a swift rebound from the floor.
<i>Coordination:</i>	The ability to use different parts of the body together smoothly and efficiently in order to effectively execute classical ballet technique.
<i>Dynamics:</i>	The appropriate degree of energy or force used to execute a movement.
<i>Extensions:</i>	Height, stretch and length of leg and foot, achieved through a combination of flexibility and strength.
<i>Musicality:</i>	Musical interpretation through the matching of movement and form to the rhythm, melody and mood of the music being played.
<i>Physical Aesthetics:</i>	Possessing the physical aesthetic appropriate to classical ballet.
<i>Port de bras:</i>	Movement and shape of the arms, in and through the distinct classical positions, involving the use of the eyes, head and upper body.
<i>Turn-out:</i>	Leg rotation in the hip socket and its enhancement through training, to be continually sustained through movement.
<i>Posture:</i>	The appropriate visual stacking of the skeletal system and maintaining correct core control when the body is static and also moving through space.
<i>Presentation:</i>	The student’s ability to engage an audience through their dancing.
<i>Vocabulary:</i>	Understanding and application of the classical ballet steps required at that particular level of training.
<i>Weight placement:</i>	The correct distribution of weight between the three points of the foot (1 st and 5 th metatarsal and front of heel) to facilitate correct posture and ease of movement.