# HSC Dance – Rationale guide

The rationale for core composition, major study Composition and major study Dance and Technology all have a limit of 300 words. The rationale assists examiners in understanding the student’s concept/intent and process they have used to develop the composition and is used as the basis of the elaboration. Students need to be selective about the information in their rationale and include key information regarding each area of study. The skill in writing a good rationale is to be succinct, clear and direct about the process. This rationale guide is one approach students could take to writing the rationale.

Table 1 – HSC Dance rationale guide

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| Suggested structure | Guiding questions | Sample response |
| An introduction that clearly explains the overall concept/intent of the dance/work. | * What is your stimulus? * In one sentence, what is your concept/intent? * How is the dance/work structured to support the communication of this concept/intent? * Briefly describe your motif. How does it relate to your concept/intent? * How many dancers have you used to portray your concept/intent? (major study only) * Where is your film set? (major study film and video only) | Derived from the ideational stimulus of Lady Macbeth, my core composition explores the feelings of desire for power and regrets about the cost of obtaining that power. The formal structure is binary. Section A represents desire and Section B explores the feeling of regret. The motif is rubbing the hands together. This turns into swiping movements across the body and further progresses to slashing movements. |
| A series of paragraphs explaining significant movement choices in each section of the dance/work, using dance language, that helps to communicate the concept/intent. | * How did you improvise? What movements did you start with (literal)? * How did you use abstraction or make literal movements symbolic? * How did you manipulate your motif to create phrases? * What aspects of space, time and dynamics did you select? How did they support the communication of your concept/intent? * How did your motif develop throughout the sections? * How did you select appropriate movements? * What film and editing techniques did you select? How did they support the communication of your concept/intent? (major study film and video only) | In Section A, the dancer travels on a diagonal floor pattern to the front corner. This active space represents the position of power. All movements and the dancer’s gaze are directed to this space. The motif of rubbing the hands together/swiping motions represent a desire for power. High levels, a sustained dynamic and slow tempo motif manipulations are used to further portray desire and longing. The accompaniment complements the movement’s slow tempo. A low exertion of force controls the sustained dynamic, emphasising the intense desire for power.  In Section B, the motif develops to slashing movement, demonstrating the regret felt after realising what was done to achieve the position of power. The dancer travels back on the diagonal to where they started. Motif manipulations include medium to low levels and swinging, percussive dynamics, using a higher exertion of force to represent this regret taking over. Movement and accompaniment contrasts to Section A as it builds in tempo and is accented to symbolise regret and guilt. |
| A closing paragraph including any other relevant information that supports the realisation of the concept/intent. | * Are there key ways you have organised the dance/work to communicate the concept/intent such as sequencing, repetition, transitions, variation and contrast formal structures or unity? * How did the accompaniment support the interpretation of the concept/intent? * Explain how the props/costumes/setting support the interpretation of the concept/intent (major study only). * Describe the relationship between the dancers. Explain how this develops to communicate the concept/intent (major study only). | The transition occurs in the downstage right corner representing the gaining of power. Literal movement of wiping the hands gesturing ‘it’s done’ and a look back to see the aftermath of the journey to power is performed. There is then a clear change in the accompaniment and the elements of dance to initiate Section B. |

## Sample rationale for core composition

Derived from the ideational stimulus of Lady Macbeth, my core composition explores the feelings of desire for power and regrets about the cost of obtaining that power. The formal structure is binary. Section A represents desire and Section B explores the feeling of regret. The motif is rubbing the hands together. This turns into swiping movements across the body and further progresses to slashing movements.

In Section A, the dancer travels on a diagonal floor pattern to the front corner. This active space represents the position of power. All movements and the dancer’s gaze are directed to this space. The motif of rubbing the hands together/swiping motions represent a desire for power. High levels, a sustained dynamic and slow tempo motif manipulations are used to further portray desire and longing. The accompaniment complements the movement’s slow tempo. A low exertion of force controls the sustained dynamic, emphasising the intense desire for power.

In Section B, the motif develops to slashing movement, demonstrating the regret felt after realising what was done to achieve the position of power. The dancer travels back on the diagonal to where they started. Motif manipulations include medium to low levels and swinging, percussive dynamics, using a higher exertion of force to represent this regret taking over. Movement and accompaniment contrasts to Section A as it builds in tempo and is accented to symbolise regret and guilt.

The transition occurs in the downstage right corner representing the gaining of power. Literal movement of wiping the hands gesturing ‘it’s done’ and a look back to see the aftermath of the journey to power is performed. There is then a clear change in the accompaniment and the elements of dance to initiate Section B.

Word count: 285

## Sample rationale for major study composition

The concept of my major study composition investigates how the consequences of a phone addiction impact a relationship. I generated my motif through improvisation based on the kinaesthetic stimuli of using a smart phone. This was abstracted into swiping and vibratory, tapping movements. The 3 sections of my work make a narrative structure.

In Section A, the movement for dancer 1 and dancer 2 is contrasted to show their different reliance on technology. Dancer 1 performs high energy, strong and percussive manipulations of the tapping motif. Dancer 2 performs the same motif with light energy and sustained movement variations. The transition begins with dancer 1 teaching dancer 2 to use the phone, where dancer 2 mirrors their movement quality through cannons and a build in the energy and tempo.

Section B explores the newly developed, aggressive phone addiction for dancer 2, symbolised by using low-level, restricted movement. Dancer 1 battles this addiction through partner work which supports the now sluggish, collapsing movement from dancer 2. The transition is established with contrast for dancer 1 with the movement motifs performed at a medium to high level and the performance space explored openly, suggesting a sense of freedom and a breakdown in the relationship.

Section C sees dancer 1 break the phone addiction for dancer 2. This is achieved by a re-establishment of the relationship between the 2 dancers through the design in space and a series of phrases forcing dancer 2 away from the ‘phone’. The tapping motif is replaced with the swiping motif, representing calm and letting go. This is developed through open, curved shapes and a free exploration of the space for both performers.

The work concludes with the 2 dancers collapsing in an embrace before dancer 2 suddenly breaks this personal space by looking at the phone.

Word count: 299

## Sample rationale for major study Dance and Technology – Film and video

The intention of my film was developed through an ideational stimulus of the 6 degrees of separation and visual stimuli of lines connecting people. Three sections create the narrative structure and explore the idea that all people are 6 or fewer social connections away from each other, although the thread that connects us may be distant or entangled. The prop of the green elastic represents these social connections.

Section A – Connecting, uses motifs of reaching movements and 2 dancers pulling towards each other to explore ideas of connection. Large linear shapes, suspended dynamics and the prop connecting the dancers represent the unknown connection. Tracking and panning enhances the pulling motif, while close-ups highlight subtle gestures that enhance the dancers’ growing connection. The accompaniment becomes layered with increasing tempo, reflecting the impact of the forces.

Through low levels and angular shapes, Section B – Distance/entangling, explores the connection being challenged. The motifs include intertwining and 2 dancers pulling away from one another. The dancers are closely positioned and use the pulling motif in a ‘tug of war’ motion to demonstrate conflict and tenuous connection. Large open movements and stretching the prop represents distant relationships. Small dimensions and the elastic entangling the dancers shows they are still connected. The accompaniment intensifies and complements the short, sharp movements. Quick cuts and close-ups allow invasion and closeness to be portrayed.

Section C – Interconnected, explores the inseparable interconnection. Tracing and circular motifs communicate an ongoing web of connection. Panning and tracking shots complement this. The 2 dancers perform curved shapes and sustained dynamics to enhance the ongoing cycle before growing apart. The prop between them further demonstrates that, although they may be connected through the 6 degrees of separation, their relationship may be ambiguous. The accompaniment and editing techniques reflect the decreased tempo.

Word count: 297

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