

# Dance Awards & Grade Work

## Celebrating Progress Together



At Oris, we believe progress should feel joyful. That's why we're reframing "exams" as awards or grade work - because you're not being tested; you're being recognised for your commitment, growth, and hard work.

### Why We Do Awards/Grade Work

- **Team Spirit:** When everyone takes part, it builds class unity - we cheer each other on and grow together.
- **Confidence Building:** Showing what you've learned is empowering. It's not about perfection; it's about progress.
- **Clear Progression:** Awards help move dancers through levels and styles, keeping classes exciting and helping everyone learn new skills at the right pace.
- **New Skills:** Each grade teaches new skills and those skills form the basis of our annual performance each year.
- **Recognition:** Think of it like a birthday for your dancing - a milestone to celebrate!

### What We Want it to Feel Like

- **Supportive, not stressful:** We prepare together and make sure dancers feel ready.
- **Encouraging feedback:** Dancers may receive helpful pointers to fuel the next stage of growth - and that's a good thing!

### If You're Feeling Unsure

Nerves are normal with dance. But rest assured teachers have been trained to understand what level of dance skills a student can cope with – we will never put a student in for an award we think they may fail. If you're anxious, unsure about expectations, or have questions about logistics or cost, please talk to us - we'll do our best to find a solution that works.

### Progression & Participation Guidelines

- **Terminology:** We'll refer to "exams" as awards or grade work in class as we want to keep the focus on celebration and progress.
- **Sequential Grades (Grade 6+):** For higher grades (above Grade 5), progression must be sequential in line with ADA rules. Missing a required award may mean:
  - pausing your award journey at that level, or



- transferring to a different class to enable you to take the missed grade with that class when it is their turn to take that grade.
- **Grades 1–5:** Missing an award below Grade 6 doesn't automatically stop progression. However, moving on to the next grade is on a case-by-case basis, at the teacher's discretion based on a number of factors including readiness, confidence, and whether the dancer can comfortably cope with the demands of the next grade.
- **Class Placement:** We aim to keep friends and age groups together, but placement will always reflect what best supports each dancer's progress and wellbeing for grade work (and show work).
- **Absences:** We encourage all dancers to attend as many of their classes as possible and we understand that scheduling conflicts can occur. However, if a dancer misses multiple classes in the half term prior to the awards day, teachers may need to consider, on a case-by-case basis, if that dancer can be entered for the award.

## Scheduling & The Day Itself

- **Timings:** Much of the schedule is determined by ADA guidance and the examiner's format on the day.
- **Requests:** If you know in advance that certain times are difficult, please tell us as early as possible and we'll try our best to help - though we can't guarantee specific slots.
- **Flexibility:** The examiner manages the flow on the day, so a little flexibility from everyone is much appreciated.

## In Summary...

### Taking part helps our dancers:

- Celebrate progress
- Grow skills and confidence
- Support their team/fellow classmates (we're all in this together. It may feel uncomfortable but we're going to support one another...and then celebrate together)
- Keep improving and moving forward through the grades

We're committed to ensuring that everyone, regardless of background, ability, or circumstance, feels equally valued. We will always work with our dancers (and their families) to find a path that maintains their progress and confidence in their dance journey. We're proud of every dancer who steps up - whether it's your first award or your tenth. Let's keep building upon the Oris Dance family, where everyone feels included, supported, and celebrated.

