



Student Evaluation Description & Definitions
For Reference on Student Evaluations

1. **Foot Line Flexibility**

Foot line flexibility refers to the ability of the foot and instep to fully articulate and create a continuous line from the leg through the ankle to the toes.

Limited foot and instep flexibility can affect several aspects of technique. A restricted foot line may cause the dancer to appear flat-footed when pointing, interrupting the visual line of the leg.

Insufficient flexibility in the instep may also make it difficult for the dancer to rise correctly onto pointe. When the foot cannot fully extend over the box of the shoe, the dancer may compensate through the toes or ankle, which can place excessive strain on the joints and increase the risk of tension or injury.

Developing both mobility and strength in the foot allows dancers to articulate through the floor with control, support proper alignment, rise onto pointe safely, and create a refined and continuous leg line.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing:**

Foot and instep flexibility are currently limited, restricting full articulation and line. Targeted stretching and resistance-based strengthening are needed to increase range of motion, arch support, and controlled articulation. Consistent Theraband work is to improve arch mobility, placement, and natural foot line

- **Improving:**

Shows steady improvement in arch articulation and foot placement, though flexibility and consistency are still developing. Consistent Theraband work is recommended to safely build strength and mobility.

- **Strong:**

Demonstrates well-developed arch articulation with consistent placement and control. The natural foot line is clearly defined and supported by coordinated foot strength, allowing for articulate, lengthened lines in both barre and centre work.

- **Advanced:**

Demonstrates a clearly articulated foot line with a naturally arched instep and refined, consistent control. The foot line is smooth and enhances the overall leg line in both barre and centre work.

2. **Foot Articulation & Strength**

Foot strength and articulation are essential for every aspect of ballet. This refers to the ability of the foot to move through the floor with control, engaging the toes, arch, and ankle in a coordinated and precise manner.

Strong and well-articulated feet allow dancers to push through the floor efficiently, absorb impact when landing from jumps, and maintain stability when rising onto demi-pointe or pointe. When foot strength and articulation are limited, movements may appear unclear or heavy, and the dancer may struggle to control transitions through the foot.

Developing strength and articulation in the foot improves clarity of movement, supports proper alignment, enhances musical precision, and contributes to overall technical control.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Foot articulation and strength are limited. Needs to work on clear use of toes, arches, and controlled movements in tendus, relevés, and basic exercises. Continued Theraband practice is recommended.

- **Improving**

Strength and articulation are improving, but control and precision are still developing. Continued Theraband work and focused practice will support further progress.

- **Strong**

Demonstrates strong, precise foot articulation with good control. Foot strength effectively supports both barre and centre work.

- **Advanced**

Demonstrates excellent foot strength and articulation, with stable and clearly articulated movements, consistent muscle engagement, and refined, controlled execution throughout all exercises.

3. Turnout – Hip Rotation, Alignment, and Control

Turnout is a foundational element of classical ballet. True turnout originates from the outward rotation of the hips while maintaining correct alignment through the knees, ankles, and feet. This rotation is generated by the muscles of the hips, glutes, inner thighs, and core rather than by forcing the feet.

Proper turnout supports the classical aesthetic of open, lengthened lines and allows dancers to execute movements such as jumps, turns, and directional changes with stability and control. When turnout is not supported by the hips and surrounding musculature, dancers may compensate by twisting through the knees or ankles, which can create tension, instability, and increased risk of injury.

Developing turnout requires both mobility in the hip joint and strength in the surrounding muscles to maintain rotation while moving. When correctly applied, turnout supports efficient movement, balanced placement, clear leg lines, and safe execution of both barre and centre work.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Turnout is limited or inconsistently applied. Needs to focus on engaging the hips, glutes, and core while maintaining alignment of knees, ankles, and feet during basic exercises.

- **Improving**

Turnout is becoming more consistent, though control and stability are still developing. The dancer is beginning to maintain hip rotation with improved alignment of the knees, ankles, and feet.

- **Strong**

Demonstrates consistent use of turnout with good control and alignment. Hip rotation is supported and maintained reliably in both barre and centre work.

- **Advanced**

Demonstrates well-controlled turnout that clearly originates from the hips and is consistently maintained throughout movements. Turnout is fully integrated into barre and centre work, including turns, jumps, and combinations, with strong alignment and stability.

4. **Core Strength & Placement**

Core strength refers to the engagement and coordination of the muscles that support the torso, including the abdominal muscles, lower back, and surrounding stabilizing muscles of the pelvis and spine. In ballet, these muscles help maintain posture, balance, and control throughout movement.

A stable and engaged core allows dancers to keep the spine and pelvis aligned while the arms and legs move freely. Core support is important for balance, turns, jumps, and smooth transitions between movements.

When core engagement is limited, dancers may lose alignment, appear unstable, or rely excessively on the legs or upper body for balance. Developing core stability supports better posture, control, and overall technical coordination in both barre and centre work.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Core engagement is still developing. Placement of the torso is not yet consistently maintained, which may affect posture, balance, and overall stability.

- **Improving**

Core engagement is still developing and is becoming more consistent, and increasingly supports posture and balance, though stability and control

- **Strong**

Demonstrates good core engagement that supports balance, alignment, and controlled movement in both barre and centre work.

- **Advanced**

Demonstrates very stable and consistent core support, maintaining strong alignment and control throughout exercises and combinations.

5. **Leg Extension – Ability to Lift and Sustain the Leg**

Leg extension refers to the ability to lift, control, and sustain the leg with correct alignment and placement. Good extension combines flexibility, strength, and core support, allowing dancers to create clean lines, maintain balance, and move safely during both barre and centre work.

Controlled extension is important not only for the aesthetics of movement, it also ensures that leg lifts are performed safely, with proper alignment through the hips, pelvis, and spine. Without proper control and placement, attempting high extensions can put excessive strain on the hips, lower back, or hamstrings.

Developing controlled extension improves leg strength, placement, alignment, and overall movement quality, supporting jumps, turns, and adagio movements safely and effectively.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Flexibility and leg extension are limited. Needs to work on stretching, strengthening, and controlled leg lifts to improve height, alignment, and smoothness. Movements may appear restricted or uneven, and maintaining stability on the supporting leg may be difficult.

- **Improving**

Extension is becoming more controlled, with greater alignment, stability, and smoother movement. Leg lifts are increasingly coordinated with the torso, though consistency and ease are still developing.

- **Strong**

Demonstrates good leg extension with controlled placement, alignment, and balance. Movements are smooth, supported by core engagement, and executed safely.

- **Advanced**

Demonstrates natural, strong leg extension with clear alignment, controlled placement, and smooth coordination with the torso and supporting leg. Leg lifts are performed with ease and continuity throughout movements

6. **Port de Bras – Arm Placement & Coordination**

Port de bras refers to the movement and placement of the arms in dance. Well-coordinated arm movements contribute to balance, support for jumps and turns, smooth adagio movements, and overall movement quality. The arms are supported by the muscles of the upper back and shoulders, allowing them to move fluidly while maintaining clear and controlled lines.

When arm coordination is still developing, movements may be less controlled, transitions between movements may be uneven, and balance or placement may be affected. Developing fluid and controlled port de bras helps dancers move with coordination, expressiveness, and stability throughout all movements.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Arm placement and coordination are still developing. Arm movements are not yet consistently coordinated with the body, and smooth transitions between movements are still emerging. Balance and placement may be affected at times.

- **Improving**

Port de bras is becoming more coordinated and fluid. Arm placement is clearer, and transitions are smoother, though control and consistency across movements are still developing.

- **Strong**

Demonstrates well-coordinated port de bras with controlled arm placement and smooth transitions. Arm movements consistently support balance, placement, and movement quality throughout barre and centre work.

- **Advanced**

Demonstrates refined and expressive port de bras with fluid, well-supported arm movements that enhance coordination, balance, and control, contributing to smooth adagio, turns, and jumps throughout all movements.

7. **Musicality & Rhythm**

Musicality is essential for all dancers. It is the ability to listen, understand, respond, and move with the music, coordinating arms, legs, and torso with rhythm, tempo, and phrasing. Strong musicality allows movements and music to become one, creating fluid, well-timed, and connected dancing.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Timing and rhythm are still developing. Movements may not align consistently with musical cues, and phrasing may feel uneven.

- **Improving**

Musicality is improving, with better awareness of rhythm and phrasing. Movements are becoming more consistent and responsive to the music.

- **Strong**

Demonstrates clear timing and rhythm, integrating movements smoothly with musical phrasing. Movements are coordinated, controlled, and in sync with the music.

- **Advanced**

Demonstrates musicality with consistent timing, clear phrasing, and smooth, rhythmic movement. Movements and music feel connected, flowing together seamlessly.

8. Turns – Spotting & Control

Turns refer to a dancer's ability to perform rotations with balance, alignment, and control, using proper spotting and coordination of the head, torso, arms, and legs. They require smooth coordination and stability throughout each rotation to maintain clean, controlled movement.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Turning technique is developing. Needs to practice consistent spotting, maintain alignment, and coordinate head, torso, and arms to improve balance and control.

- **Improving**

Shows steady improvement in turns, with better control, cleaner rotations, and more consistent spotting. Balance is improving throughout the movement.

- **Strong**

Executes well-aligned turns with solid control, consistent spotting, and confident finishes. Rotations are smooth and coordinated with the body.

- **Advanced**

Demonstrates controlled, centered turns with clear spotting, strong alignment, and stable balance. Rotations are consistent and coordinated across all exercises and combinations.

9. **Jumps – Elevation & Landing**

Jumps refer to a dancer's ability to lift off the floor with height and control, and land softly and safely. Elevation comes from strength in the legs, glutes, core, and feet, with a coordinated push through the toes. Proper use of the arms, torso, and back supports the jump, helping with coordination, lift, and alignment.

Landing requires sustained engagement through the feet and toes, combined with proper alignment of the legs and torso, to achieve soft, stable, and controlled landings.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Elevation and landing technique are developing. Needs to focus on pushing through the feet, engaging legs and core, and practicing soft, controlled landings.

- **Improving**

Jumps show improved elevation and more controlled landings. Height, balance, and coordination through the feet, legs, and arms are developing, though consistency is still being established.

- **Strong**

Executes jumps with good height, controlled execution, and increasingly smooth, stable landings. Push through the feet, legs, and core is coordinated with proper use of the arms and torso.

- **Advanced**

Performs jumps with strong elevation, controlled execution, and consistently smooth, well-aligned landings. Height, control, and stability are maintained across exercises, with coordinated push and sustained engagement through the feet, legs, core, arms, and torso

10. **Discipline & Consistency**

Discipline refers to a dancer's focus, effort, and consistency in class, including attention to instructions, exercises, and practice. Consistent discipline supports growth in technique, coordination, and overall performance.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Needs to improve focus, listen more carefully, and stay engaged consistently in class.

- **Improving**

Shows better focus, follows instructions more consistently, and participates with increasing attention and effort in class.

- **Strong**

Consistently focused, follows instructions carefully, and demonstrates reliable effort and engagement in all exercises.

- **Advanced**

Shows consistent dedication, patience, and self-discipline in all aspects of training.

11. **Correction-Taking & Adaptability**

Correction-taking refers to a dancer's ability to listen to feedback, understand it, and apply it to improve technique, alignment, or execution. Adaptability supports steady learning and better performance over time. Some dancers may take longer to integrate corrections, but with attention and practice, they can improve their execution consistently.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Needs to focus on listening carefully to corrections and practicing applying them consistently.

- **Improving**

Shows improvement in responding to feedback and gradually applying corrections more reliably.

- **Strong**

Demonstrates good attention to instruction and applies corrections effectively, showing steady progress.

- **Advanced**

Integrates corrections efficiently and consistently, adapting movements with control and accuracy

12. **Pointe Work (levels 4 and up)**

Pointe work is an essential part of classical ballet, but it requires that a dancer is physically ready. Before going on pointe, a student must have strong ankles, legs, and core; proper foot articulation and flexibility; and sufficient turnout and alignment.

Strong pointe technique is not just about rising onto pointe – it is also about how a dancer rises and lowers safely. Controlled push through the toes on the way up and rolling through the toes on the way down develops strength, stability, and coordination, and reinforces proper alignment. Performing pointe work without readiness or correct technique can lead to injuries that affect the feet, ankles, and hips long-term.

Developing strength, alignment, and control in preparation for pointe allows students to perform safely, execute steps correctly, and maintain healthy technique over time.

Evaluation Options:

- **Developing**

Strength, stability, and readiness for pointe work are developing. Needs to continue building ankle, leg, and core strength, foot flexibility, and proper alignment to prepare safely.

- **Improving**

Pointe readiness is improving, with better stability, alignment, and support. Placement and controlled rising and lowering are developing, though consistency is still emerging.

- **Strong**

Demonstrates strong, controlled pointe placement with proper alignment, strength, and coordination. Rising and lowering through the feet is controlled, supporting safe execution.

- **Advanced**

Performs pointe work with controlled strength, alignment, and stability. Rising and lowering through the feet is smooth and precise, with strength and coordination maintained across exercises, supporting safe and confident execution