



# Specification

## Solo Seal

This Specification is valid from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016 (or until further notice)

The Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) is an international teacher education and awarding organisation for dance. Established in 1920 as the Association of Operatic Dancing of Great Britain, it was granted a Royal Charter in 1936 and renamed the Royal Academy of Dancing. In 1999 it became the Royal Academy of Dance.

## **Vision**

Leading the world in dance education and training, the Royal Academy of Dance is recognised internationally for the highest standards of teaching and learning. As the professional membership body for dance teachers it inspires and empowers dance teachers and students, members, and staff to make innovative, artistic and lasting contributions to dance and dance education throughout the world.

## **Mission**

To promote and enhance knowledge, understanding and practice of dance internationally by educating and training teachers and students and by providing examinations to reward achievement, so preserving the rich, artistic and educational value of dance for future generations.

## **We will**

- communicate openly
- collaborate within and beyond the organisation
- act with integrity and professionalism
- deliver quality and excellence
- celebrate diversity and work inclusively
- act as advocates for dance

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This Specification should be read in conjunction with the document:

*Examinations Information, Rules and Regulations*

available from [www.rad.org.uk](http://www.rad.org.uk)

# I Introduction and aims

## I.1 Introduction

- I.1.1 The Solo Seal Award was introduced in 1928 as an additional examination for students who had achieved the Advanced Certificate. Today, the Solo Seal is the highest vocational graded examination of the Royal Academy of Dance, focusing on solo performance.
- I.1.2 Candidates are required to perform three contrasting variations, which have been selected to meet the stylistic and technical demands of today's choreographers and directors.
- I.1.3 The Solo Seal takes place in front of an invited audience and panel of judges, which normally consists of an RAD examiner and professional dancer, former dancer, director and/or ballet master/mistress from a ballet company, approved by the Artistic Director of the Academy.
- I.1.4 The Solo Seal Award is placed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RQF) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland at Level 5.

## I.2 Objectives

- I.2.1 The knowledge and skills gained through successful completion of this qualification are commensurate with those required of a dancer embarking on a professional career.
- I.2.2 Graded examinations, solo performance awards, and vocational graded examinations in dance are progressive structured assessments which ultimately lead to recognised achievement at a high level in dance performance. The higher level qualifications are accepted as benchmarks of achievement by vocational schools, attended by most young dancers intending to enter the profession. They are also taken into account by universities and other HE institutions offering degree courses and programmes in dance and dance teacher education (such as the RAD itself). Such qualifications also aid progression to workplace opportunities such as: professional dancer, professional dance teacher, professional choreographer, professional dance notator, professional dance historian, lecturer in dance, and facilitator in community dance.
- I.2.2 Achievement in dance contributes to the development of a range of competencies and life skills, such as motor control, health and safety awareness, self-expression, physical fitness and stamina, discipline, mental ability and confidence.

## I.3 Further information

- I.3.1 Further information about RAD examinations can be found in the document *Examinations Information, Rules and Regulations*, available from [www.rad.org.uk](http://www.rad.org.uk)

## 2 Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

- 2.1 The learning outcomes and assessment criteria set out in 2.2 below are taken from the unit against which the qualification is mapped on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. For more information, see *Examinations Information, Rules and Regulations*, Section 2.

*Learning outcomes* describe what a learner should know, understand or be able to do on completion of a learning process, defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

*Assessment criteria* specify the standard a learner is expected to meet in order to demonstrate that the learning outcomes have been achieved.

### 2.2 Solo Seal

Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner can:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>apply and demonstrate a thorough and in-depth understanding of the technique and vocabulary of ballet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>apply and demonstrate, through solo performance in front of an audience, a thorough and detailed knowledge and in-depth understanding of the mechanics and purpose of the required vocabulary</li> <li>demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the contrasting styles of 19th, 20th and 21st century solo variations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform a range of highly complex and physically demanding variations showing consistently well developed and established technical skills in ballet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate high-level and complex technical skills showing appropriate physical awareness, strength and stamina</li> <li>demonstrate a highly disciplined, mature, confident and professional approach in a range of high level technical skills including               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>spatial awareness</li> <li>control</li> <li>co-ordination</li> <li>contrasting dynamic values</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform a range of complex variations, showing a highly developed and in-depth understanding of musicality in ballet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate an in-depth and mature understanding of a highly complex range of timings, rhythms and accents</li> <li>demonstrate a highly developed, mature and in-depth understanding of musical interpretation within a range of contrasting variations including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rhythm</li> <li>phrasing</li> <li>dynamics</li> <li>atmosphere</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

/ cont.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apply and demonstrate with assurance a mature, appropriate and highly developed range of performance skills in ballet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate the ability to engage with an audience in a mature, appropriate and highly professional manner</li> <li>• demonstrate a highly developed approach to and understanding of the many subtleties of performance appropriate to the era and choreography of both the set and selected solo variations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) expression</li> <li>b) communication</li> <li>c) projection</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate accuracy of choreography</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate accurate choreography according to the Royal Academy of Dance DVD and Benesh Movement Notation</li> </ul>

2.3 In all variations candidates are assessed on the following:

### **Technique**

- correct posture, weight placement and use of turnout
- ability to show control and varied qualities performed with ease
- co-ordination of the whole body, through the harmonious relationship of torso, limbs, head and eye focus in movement
- spatial awareness
- contrasting dynamic values
- refined range of lines
- use of épaulement
- secure co-ordinated turning action
- clearly articulated footwork
- appropriate range of elevation
- secure, assured movements en pointe (female candidates only).

### **Music**

- correct timing and rhythmical accuracy
- appropriate response to phrasing, contrasting dynamics and atmosphere.

### **Performance**

- expression and interpretation appropriate to era and choreography of set and selected variations
- communication and projection.

### **Accuracy of choreography**

- accuracy of choreography in relation to the Royal Academy of Dance Solo Seal DVD and Benesh Movement Notation.

### 3 Syllabus content

#### 3.1 General

3.1.1 Candidates are required to prepare three variations as listed below:

- Set variation (20th century)
- A choice of one variation from the 21st century
- A choice of one variation from the classical repertoire (19th century)

Female	Male
<b>Set variation</b>	
<i>Genée Port de Bras</i>	<i>Largo</i>
<b>21st century</b>	
<i>Caprice</i>	<i>La Vision</i>
<i>Tread Lightly</i>	<i>Formal Allusion</i>
<i>Dance a Little Faster</i>	<i>Art of Flying</i>
<b>Classical repertoire</b>	
<i>La Bayadère 1</i>	<i>Don Quixote</i>
<i>La Bayadère 2</i>	<i>Coppélia</i>
<i>La Bayadère 3</i>	<i>Swan Lake 1</i>
<i>Raymonda 1</i>	<i>Swan Lake 2</i>
<i>Raymonda 2</i>	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i>
<i>Raymonda 3</i>	<i>Le Corsaire</i>
<i>Raymonda 4</i>	<i>Raymonda</i>

*The Royal Academy of Dance wishes to thank the Rudolf Nureyev Foundation for permission for the use of Rudolf Nureyev's choreography for 'La Bayadère' and 'Raymonda'.*

3.1.2 The three chosen variations are performed in the following order:

- *Genée Port de Bras / Largo*
- 21st century
- Classical repertoire

3.1.3 A simple *révérence* should be performed after the classical repertoire variation.

3.1.4 Benesh Movement Notation scores of the set variations are published in the *Solo Seal* book (see Section 6 below - *Resources*) which includes a DVD and may be purchased from [www.radenterprises.co.uk](http://www.radenterprises.co.uk)

3.1.5 For more information about preparation, requirements and procedure, see *Examinations Information, Rules and Regulations*, Sections 4 and 5.

## 3.2 Further information on the variations

### 3.2.1 Names and titles

Naming the 19th variations is problematic: it is well known that variations tend to move from place to place not just within a single ballet, but also from ballet to ballet, like 'suitcase arias' in opera. The published musical score of a ballet may never be played in that order in a performance. For example, the variation known almost everywhere as the 'Swan Lake Act III' variation for Siegfried is located, in the original 1877 score, in Act I. Similarly, Jean de Brienne's solo from what is often advertised as 'Raymonda Act III' - itself a one act ballet - is found in Act II in the musical score.

The variations in the Solo Seal are fixed versions of a fluid concept for a particular purpose. That being the case, for ease of use and reference, short names such as 'Raymonda 1' or 'Swan Lake 2' have been given to each of the variations, which correspond to those used in the Benesh Movement Notation and on the DVD. These are used to identify the variation quickly within the context of the book and the Award itself. They are not the original titles of the variations.

For the sake of interest and correspondence with other musical materials, we have included further information, where possible. For example, the Act and Scene numbers are given for the Tchaikovsky and Glazunov ballets. It is recommended, however, that the short names are used in the studio, to ensure that teacher, dancer and musician are talking about the same piece.

### 3.2.2 Female variations

No.	Title	Music
F1	<i>Genée port de bras</i>	Ann Hogben
F2	<i>Caprice</i> (Hampson, 2003)	<i>Pasquinade Caprice</i> , Op. 59 by Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869)
F3	<i>Tread Lightly</i> (Dowson, 2004)	Adapted from Sonata in E flat, Op. 1 No. 1, 2nd Movt.: Rondo by John Field (1782-1837) edited by Christopher Kite & Timothy Roberts, published by Stainer & Bell Ltd
F4	<i>Dance a Little Faster</i> (Ng, 2006)	"Love Is..." from <i>The Good Person of Szechuan</i> by Leon Ko
F5	<i>La Bayadère 1</i> <i>La Bayadère Kingdom of the Shades, 1st Variation</i>	From <i>La Bayadère</i> (1877) by Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917)
F6	<i>La Bayadère 2</i> <i>La Bayadère Kingdom of the Shades, 2nd Variation</i>	From <i>La Bayadère</i> (1877) by Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917)
F7	<i>La Bayadère 3</i> <i>La Bayadère Kingdom of the Shades, 3rd Variation</i>	From <i>La Bayadère</i> (1877) by Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917)
F8	<i>Raymonda 1</i> <i>Raymonda Act I, Scene II, No. 14: Grand pas d'action, Variation I</i>	From <i>Raymonda</i> (1898) by Aleksandr Glazunov (1865 – 1936)



F9	<i>Raymonda</i> 2 <i>Raymonda</i> Act I, Scene II, No. 14: Grand pas d'action, Variation II	From <i>Raymonda</i> (1898) by Aleksandr Glazunov (1865 – 1936)
F10	<i>Raymonda</i> 3 <i>Raymonda</i> Act II, Grand pas d'action, Variation III	From <i>Raymonda</i> (1898) by Aleksandr Glazunov (1865 – 1936)
F11	<i>Raymonda</i> 4 <i>Raymonda</i> Act III, Grand pas Hongrois, Variation I	From <i>Raymonda</i> (1898) by Aleksandr Glazunov (1865 – 1936)

### 3.2.3 Male variations

No.	Title	Music
M1	<i>Largo</i>	2nd movement from Concerto in F minor for Harpsichord and Orchestra BWV1056 by J.S. Bach (1685-1750), adapted and arranged for piano solo by Harold Craxton. Publisher: Oxford University Press
M2	<i>La Vision</i> (Hampson, 2003)	<i>Esquisses</i> Op. 63 No. 1: <i>La Vision</i> by Charles-Valentin Alkan (1813-1888)
M3	<i>Formal Allusion</i> (Dowson, 2004)	Sonata Op. 1 No. 2 in A major, 2nd Movement: <i>Allegro vivace</i> by John Field (1782-1837) edited by Christopher Kite & Timothy Roberts, published by Stainer & Bell Ltd
M4	<i>The Art of Flying</i> (Ng, 2006)	<i>The Art of Flying</i> from <i>The Good Person of Szechuan</i> by Leon Ko. Publisher: Oknoel Music Ltd administered by Music Nation Publishing Co Ltd
M5	<i>Don Quixote</i> <i>Don Quixote</i> Act III/Vpas de deux: Male variation	From <i>Don Quixote</i> (1869) by Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917)
M6	<i>Coppélia</i> <i>Coppélia</i> Act III: Franz's variation	<i>Coppélia</i> Act III Scene VI: 'La discorde et la Guerre' - Marche des guerrières by Léo Delibes (1836-1891)
M7	<i>Swan Lake</i> 1 <i>Swan Lake</i> pas de trois	From <i>Swan Lake</i> Act I No 4, Pas de Trois, Male Variation
M8	<i>Swan Lake</i> 2 <i>Swan Lake</i> : Siegfried's variation from 'Black Swan pas de deux'	From <i>Swan Lake</i> (1877) Act I No. 5 (b): Pas de deux
M9	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i> Prince Desiré's variation from Act III pas de deux	From <i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> Act III No. 28 Variation I (1890) by Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
M10	<i>Le Corsaire</i> From <i>Le Corsaire</i> pas de deux	From <i>Le Corsaire</i> pas de deux by Riccardo Drigo
M11	<i>Raymonda</i> Interpolated 'Jean de Brienne' variation from Grand pas Hongrois Act III	From <i>Raymonda</i> (1898) by Aleksandr Glazunov (1865-1936) Act II No. 21 (b) Grand pas de deux, male variation

### 3.3 Tempo and timing in the classical repertoire variations

Since many of the 19th century variations are in part vehicles for a display of virtuosity, tempo in these cases is greatly influenced by the particular technical strengths and physical attributes of individual dancers. It is virtually impossible to establish anything like a historically 'correct' or 'authentic' tempo, and the tempos exhibited on the Solo Seal DVD are largely unique and personal to the individual performers.

Nonetheless, tempo is also a key factor in the artistic interpretation of a variation, and the overall effects of choosing one tempo over another should be carefully considered. For example, to speed up or slow down one section for the sake of comfort or showing a particular step to better advantage may have a negative effect on the overall impact and flow of the variation. If a tempo is too sluggish or too fast, it may detract from the audience's enjoyment of the dance as a whole, regardless of how excellent the dancer's movement may be.

For this reason, it is important for dancers at this level to work with live accompaniment, so that they can explore the impact of different tempi and interpretations, as well as enjoying sympathetic and supportive accompaniment at an individually appropriate tempo.

## 4 Marking, awarding and reporting

### 4.1 Overview of the markscheme

- 4.1.1 The learning outcomes and assessment criteria detailed in Section 2 are differentiated across the examination via four related assessment areas - technique, music, performance and accuracy of choreography.
- 4.1.2 Technique, music, performance and accuracy of choreography are assessed via the markscheme outlined in section 4.3 below.
- 4.1.3 In the examination, the examiner awards a mark of between 0 and 10 for each component mark. A mark of 1 or higher signifies the standard attained by the candidate with respect to that component. A mark of 0 signifies that no work was shown for the section of the exam relating to that component. The table in Section 4.2 below explains the standard which the candidate needs to demonstrate, in relation to the elements contained within each component, in order to achieve these marks.

### 4.2 Attainment descriptors

- 4.2.1 The descriptors below are used for all components:

Mark	Descriptor
0	No work was shown
1	The candidate showed an <b>extremely limited</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed
2	The candidate showed a <b>very limited</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed
3	The candidate showed a <b>limited</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed
4	The candidate showed an <b>adequate</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed
5	The candidate showed a <b>fair</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed
6	The candidate showed a <b>fairly good</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed
7	The candidate showed a <b>good</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed
8	The candidate showed a <b>very good</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed
9	The candidate showed an <b>excellent</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed
10	The candidate showed an <b>exceptional</b> ability to achieve the elements assessed

### 4.3 Solo Seal: Markscheme

Examination content	Marks
<b>VARIATION 1</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct posture and weight placement</li> <li>• Control and turnout</li> <li>• Co-ordination</li> <li>• Line</li> <li>• Spatial awareness</li> <li>• Dynamic values</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Performance</li> <li>• Syllabus accuracy</li> </ul>	10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10
<b>VARIATION 2</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct posture and weight placement</li> <li>• Control and turnout</li> <li>• Co-ordination</li> <li>• Line</li> <li>• Spatial awareness</li> <li>• Dynamic values</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Performance</li> <li>• Syllabus accuracy</li> </ul>	10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10
<b>VARIATION 3</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct posture and weight placement</li> <li>• Control and turnout</li> <li>• Co-ordination</li> <li>• Line</li> <li>• Spatial awareness</li> <li>• Dynamic values</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Performance</li> <li>• Syllabus accuracy</li> </ul>	10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10

#### 4.4 Awards

4.4.1 The Solo Seal is either awarded or not awarded. There is no grading within an award.

<b>Awarded</b>	Throughout the three variations, the candidate consistently demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a high level of technical accomplishment</li><li>• an innate response to music</li><li>• the ability to perform varied styles with ease and contrasting interpretation</li></ul>
<b>Not awarded</b>	The candidate has not achieved the level of technique, music, performance and accuracy of choreography required

4.4.2 To attain the Solo Seal the candidate must achieve a minimum of 8 for each component mark.

#### 4.5 Results and certificates

4.5.1 Successful candidates will receive a certificate, and will have their names published in *Focus on Exams*.

## 5 Resources

### 5.1 Benesh notation and DVD

Code	Description
100SSA	Printed book: Benesh Movement Notation for Solo Seal variations, including DVD which shows performances of the variations by professional dancers, and exclusive footage of coaching sessions with the choreographers of the 21st century Variations

### 5.2 Music

5.2.1 The music must be played 'live' by a pianist. The candidates can bring their own pianist, or a pianist can be provided by the RAD, for which there is a charge.

5.2.2 Music resources are available as follows:

Code	Description
200SSA	Printed music book: music to accompany the variations

### 5.3 Uniform

For more information about uniform, please see *Examinations Information, Rules and Regulations*, Section 5.5.

FEMALE	MALE
<p><b>Port de bras</b> Any colour sleeveless leotard with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• soft chiffon circular (mid-calf length) skirt in matching or toning colour to the leotard</li> <li>• soft chiffon wrap around (mid-calf length) skirt in similar matching or toning colour to the leotard</li> </ul> <p><b>21st century variation</b> Any colour sleeveless leotard with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• soft short chiffon wrap around skirt in matching or toning colour to the leotard</li> </ul> <p><b>Classical repertoire variation</b> Any colour sleeveless leotard with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tutu skirt in a colour matching or toning with the leotard</li> </ul> <p>Pink tights should be worn for all variations Pointe shoes should be worn for all variations Split sole shoes are permitted</p>	<p><b>Largo and classical repertoire variation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any colour leotard or short sleeved t-shirt worn inside tights</li> <li>• Any colour tights and socks</li> <li>• Any colour unitard</li> <li>• Black or white ballet shoes</li> </ul> <p><b>21st century variation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any colour leotard or short sleeved t-shirt</li> <li>• Any colour <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> or full length tights</li> <li>• Any colour unitard</li> <li>• Black, white or flesh colour ballet shoes</li> </ul>

## 5.4 Outlets and stockists

### 5.4.1 The printed book / DVD and music book are available from:

Royal Academy of Dance Enterprises Ltd  
[www.radenterprises.co.uk](http://www.radenterprises.co.uk)

36 Battersea Square  
London SW11 3RA  
Tel 0207 326 8080  
Fax 020 7228 628  
online, by post or in person

and other Academy branch outlets.

### 5.4.2 RAD uniform is available to Registered Teachers through the RADE Uniform Direct promotion from:

Freed of London  
<http://www.radefreed.com>

62-64 Well Street  
London E9 7PX  
Freephone 0800 975 5981 (UK)  
Tel 020 8510 4700  
Fax 020 8510 4750  
online, by post or in person

and other stockists.