

Unit 52: Urban Dance

Unit code:	K/502/4909
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

This unit aims to provide learners with an understanding of the basic physical and interpretative skills of these styles whilst taking into consideration the genre of music they are associated with.

● Unit introduction

Understanding the fundamentals of how a dancer can successfully perform with individuality and originality is the emphasis of this unit. Urban dance and its many techniques are essential for anyone intending to work in commercial or community dance. Urban dance is part of youth culture and is making its way into the West End of London as well as pop videos, pop acts, live performances, stage shows, movies and television programmes. There are countless competitions and classes that encourage this art form in many urban areas in Britain and America, in addition to dance companies and choreographers using styles of urban dance in contemporary works and dance for camera. Some styles involved with urban still have a place in a townscape or street environment.

Some aspects of urban dance can really challenge learners' physicality and it is important that this takes place in a safe working environment. While learners will be assessed for their practical involvement, it is essential that observation and appreciation of other learners are taken into account as part of the development process. Elements of performance technique and interpretative skills must be addressed in this unit, so that learners develop confidence and knowledge of how to present themselves as performing artists. This unit aims to develop learners' dynamic responses to the chosen styles whilst encouraging them to appreciate its evolving form. Urban dance styles are diverse and movement vocabulary created from street dance to parkour, break dancing to capoeira, can be explored and developed.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Be able to perform the key features of urban dance
- 2 Understand the relationships between music and urban dance
- 3 Be able to demonstrate the application of physical and interpretative skills in performance.

Unit content

1 Be able to perform the key features of urban dance

Health and safety: warm-up; appropriate clothing; response to direction; safe practice; group awareness

Styles: eg street dance, street jazz, break dancing or b-boying, locking, boogaloo, hip-hop, bump and grind, body popping, robotics, body rock, freestyle, capoeira, krumping, free running, parkour

Movement vocabulary: eg backspins, body and arm waves, contractions, crazy legs, down rock, footwork, gestures, head spins, isolations, slides, top rock, windmills; freezes, threading, six step, coffee grinder, pivots, turns, elevations

Movement memory training: performing sequences using practice and repetition

2 Understand the relationships between music and urban dance

Use of rhythm and style: improvisation; syncopation; tempo; missed beats; off beats; direct correlation

Music styles: eg funk, soul, hip-hop, trip hop, electronica, rhythm and blues, pop, grime, garage, drum and bass, jungle, dance hall, raga, new metal

3 Be able to demonstrate the application of physical and interpretative skills in performance

Physical skills: posture; alignment; balance; coordination; flexibility; strength; stamina; body awareness; extension; contraction; rotation; ability to reproduce movement accurately; whole body participation and/or isolation; application of dynamic range; stillness

Interpretative skills: projection; focus; phrasing; emphasis; quality; musicality; dynamics; facial expression

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 demonstrate an awareness of health and safety issues in a disciplined way in a majority of classes [SM]	M1 demonstrate an awareness of health and safety issues in a disciplined way in all classes	D1 demonstrate an awareness of health and safety issues in a highly disciplined way in all classes
P2 demonstrate the ability to perform key features of urban dance [EP]	M2 demonstrate the ability to perform accurately key features of urban dance	D2 demonstrate the ability to perform to a high standard key features of urban dance with flair
P3 learn and recall in performance sequences with a degree of accuracy in relation to dynamics and timing [SM]	M3 learn, recall and reproduce in performance sequences with appropriate dynamic input and timing	D3 learn, recall and reproduce in performance sequences with contrasting dynamic input, timing and a strong sense of projection
P4 demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between music and urban dance	M4 demonstrate a strong awareness of the relationship between music and urban dance in performance	D4 demonstrate a strong awareness of the relationship between music and urban dance, exploring and developing own musicality in performance
P5 show the application of physical skills in the execution of movement phrases. [SM]	M5 show an awareness of the application of physical skills in the execution of movement phrases.	D5 apply physical skills in the execution of movement phrases with confidence, focus and energy.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit will be delivered through structured workshops and classes, which may focus on three or more urban dance styles. The styles chosen will reflect the tutor or workshop leader's training and it is important that there is consistency throughout the unit. All classes or workshops need to follow a similar structure, with warm-up, sequences, combinations and studies. These will be taught over a number of weeks to enable learners to develop physical skills, increase movement memory and challenge abilities. A safe working environment needs to be provided to enable learners to experiment effectively with new, exciting movements. Whilst a basic grounding in dance practice is invaluable, no previous dance experience is necessary for this unit. However, learners should be aware that attendance at regular classes and workshops will help them achieve the level of physicality this style of dance requires in performance.

Over the course of the unit exercises and combinations will increase in complexity, giving learners the opportunity to develop their skills further. This unit will provide learners with a solid foundation in urban dance techniques and their diversity. Learners will need to be given opportunities to perform in small groups and ensemble work to further challenge accuracy and musicality.

Learners will benefit from utilising a wide range of music to experiment with the possibilities each style offers as well as finding ways in which they merge. Music is integral to this unit and learners should be encouraged to bring in their own collections for use in classes and workshops.

Learners should observe recordings of their individual and group performances of exercises and combinations. Recordings could be in the form of a 'pop' video style. The content and outcomes of this unit should be demonstrated through the development of practical skills.

Learners should be aware that attendance at regular classes and workshops would help them achieve the awareness of rhythm and dynamics this style of dance requires in performance. Learners need to be responsible for themselves in all activities and have an awareness of safety issues. Tutors may want to put strength exercises into the warm-up to develop learners' endurance.

Although the focus of the unit is on three urban dance styles, tutors might like to introduce a variety of styles to enable learners to gain a broader understanding of urban dance and its many musical influences.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
<p>Discussion: health and safety issues for this unit. To include correct dress, dance studio code of conduct, correct warm-up, knowing what your body can be expected to do. Also expectations – what would learners like to cover, what skills do they already have. Devise group contract that each learner could sign. Grading criteria 1.</p>
<p>Assignment 1: Class Work and/or Longer Sequence (P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5)</p> <p>Urban dance style investigation and movement development. Looking at one style of urban dance and the music that enhances or initiates it. Over 8-10 sessions leading to a longer sequence performed in class. Working on isolations, leg and arm gestures and steps using different rhythmic patterning that build up over several sessions. Head, shoulder, hip, spine, rib isolations, steps forwards, backwards, side to side in different sizes with arms and leg gestures. As it gets harder the arms need to have a different rhythm to the leg to create a longer sequence for all learners to perfect for performance in class to an appropriate piece of music.</p> <p>Rehearsal for assessment.</p>
<p>Looking at the use of urban dance in music videos, television shows, musicals picking out and identifying the key features in discussion and by putting into the body. Could be in class, as research or theatre visits. Underpinning knowledge.</p>
<p>Assignment 2: Small Group Pieces (P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5)</p> <p>Urban dance style investigation and movement development. Looking at one style of urban dance and the music that enhances or initiates it.</p> <p>10 sessions leading to a small-group performance piece.</p> <p>Learners to use the music to enhance interpretative skills.</p> <p>Rehearsal for assessment.</p>
<p>Workshop (s) from visiting urban dance artist (s).</p>
<p>Assignment 3: Practical Investigation (P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5)</p> <p>Learners sharing styles, ideas, themes, experiences, choreography with each other. Learners to create phrases for each other. Could be a practical investigation in an assessment.</p> <p>Rehearsal for assessment.</p>
<p>Assignment 4: Whole Group Piece (P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5)</p> <p>Urban dance style investigation and movement development. Looking at either a different style of urban dance or further development of a style covered to date and the using the music that enhances or initiates it. Over 10 sessions leading to a whole-group performance piece.</p> <p>Rehearsal for assessment.</p>

Assessment

The practical work produced for this unit should clearly communicate the key features of urban dance in whichever styles are being studied. This could be workshops, classes, performances, 'pop' video production and residencies. Tutors and learners are encouraged to experience the energy and rhythm that a diverse selection of music will give this style. It is expected that learners' performances of chosen urban dance will have a correlation with the style, tempo, melody, rhythm and energy of the music. Assessment evidence puts the emphasis on creation, rehearsal and performance. Evidence will take the form of video recordings, tutor observation and peer and tutor feedback. Learners will need a mature approach to this style of dance, as there are health and safety implications especially with break dance. It is possible for learners to enjoy every aspect of this style if rules, boundaries and a greater understanding of how to be safe are instilled from the very beginning.

Urban dance can be assessed in a variety of ways and because learners are gaining or exploring new skills in nearly every session more assessment opportunities present themselves. It is up to the tutor to assess learners in workshops where they are achieving especially when learners are progressing in one style more than another.

Learning outcome 1 not only requires learners to be aware of health and safety issues when taking part in workshops but also to develop skills in more than two different urban dance styles and perfect movement vocabulary throughout the course of the unit. Differentiation between pass, merit and distinction will be apparent through the high standard of skills acquired, the performance skills needed to perfect movement material and the ability to be highly disciplined in these classes or workshops.

Grading criteria 1 and 2

- At pass level, learners will be able to identify elements of the workshop that may need safety considerations but they may have lapses in discipline in several classes. When performing urban dance features they may only be able to select simple movements to perform successfully or rely on the same movements that they know they can do with a degree of success. They may be efficient in performing these features but if they do not explore other possibilities they are working at a pass.
- At merit level, learners will be aware of what movements will need extra attention and risks will be assessed in a mature and disciplined way with a clear awareness of health and safety implications. Learners achieving merit will be able to also demonstrate key features of urban dance giving their attention to details such as where arms and legs work best in space and what dynamics are most effective. They will be keen to try and perfect these key features.
- At distinction level, learners will be able to pre-empt what movements they can readily try and which will need more strength or training. This will be evident in all classes with learners being mature and disciplined having a strong awareness of health and safety implications. Learners achieving distinction will be able to also demonstrate key features of urban dance with such close attention to detail and accuracy as well as being entertaining. Distinction learners will have an elegance and panache about their work.

Learning outcome 2 requires learners to understand the relationship between music and urban dance and demonstrate what this will impose on movement vocabulary in the body. Learners need to be clear in demonstrating movements that take 1 count, 1/2 beat or last for longer or indeed miss a beat or any other stresses or off beats that are needed to perform with flair. As well as rhythm learners need to understand how the different styles of music affect the dance from creation and direct correlation to adaptation of movements. Differentiation between pass, merit and distinction will be apparent through the use of rhythm, timing, quality and dynamic in the whole body and a sense of 'showmanship' that comes with dancing to this type of music. Learners will need to demonstrate this as many times as the tutor can allow as for some learners it may take time to perfect the timing and to find the stresses in the body showing that the music enhances the dance.

Grading criteria 3 and 4

- At pass level, learners will be able to demonstrate the movement material with a basic understanding of timing. They may miss counts, musical cues or find it difficult to find the 'beat' of the imposed style. Learners in the most part will perform the movements correctly but if they perform in groups they may not keep together or find that they begin or even finish incorrectly.
- At merit level, learners will be able to use the whole body, whether in isolation or moving as a whole, to demonstrate clearly the timing and rhythm of the material and use the music to enhance the dance. There may be moments that a strong understanding is shown but this may be inconsistent.
- At distinction level, learners will have a true understanding of the rhythms in the movement material and an understanding of the style imposed or created from the music. The rhythm will be shown through the body. Distinction level learners will be able to perform urban dance sequences confidently and accurately. There will also be a strong sense of musicality and understanding of stresses, quick and sharp dynamic movements and moments.

Learning outcome 3 requires learners to learn and perform movement phrases, sequences, and dance pieces in an urban style with a use of both physical and interpretative skills. Differentiation between pass, merit and distinction will be evident through learners' technical ability to recreate the exact steps/movements and their interpretative skills as a dancer.

Grading criterion 5

- At pass level, learners will produce a performance that recognisably reproduces the original steps with some sense of technical detail. There may be some inaccuracies but this does not detract from the overall performance. Pass level learners will be competent dancers and be able to use some interpretative skills but there may be inconsistencies.
- At merit level, learners will provide a performance which is technically secure and that has a consistent approach to the interpretative needs of the piece for example musicality. The performance will be consistently watchable and will have memorable elements to it. There is engagement with the material and an interpretation, which works, although it may not necessarily be inspired or technically correct throughout.
- At distinction level, learners will have an unmistakable confidence in everything they perform in assessment. There is something undeniably 'watchable' about their performance and they have the ability to communicate with a complete sense of ease, commitment and flair. Their performance will pay close attention to the full range of dynamics in the body, the correct alignment and technical skill with focus and energy directed towards the audience.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5	Class Work and/or Longer Sequence	Create a longer sequence for all learners to perfect for performance in class to an appropriate piece of music.	Tutor observation. Performance to video in dance studio.
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5	Small-group Pieces	After investigation of a style of urban create or be taught a small performance piece to a chosen piece of music.	Tutor observation. Practical performance piece to an audience. Videoed.
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5	Practical Investigation Underpinning Theory Exploration	After a workshop from visiting urban dancers and sharing with others, create a phrase or sequence to perform whilst explaining the styles used, the key features and why it works with the chosen music.	Tutor observation. Seminar and short performance. Videoed.
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5	Whole-group Piece	Performing a piece of urban dance that may use several styles to a whole piece of music with the whole group. Performance to an audience. (Could be a music video if there are no performance platforms available.)	Tutor observation. Performance to an audience. Videoed.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Performing and Production Arts sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the BTEC Performing and Production Arts suite:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Exploring Dance Skills	Exploring Urban Dance Styles	Dance Performance
	Performing Dance	Choreographic Principles
	The Development of Dance	Choreographing Dance
		International Dance
		Dance Appreciation

Essential resources

A practical dance space will be required with mirrors and preferably with a sprung floor. Access to sound equipment, a video camera and video playback facilities would be useful. Tutors may want to access gym equipment to break the fall during the initial exploration of movements and to create a safe environment whilst allowing learners to experience some of the diverse aspects of urban dance. It will be necessary to video examples of classes as well as performances. Learners would also benefit from theatre visits and workshops with visiting artists.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres are encouraged to develop links with professional dance companies, choreographers, local universities and dance colleges and dancers in the dance world. This could be talks, demonstrations, workshops, classes, taught repertoire, performance opportunities, visits to the theatre, visiting performances to centres and education resources that are available to centres.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Ashley L – *Essential Guide to Dance, 3rd Edition* (Hodder Arnold, 2008) ISBN 9780340968383

Cohen-Cruz J – *Radical Street Performance, an International Anthology* (Routledge, 1998)
ISBN 9780415152310

Wiles D – *A Short History of Western Performance Space* (Cambridge University Press, 2008)
ISBN 9780521012744

DVD and videos

Bentley N – *Street Jazz, Pineapple Studios Dance Masterclass* (2002)

Instone A – *Phat Moves, Street Dance Grooves* (2004)

Prince K – *Funk Fusion, Pineapple Studios Dance Masterclass* (2003)

Stewart S – *Let's Hip Hop, with Seth Stewart* (2004)

Street 2000 – *Stomp Out Loud – Stomp Company* (2000)

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	carrying out research into different styles of urban dance rehearsing set movement phrases independently
Creative thinkers	creating new and innovative movement answers and connecting movements whilst relating to other dancers adapting movements learnt to a new facing or timing
Reflective learners	watching themselves on video reviewing their own and their peers progress and performance
Team workers	working in small groups considering how to create innovative movement phrases being responsible collaborating on choreographies performing unison work in small groups considering other dancers in the space during workshops reviewing work with other learners and agreeing ways of improving collaborative work in the future
Self-managers	improving their own performance organising rehearsal time responding to direction from tutor and peers responsible for self discipline
Effective participators	working in groups on choreographic ideas negotiating movements answers proposing practical ways forward identifying strengths and weaknesses for improvement.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	researching dance companies visiting the theatre exploring issues or events that could be used as stimuli
Creative thinkers	generating ideas and collecting stimuli especially diverse music for use in choreography
Reflective learners	considering their own performance from feedback evaluating strengths and weaknesses setting future goals that are achievable.
Team workers	working in a group to create a joint piece of choreography collaborating on themes providing support for other learners in the process ensuring unison work is effective
Self-managers	researching dance pieces planning rehearsal schedules
Effective participators	working in groups to create choreography and performance pieces offering beneficial suggestions to all dancers and proposing improvements.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	attending seminars on different types of urban dance and the key features discussing improvements for performance pieces
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching stimuli for dance.