



**IDTA**

**DANCE  
INTERNATIONAL  
MAGAZINE**

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## Practice-Based Awards

Recognising and celebrating the achievements of those with special educational needs, disabilities and medical conditions.

The IDTA launched the Practice-Based Awards for the Ballroom branch on 1st September 2025. This is the first syllabus within the association created specifically to support individuals with additional needs.

### What are the Practice-Based Awards?

The Practice-Based Awards are examinations that can be taken by candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or medical conditions. They follow the same structure as our IDTA Dance Award system starting from One Dance through to International Certificate but are assessed differently to allow the candidates to achieve within their own capability.

### Who are the Practice-Based Awards for?

For candidates with special educational needs, disability or medical conditions and for whom no reasonable adjustment will assist the candidate in enabling them to reach the criteria for an IDTA Dance Award examinations.

### How are the Practice-Based Awards assessed?

The Practice-Based Awards are assessed in two ways. Firstly, through continuous formative assessment. An IDTA qualified teacher will assess the candidates progress in class in the genre of dance they are studying. The teacher will fill out a tick-based report form and comment on the progress of the candidate. On exam day the examiner will then assess the candidates overall performance reflecting on the translation of the syllabus technique within the capabilities of the candidate, the expression and interpretation of the music and performance skill. The examiner will then grade the candidate successful or unsuccessful.

### Can candidates with special educational needs, medical conditions or disabilities still take Rosettes, Junior Dance Awards and Social Dance Awards?

Yes, absolutely. Students with additional needs can still take all of the current ranges of examinations the IDTA offers. The Practice-Based Awards are an additional route that is now available. Teachers are to enter students for the exam that they believe is most suitable for their student.

### Can a candidate start on the IDTA Dance Award system and then move across to Practice-Based Awards if they begin to find it difficult to meet the criteria of the IDTA Dance Awards?

Yes, they can. Candidates may start on the IDTA Dance Awards system and then move across at the same level on the Practice-Based Awards.

### How do I decide which exam is most suitable?

Factors you need to consider are age, syllabus/grade criteria and the students own capability.



Do I still need to complete a reasonable adjustment form?

Yes, you still complete a reasonable adjustment form. This ensures the examiner is aware of the candidate's additional needs and allows you to request any specific support your candidate requires, such as extra time during the exam.

## What subjects can students be entered in for?

Ballroom branch subjects – Ballroom, Latin, Classical Sequence, Freestyle, Modern Sequence, Musical Theatre, Street Dance, Line Dance, Rock 'n' Roll and Cheer.

## What do the exam reports look like?

The examination reports follow the familiar format of our IDTA Dance Award forms with the addition of three tick-based questions and a teacher comment section:

1. Has the candidate attended a regular course of instruction? **YES/NO**
2. Has the candidate engaged with the work? **YES/NO**
3. Has the candidate achieved and improved, working within their own capability? **YES/NO**

These tick-based questions are completed by an IDTA qualified teacher, who will also provide written feedback in the teacher's comment box.

On the exam day, the examiner will review the completed questions and the teacher's comment. After watching the candidate perform their dances, the examiner will add their own feedback in the examiner's comment box and assess the result as either successful or unsuccessful.

**IDTA** INTERNATIONAL DANCE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Candidate's ID: Age, Male/Female, Branch Code, Grade Code, IDTA Pin, Date of last test

First Name, Surname, School, Date of Test

**PRACTICE-BASED AWARD** (For official use only)

**EXAMINER'S REPORT**

1. Has the candidate attended a regular course of instruction? YES NO

2. Has the candidate engaged with the work? YES NO

3. Has the candidate achieved and improved, working within their own capacity? YES NO

**TEACHER COMMENT**

**EXAMINER COMMENT**

Achieved Not Achieved

Examiner: IDTA Ltd, International House, 76 Bennett Road, Brighton, BN1 5UL. www.idta.co.uk (Jan 2009)

## What kind of feedback should the teacher write in the comment box?

The feedback should be constructive and encouraging. Examples of comments:

*Adam has been able to adapt the dances by using expressive arm movement to show rhythm. His progress has been good and he engages well with the work.*

*Eve has shown improvement from the last dance award by attending regularly, being enthusiastic in the class, and contributing ideas to adapt movement.*

## What do the medals and certificates look like?

The medals are identical to those awarded for the corresponding grade in the IDTA Dance Award system, with one small distinction: the engraving plate reads 'Practice Based'. Similarly, the certificates follow the same design as the standard ones, with the addition of 'Practice-Based Award' printed on them.

## What makes the Practice-Based Awards an important and exciting addition to the IDTA's range of examinations?

The Practice-Based Awards allow students with additional needs the opportunity to achieve alongside their peers. By creating a new award system based on our existing IDTA Dance Award system it promotes inclusion by focusing on the candidates progress and individual achievements rather than emphasising differences.

## Who can I contact for advice and information about the Practice-Based Awards?

Please email Katy or Lynn for advice and information.

Katy: katynorth.danceacademy@gmail.com

Lynn: l.armsby@idta.co.uk

## Practice-Based Awards in action

In December 2025, I entered students for the new Practice-Based Awards for the very first time. It was an exciting moment to be able to extend our inclusive practice in class to a more inclusive experience in our exam sessions too. To prepare, I submitted my reasonable adjustment forms along with my exam request to head office and observed and assessed my students' progress in class. A week before the exam session I ensured all report forms were completed and ready.

On exam day, I began with students taking Practice-Based Awards who required extra time. Later in the session, I had students taking the Practice-Based Awards dancing alongside their peers taking the equivalent IDTA Dance Award exams. This allowed friends to dance together, performing the same routine, while each achieved success within their own system – one in Practice-Based Award One Dance Green and the other in IDTA Dance Award One Dance Green.

The week that commenced after the exam session I handed out the report forms to my students, and we celebrated their achievements together. Many of them had previously taken part in Rosette, Junior Dance Award and Social Dance Award exams which meant this was the first time they were receiving written feedback from the examiner despite many of them dancing for over 10 years.

In January 2026, we presented the Practice-Based Awards to our students, alongside all the other Rosettes, medals and trophies from our exam session. It was an incredibly special moment to see my student's progress and accomplishments recognised alongside their peers. They were thrilled with their awards, and it reminded me how fortunate I am to be part of an association that is both forward thinking and inclusive. I am proud to be an IDTA teacher.

**Katy North**

