Sixth Form Dance and Drama Award

Funding Policy

The Dance and Drama Awards are designed to ensure that access to excellent training may be given to talented young dancers regardless of their background or financial circumstances. These are means-tested awards and therefore the level of funding is dependent on parental income.

Code of Practice

The school undertakes to consider all applications for entry to the school and for scholarships and awards regardless of ethnic background, gender, disability, as long as they are able to fully participate in a ballet class. All candidates have the right to appeal a decision not to award funding and all appeals will be treated with a professional approach and respect for the individual. Contents of the appeal will be treated in confidence and only those staff and administrators directly concerned with the appeal will have access to the information relevant to the process.

Acceptable grounds for Appeal:

If the school has failed to follow the audition code of practice as described below an appeal may be made. Appeals that question the judgement or decision making of the panel will not be considered.

The school has the discretion to award the Dance and Drama Awards to the most suitable candidate. This is determined by a rigorous audition procedure, outlined as follows:

Awarding a Dance and Drama Award

Stage 1:

The candidate auditions for the school and passes the audition for the course based primarily on their physique, and secondly on their technical ability. During this audition the panel make an assessment as to whether the candidate should be recalled for the second, funding audition. The panel is composed of the Director of the Dance Course, Artistic Director, Head of Classical Ballet, and the Curriculum Co-Ordinator in Contemporary Dance.

The audition consists of a ballet class, a contemporary phrase, a flexibility assessment and a prepared dance solo.

Exception to Stage 1: all internal Year 11 dance course candidates may go directly to Stage 2. Occasionally external vocational candidates may also proceed directly to Stage 2 on a case-by-case basis.

Stage 2:

All candidates will be asked to remain for a comprehensive physical screen to assess ranges of movement, injury and medical history and suitability for rigorous vocational training at this level. Full disclosure about any previous issues is important as failure to report something that later becomes evident may result in a Dance and Drama Award being removed. Any previous history of injury or illness will not necessarily preclude an award, but form part of an understanding of the physical background and resilience towards the demands of dance training. This screen forms an important part of evidence gathering for the final decision.

Stage 3:

Prior to the Stage 1 audition, all parents will be asked to complete a financial statement. This remains in the Finance office and does not form part of the award process but is used to predict how much Dance and Drama Award funding is needed.

At this stage of the audition for funding the panel consists of the Director of the Dance Course, Artistic Director, Head of Classical Ballet, Curriculum Co-Ordinator in Contemporary Dance, the Director of Studies, and the Principal. An invited external consultant will also be present.

The panel is looking for the most physically suitable candidates for professional training primarily in classical ballet, and secondly on their skill in contemporary dance or jazz dance. Candidates are scored on their technical, physical and artistic abilities.

The panel look for a sense of performance, natural musicality, and artistry.

This audition is a classical ballet class.

Stage 4:

The panel meet with the physiotherapists to assess every screen individually and discuss the suitability for training, matched with the results of the dance audition. The panel rank the candidates in order of suitability and the list is then discussed with the Principal who makes all final decisions. Letters informing parents and candidates of the results are sent.

No disclosure will be made about the order of rankings of the candidates to parents other than a generalised top, middle or lower end of the ranking. This is in line with all other schools that offer Dance and Drama Awards.

After the audition:

If an offer of a Dance and Drama Award is made, candidates and their parents are given two to three weeks to make a decision about accepting the award. This is in order to process financial information as soon as possible or to pass the scholarship to the next highest-ranking candidate.

If a student is put on a reserve list, that list remains active until the 1st September of that academic year.

Removing an Award

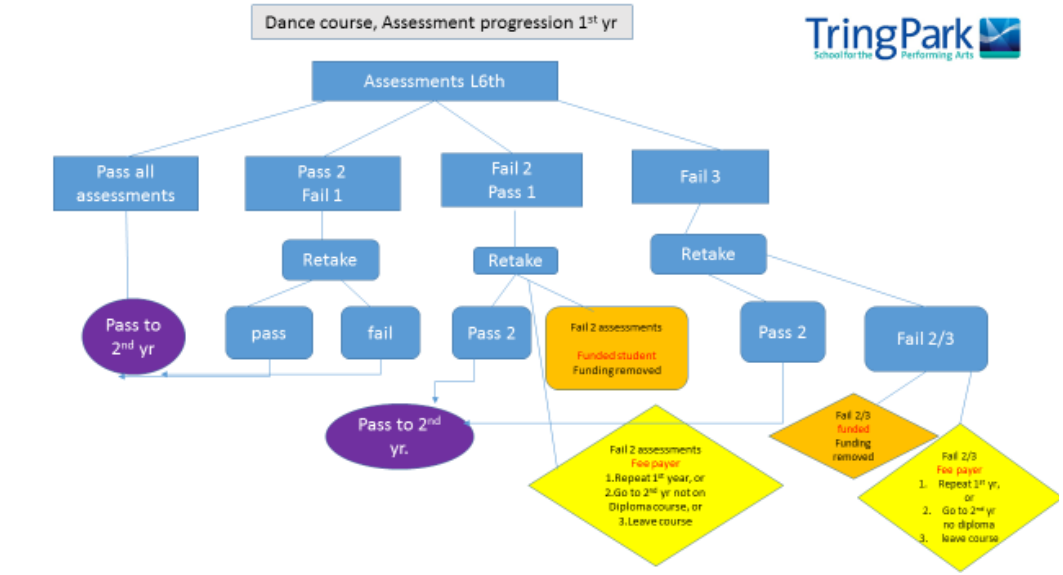
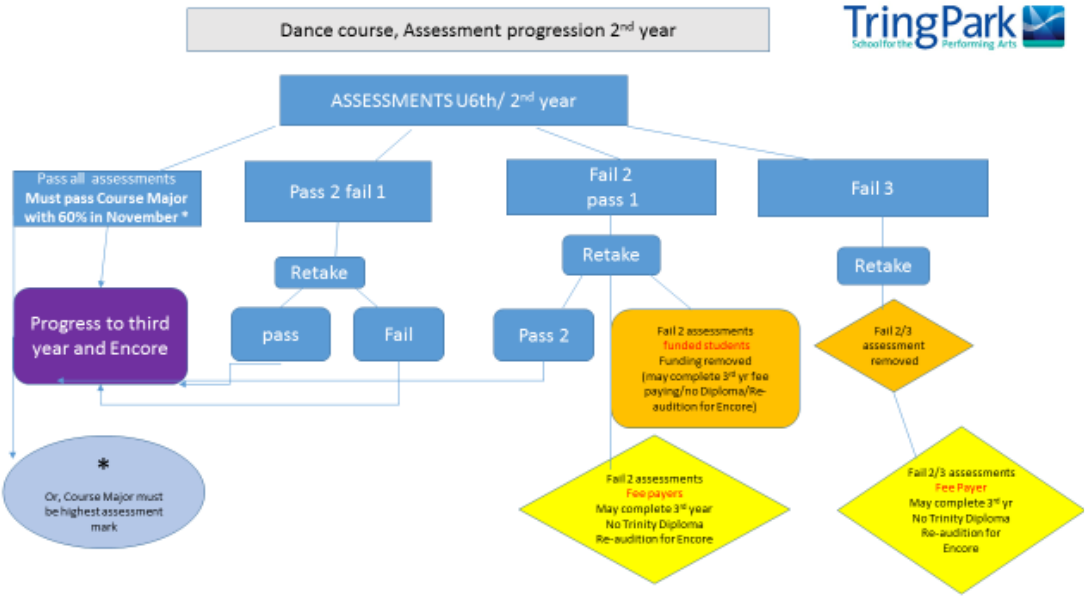
Students are assessed twice a year in core genres.

If two out of three technical assessments are not passed at the end of the first year, or second year, the school will withdraw the award for the following year. This is because the award is intended for those who have the potential to be professional dancers and failing two assessments puts that into question. Trinity Examinations will not pass a candidate who has failed assessments or failed to complete their Integrated Professional Studies.

It may be that assessment marks are below the expected level for someone on this award; work ethic, or performance levels, fall short of what is required for this award; or there is a lack of natural resilience for the demands of training. The removal of a Dance and Drama award is discussed by the entire dance faculty based on evidence from teachers, assessments and reports on effort from all areas of the school. Recommendations are made to the Principal and the School will send a letter to the parents inviting them in for a discussion. Parents may have already been alerted about concerns from teachers' feedback in consultations and in reports.

Parents will meet with the Director of the Dance Course, Artistic Director and the Director of Studies who will outline those areas for concern and a date by which time the final decisions will be made. This is normally at the end of the second set of assessment marks in the spring term).

Removal of a Dance and Drama award does not mean that the student must leave the school. If alternative funding can be found the student will retain their place at the school.

A diagram representing assessment and funding decisions is shown below.

In all matters related to the awarding and removing of funding the Principal makes the final decisions, after consultation with relevant staff.