



I-PATH Unregulated Awards Brochure

**Achievement Awards, Graded Achievement Awards, Guided Graded Awards
and Sparkle Awards**

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1. About Our Unregulated Awards

At I-PATH, we believe every performance deserves recognition. That's why our unregulated awards system have become a favourite among dance, performing arts, and music teachers worldwide. These awards are designed to motivate learners, build confidence, and celebrate progress, all without the pressure of a traditional exam.

What sets our awards apart is their flexibility. Unlike many medal-test systems, I-PATH offers four distinct award pathways, giving teachers complete freedom to choose what works best for their learners and studio.

Our original **Achievement Awards** allow you to decide how to structure the experience. You can follow our framework or create your own, the choice is yours. With multiple assessment formats, including live, recorded, and in-person options, you can deliver awards in a way that suits your timetable and teaching style.

Our **Graded Achievement Awards** and **Guided Graded Awards** offer even more choice. Teachers can select components from our Programmes of Study or design their own material, depending on the needs of their learners. These awards use supportive assessment criteria designed to recognise progress, engagement, and developing skills.

Our **Sparkle Awards** is I-PATH's early years performing arts programme for children aged 2–4 years, with each discipline having its own Programme of Study. The assessments are led by the teacher, not the examiner. Delivered in a familiar class-style format, with an emphasis on creating a calm, inclusive and relaxed environment.

All I-PATH Achievement Awards, Graded Achievement Awards, Guided Graded Awards and Sparkle Awards are unregulated awards, which means they do not sit within the RQF and are not Ofqual regulated. These awards are designed to offer teachers and learners greater flexibility while still maintaining high standards.

Although unregulated, they are fully quality-assured by I-PATH, with the same level of examiner training, moderation and standardisation that we apply to our regulated graded exams. All examiners assessing these awards are equally qualified and experienced, ensuring every learner receives fair, consistent and professional feedback.

The assessment criteria for these awards are different from those used in our regulated graded examinations, reflecting the supportive, flexible and developmental nature of each of our unregulated pathways.

In line with sector practice, our unregulated awards use different assessment criteria, different assessment conditions, different examiner roles, and a different assessment purpose, ensuring that no regulated assessment tasks are reused.

2. How To Book An Exam

Unregulated Award sessions can be booked via the website and can happen on the same day as regulated exams. The only stipulation is that an award cannot be examined in the same exam as candidates taking regulated graded exams.

For example, a centre could not hold a Grade 4 Ballet exam with 4 candidates taking the regulated exam and 2 candidates taking the Graded Achievement Award all in the same room at the same time.

3. Assessment Methods

Once students are ready, choose an assessment method:

Face-to-Face (F2F) – Examiner visits your studio for an in-person assessment.

Recorded Video Exam (RVE) – Record performances and upload them.

Live Video Exam (LVE) – Book a live virtual exam via Zoom.

For F2F Exams: By default, all awards, certificates, and reports are sent after the session.

However, with a minimum of four weeks' notice and completion of booking/payment, we may be able to send awards and certificates in advance. The examiner could then present these on the day. Report forms would be completed and posted separately.

For LVE & RVE Exams: Everything is posted to the studio after the session, including awards, certificates, and report forms.

We aim to make this process as smooth as possible - just let us know what works best for you!

4. Helpful Checklist

In order that our examiners can provide the quality of feedback that your candidates deserve for their achievements, we still require the same care and attention to detail on an exam day that we require in a regulated exam.

The Teacher/Centre Exam Handbook that is available on the website will provide you with detailed requirements for your exam day, however, here is an easy checklist for awards:

- 1) Have I selected my assessment method: F2F / RVE / LVE.
- 2) Have I selected the best award for my candidates:
 - **Achievement Awards** – a solo/duet/trio/quartet or group performance.
 - **Graded Achievement Awards** – a class presentation of a selection of exercises from a graded class.
 - **Guided Graded Awards** – a full class presentation of all exercises from a graded class.
 - **Sparkle Awards** – a class presentation of a selection of exercise from our early years programme.These should all be teacher led, with as much support, demonstration and guidance as is required. Exercises can be adapted and own exercises can be choreographed as alternatives.
- 3) Have I kept within the time limits for each award type (see pages below for further details).
- 4) Have I kept to the maximum number of six candidates or am I happy to receive a group report.

- 5) Are the candidates clearly identifiable by a large number on their front and back and am I ready to introduce them clearly for the camera or examiner.
- 6) Does their name and their identification match what was given at the time of booking.
- 7) Are all candidates in clear view of the examiner or within camera shot when the recording device is stationary on a fixed surface and filming in landscape mode.
- 8) Do I have enough storage on my recording device and is there enough power, or can I plug into the mains.

IMPORTANT: Please record the exams in landscape mode and please ensure the recording device is fixed and not handheld.

Hundreds of teachers have already discovered how I-PATH Awards keep students inspired, motivated, and excited about their learning journey. Now it's your turn. Give your learners the recognition they deserve and let's celebrate their achievements together.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

1. How To Deliver I-PATH's Achievement Awards

Unlike traditional medal test systems that require a strict syllabus, I-PATH gives you complete flexibility to implement Achievement Awards in a way that works for your students, your studio, and your teaching style.

We offer Achievement Awards in any discipline you choose - from Acro to Hip Hop, Acting to Cheer, Ballet to Singing, or even Piano to Cello.

Whatever your specialty, we'll ensure you have a qualified examiner to assess and celebrate your students' achievements!

Achievement Awards are designed for the teacher to choreograph or prepare students to deliver a performance (performances from Foundation Shield), this can be a dance, recital of a poem, song, monologue or play on their instrument.

Choose How You Deliver Achievement Awards

We offer multiple delivery options so you can find the perfect fit for your studio!



Follow our Suggested Framework (Optional)

If you prefer a structured system, you can follow our suggested framework:

Rosettes, Medals & Stars – 1 performance piece in any discipline.

Glass Shields – up to 2 performance pieces in any discipline from the same group.

Cups – up to 3 performance pieces in any discipline from the same group.

Prestige, Legacy & Founders Award – up to 4 performance pieces in any discipline from the same group.

2. More Ways To Deliver Achievement Awards

1

Annual Show – Celebrate Every Performer!

Turn your annual show into an Achievement Award event, where every student receives recognition.

✓ **Face-to-Face (F2F):** Examiner attends, provides overall verbal feedback, and can present certificates and awards at the end of the show.

2

Use Competition/Festival Performances – No Extra Work!

Already preparing competition or festival entries? Simply use your existing choreography and enter students for Achievement Awards.

3

Perfect for Non-Syllabus Schools

If your school doesn't follow a set I-PATH syllabus, use Achievement Awards to mark:

- The end of a term or year
- Moving up to a new class
- A class dance or performance

Match the framework to an age group or level within your school and perform a class dance or performance to mark moving the next class.

4

A Stepping Stone to Graded Exams

Not all students are ready for a full graded exam at the same time. If only half of your class is ready, you can still ensure everyone feels included.

- Enter the exam-ready students for the full Regulated Graded Exam.
- Enter the others for an Achievement Award (solo, duet, trio or group piece).

These assessments must be scheduled in separate time slots, as regulated exams and unregulated awards cannot be delivered under the same assessment conditions.

When they are ready, enter them for the Regulated Exam in the next session.

This ensures all students feel included and motivated without discouraging those who need more time.

5

More Ways to Deliver I-PATH's Achievement Awards

- **Studio Showcases & In-House Competitions** – Organise a friendly in-house competition! Students perform for an examiner in a mini competition format (non-competitive feedback given). (F2F, RVE, LVE)
- **Themed Awards** – Recognise students during seasonal performances (Christmas, Summer, Halloween). A fun and engaging way to keep students motivated year-round! (F2F, RVE, LVE)
- **Performance Portfolios** – Students work towards a multiple Achievement Award by submitting performances in multiple styles (e.g. Ballet, Tap, Acting) and receiving multiple awards. (F2F, RVE, LVE)
- **Parent & Family Viewing Days** – Students perform in front of their families and an examiner, who can present certificate and awards on the spot and send reports at a later date! (F2F, RVE, LVE)

3. What Do Students Receive?

What Do Students Receive?

Every student who takes part in an I-PATH Achievement Award receives:

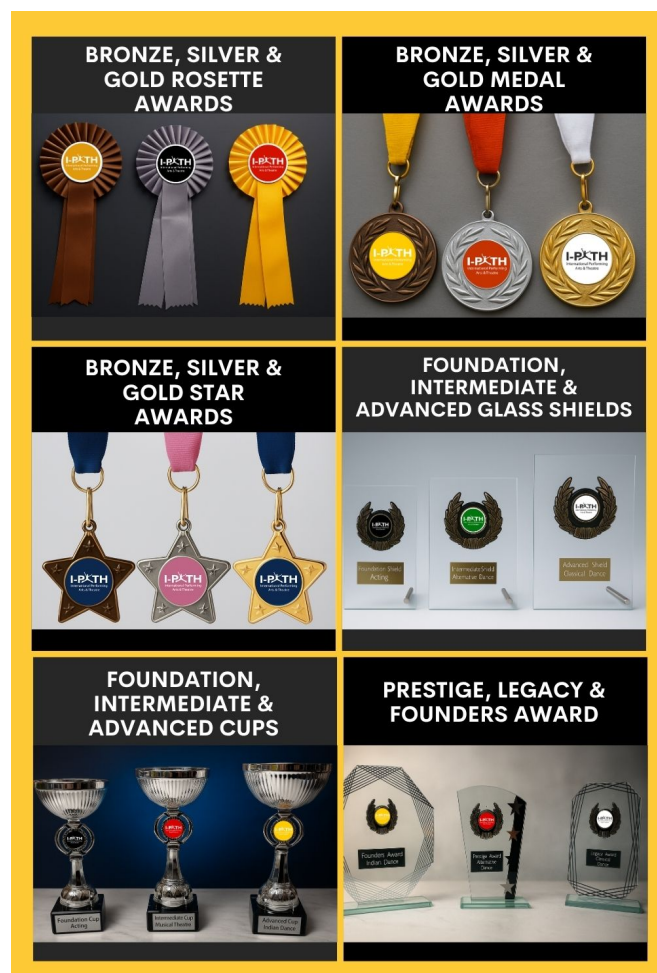
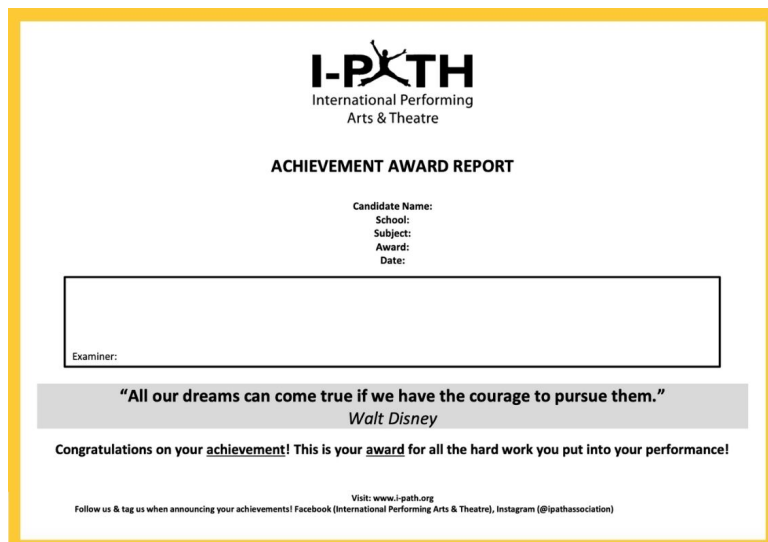
- A Certificate – Officially recognising their achievement.
- A Personalised Report – Includes positive, confidence-boosting feedback with helpful tips for progression (always focused on encouragement and self-esteem).
Please note: Group feedback reports will be provided for 7 or more candidates, unless the exam is recorded twice with different candidates easily identifiable through numbers or different costumes.
- An Achievement Award – The award they've been entered for, making their accomplishment even more special.

Available Awards

-  Rosettes – Bronze, Silver, Gold
-  Medals – Bronze, Silver, Gold
-  Stars – Bronze, Silver, Gold
-  Glass Shields – Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced
-  Cups - Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced
-  Higher Awards – Prestige, Legacy, Founders

The Certificates, Reports and Awards

Teachers have complete flexibility over where their students begin! Start with Rosettes, move straight to Shields, or begin at whichever level best suits your students' age, ability, and confidence. Whatever works best for your school, works for us!



Please note: The images above were accurate at the time of publishing. However, award designs may occasionally vary due to stock availability from our suppliers.

Report formats may also occasionally change depending on systems.

Rest assured, all awards will always be high quality!

Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Content and Delivery

Award	Content	Time Allowance
Rosettes and Medals	One Performance Piece	Max 3 mins (Solo) Max 5 mins (Group)
Glass Shields	Up to Two Performance Pieces (Same discipline)	Max 6 mins (Solo) Max 10 mins (Group)
Cups	Up to Three Performance Pieces (Same discipline)	Max 9 mins (Solo) Max 15 mins (Group)
Prestige, Legacy & Founders Award	Three Performance Pieces (Same discipline)	Max 9 mins (Solo) Max 15 mins (Group)

Role of the Teacher

- Create choreography that best showcases their learners
- Adapt or simplify movement to suit the needs of the group
- Select performance material that highlights strengths and supports success
- Lead and guide the presentation if necessary
- Demonstrate, prompt and support learners throughout, if required
- Encourage confidence, enjoyment and full participation
- Remain present and actively engaged for the entire performance, if required

Teacher involvement is not only permitted, it is fundamental to the ethos of the Achievement Awards. Their presence creates a familiar, reassuring environment where learners feel safe, supported and able to perform with joy.

Even if the Teacher only introduces the candidates and the award they are taking, saying their names and introducing them for the camera/examiner along with their candidate ID number, it will make a difference.

Role of the Examiner

Examiners observe the presentation and provide a short, positive narrative report for each candidate (or for the group where appropriate).

Examiners do not:

- Assess against regulated criteria or grade standards
- Award marks, scores or percentages
- Require formal exam conditions or independence
- Provide technical corrections or critique

Examiners do:

- Celebrate what the learner achieved
- Recognise effort, engagement and commitment
- Highlight developing performance skills
- Provide one gentle developmental suggestion (“even better if...”) where appropriate
- Create relaxed assessment conditions

Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Examiner Focus

Examiners observe the presentation as a whole, with particular attention to:

- Participation and willingness to take part
- Energy and enthusiasm
- Developing performance qualities
- Musical awareness (if applicable)
- Confidence and stage presence
- Teamwork and cooperation
- Remembering their performance piece

Written Reports

Each learner receives a short, personalised report written in a positive, supportive and appropriately pitched style, reflecting their individual level of ability and stage of development.

Please note: Group feedback reports will be provided for 7 or more candidates, unless the exam is recorded twice with different candidates easily identifiable through numbers or different costumes.

Reports aim to:

- Recognise what the learner achieved and performed well
- Highlight effort, focus and engagement
- Acknowledge developing performance and technical awareness
- Support confidence, self-belief and continued progression
- Celebrate a clear sense of achievement and personal growth

The language used is:

- Adaptable and appropriate to the learner's level
- Clear, encouraging and development-focused
- Meaningful for both learners and parents/carers

Where appropriate, a gentle developmental point may be included, framed constructively and positively (e.g. "Continuing to build consistency and confidence in performance will support further development.").

Key Principles

- Development over judgement
- Encouragement over critique
- Experience over examination

Achievement Awards provide a safe and motivating stepping stone, supporting learners as they build confidence, skills and enjoyment in performance without the pressure of regulated assessment.

GRADED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

1. How To Deliver I-PATH's Graded Achievement Awards

Our unregulated Graded Achievement Awards are a flexible and inclusive way for students to experience elements of a graded programme of study without the pressure of a full, regulated exam.

- Perfect for students who aren't ready for a full Graded Exam
- Supports students with additional needs who cannot access the full grade
- Ideal for studios with limited teaching time - cover what you can!

How It Works

- Students perform exercises from either I-PATH's programmes of study or material created by the Teacher (see table below)
- They perform the exercises together as a class in a classroom setting with the teacher present for support. The Teacher also leads the award.
- For specific "genre" requirements, please see the individual programme of study document for each grade and genre. These can be found in the Members Section of the website or in the I-PATH Hub.
- To make them feel like a real exam experience, please close with a reverence.

Award	Grade Equivalent	I-PATH POS Content	Teacher's Own Content
Foundation Glass Shield	Primary, Preparatory & Grade 1	Warm-Up, One Exercise, Dance/Song/Piece (for Dance this should be either Teacher Choreographed or the Set Dance)	Warm-Up, One Exercise, Dance/Song/Piece
Intermediate Glass Shield	Grade 2 & 3	Warm-Up, Two Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece (for Dance this should be either Teacher Choreographed or the Set Dance)	Warm-Up, Two Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece
Advanced Glass Shield	Grade 4 & 5	Warm-Up, Three Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece (for Dance this should be either Teacher Choreographed or the Set Dance)	Warm-Up, Three Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece
Foundation Cup	Grade 6	Warm-Up, Four Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece (for Dance this should be either Teacher Choreographed or the Set Dance)	Warm-Up, Four Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece
Intermediate Cup	Grade 7	Warm-Up, Four Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece (for Dance this should be either Teacher Choreographed or the Set Dance)	Warm-Up, Four Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece
Advanced Cup	Grade 8	Warm-Up, Four Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece (for Dance this should be either Teacher Choreographed or the Set Dance)	Warm-Up, Four Exercises, Dance/Song/Piece

A fantastic unregulated award programme designed to introduce students to graded-style work in a supportive and inclusive environment.

2. What Do Students Receive?

Every student who takes part in an I-PATH Graded Achievement Award receives:

- A Certificate – Officially recognising their achievement.
- A Personalised Report – Includes positive, confidence-boosting feedback with helpful tips for progression (always focused on encouragement and self-esteem).
- A Graded Achievement Award – The award they've been entered for, making their accomplishment even more special.



Please note: The images above were accurate at the time of publishing. However, award designs may occasionally vary due to stock availability from our suppliers.

Report formats may also occasionally change depending on systems.

Rest assured, all awards will always be high quality!

Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Content and Delivery

Grade Equivalent	Content	Time Allowance
Preparatory, Primary & Grade 1	See table above, can be taken from I-PATH POS or Teacher Choreography	Maximum 15 minutes
Grade 2 & 3	See table above, can be taken from I-PATH POS or Teacher Choreography	Maximum 15 minutes
Grade 4 & 5	See table above, can be taken from I-PATH POS or Teacher Choreography	Maximum 20 minutes
Grade 6, 7 & 8 or Intermediate & Advanced 1	See table above, can be taken from I-PATH POS or Teacher Choreography	Maximum 20 minutes

Teachers may:

- Select which components/exercises to present, within guidelines and time limits.
- Adapt, simplify or choreograph activities to suit the class
- Present and lead the assessment, supporting where necessary

Role of the Teacher

Teachers play an active and essential role in the delivery of Graded Achievement Awards. They may:

- Lead the warm-up and exercises, introducing each component.
- Demonstrate and guide movement
- Support and prompt learners where needed
- Encourage participation and confidence
- Adapt exercises or choreography to suit the group
- Use their own choreography or creative material
- Remain present and engaged throughout the presentation

Teacher involvement is expected and welcomed, helping to create a familiar and reassuring environment for learners. The Teacher should introduce the candidates, saying their names and introducing them for the camera/examiner along with their candidate ID number, it will make a difference.

Role of the Examiner

Examiners observe the presentation and provide a short, positive written report for each candidate.

Examiners do not:

- Assess against regulated criteria or grade standards
- Award marks, scores or percentages
- Require formal exam conditions or independence
- Provide technical corrections or critique

Examiners do:

- Celebrate what the learner achieved
- Recognise effort, engagement and commitment
- Highlight developing performance skills
- Provide one gentle developmental suggestion (“even better if...”) where appropriate
- Create relaxed exam conditions

. Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Examiner Focus

Examiners observe the presentation as a whole, with particular attention to:

- Participation and willingness to take part
- Energy and enthusiasm
- Developing performance qualities
- Musical awareness
- Confidence and stage presence
- Teamwork and cooperation
- Remembering and performing choreography
- Engagement with the teacher and assessment environment

Written Reports

Each learner receives a short, personalised report written in a positive, supportive and appropriately pitched style, reflecting their individual level of ability and stage of development.

Reports aim to:

- Recognise what the learner achieved and performed well
- Highlight effort, focus and engagement
- Acknowledge developing performance and technical awareness
- Support confidence, self-belief and continued progression
- Celebrate a clear sense of achievement and personal progress

The language used is:

- Adaptable and appropriate to the learner's level, rather than age or grade alone
- Clear, encouraging and development-focused
- Meaningful for both learners and parents/carers

Where appropriate, a gentle developmental point may be included, framed constructively and positively (e.g. "Continuing to build consistency and confidence in performance will support further development.").

Key Principles

- Development over judgement
- Encouragement over critique
- Experience over examination

Graded Achievement Awards provide a safe and motivating stepping stone, supporting learners as they build confidence, skills and enjoyment in performance without the pressure of regulated assessment.

GUIDED GRADED AWARDS

1. How To Deliver I-PATH's Guided Graded Awards

Our unregulated Guided Graded Awards use the familiar grade outcomes of Distinction, Merit and Pass, but they are assessed using criteria that differ from those used in our regulated graded examinations. These awards reflect the supportive, flexible and developmental ethos of our other award pathways. While we assess both technique and performance, examiners focus on how these skills are applied throughout the exam for example, whether they are demonstrated consistently, often, or sometimes creating a more encouraging and learner-centred experience.

- Perfect for students who aren't ready for a full Graded Exam.
- Supports students with additional needs who cannot access the full regulated grade.
- Ideal for studios with limited teaching time - as a teacher can support and demonstrate in the assessment.

How It Works

- Students can perform exercises from either I-PATH's programmes of study (POS) or material created by the teacher.
- Exercises used from the POS can be adapted, replaced or removed, dependent on need.
- They perform the exercises together as a class in a classroom setting with the teacher present for support. The teacher also leads the award and can demonstrate if necessary.
- For specific "genre" requirements, please see the individual programme of study document for each grade and genre.

A fantastic unregulated award programme designed to introduce students to graded-style work in a supportive and inclusive environment.

2. What Do Students Receive?

Every student who takes part in an I-PATH Guided Graded Award receives:

- A Certificate – Officially recognising their individual band of attainment.
- A Personalised Report – Showing their band of attainment in each of the four holistic assessment categories, along with an overall band.
- A Guided Graded Medal – Specifically detailing the graded and genre of the award they have been entered for.



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Report formats may also occasionally change depending on systems.

Rest assured, all awards will always be high quality!





GUIDED GRADED AWARD REPORT

Candidate Name: _____
 School: _____
 Subject: _____
 Award/Level: _____
 Date: _____

Technical Foundations Awarded: _____	Quality and Expression Awarded: _____
Expressive Timing and Delivery Awarded: _____	Engagement and Learning Behaviours Awarded: _____

Overall Awarded

"All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them."
Walt Disney

Congratulations on your achievement! This is your award for all the hard work you put into your learning!

This award is an unregulated I-PATH award designed for formative, teacher-supported assessment.

Visit: www.i-path.org
 Follow us & tag us when announcing your achievements! Facebook (International Performing Arts & Theatre),
 Instagram (@ipathassociation) & Twitter (@IPATH2010)

Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Content and Delivery

Teachers lead the award as they normally would the class, using:

- Familiar music and routines
- Exercises from the I-PATH programmes of study or own choreographed exercises
- Encouragement, reassurance and support as necessary throughout

Teachers may:

- Use programme content
- Adapt amend or reduce material, or;
- create/choreograph their own material entirely

Role of the Teacher

Teachers may:

- Lead and support throughout the class, if necessary
- Demonstrate or guide movement, if necessary
- Encourage confidence and participation
- Adapt material to suit the group
- Use their own choreography or exercises

Teacher involvement is expected and welcomed, helping to create a familiar and reassuring environment for learners. The Teacher should introduce the candidates, saying their names and introducing and introducing them for the camera/examiner along with their candidate ID number, it will make a difference.

Role of the Examiner

Examiner observes the class as a whole:

- Assess each learner across four holistic categories
- Apply Distinction/Merit/Pass using indicative descriptors
- Recognise strengths, progress and developing skills
- Maintain a calm, encouraging and learner-centred approach

Examiners do not:

- Apply regulated criteria
- Award numerical marks or percentages
- Require exam-style independence
- Provide technical corrections or critique

Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Examiner Focus

Assessment Categories	What the examiner is looking for:
Technical Foundations	• Demonstrates safe practice appropriate to the discipline (body use, vocal use, physical awareness). • Shows control and coordination in movement, voice, posture, or physical presentation. • Applies foundational technique relevant to the genre. • Maintains stability and consistency in technical execution. • Demonstrates awareness of discipline specific fundamentals.
Quality and Expression	• Presents work with clarity. • Communicates expressive intention, emotional tone, or stylistic character. • Uses dynamic variation to enhance performance. • Shows awareness of style, genre, or artistic intention. • Demonstrates engagement with expressive detail, shaping, or nuance.
Expressive Timing and Delivery	• Uses appropriate timing. • Responds to cues. • Demonstrates expressive delivery. • Maintains flow and continuity. • Shows awareness of structure.
Engagement and Learning Behaviours	• Shows active engagement in the class or assessment environment. • Demonstrates willingness to participate, explore, and contribute. • Responds positively to support, guidance, or correction. • Works with focus and readiness appropriate to the level. • Shows professional behaviours. • Demonstrates adaptability, openness, and willingness to try new approaches.

Marking

Assessment Categories	How to interpret this across genres	Band of Attainment	Indicative Descriptors
Technical Foundations	• Dance: alignment, placement, control • Singing: breath support, tone, pitch accuracy • Acting: vocal clarity, physical presence • Public Speaking: articulation, vocal projection • Choreography: structuring movement safely	Distinction – consistently secure, confident, and controlled Merit – generally secure with developing consistency Pass – basic demonstration with emerging control	Assesses the learner's ability to demonstrate safe, coordinated, and discipline appropriate technique.

Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Assessment Categories	How to interpret this across genres	Band of Attainment	Indicative Descriptors
Quality & Expression	• Dance: movement quality, dynamic contrast • Singing: phrasing, tone colour, expressive shaping • Acting: emotional intention, expressive delivery • Public Speaking: emphasis, pace, vocal colour • Choreography: artistic intention	Distinction – expressive, clear, and dynamically responsive Merit – mostly clear with some dynamic variation Pass – developing clarity and spatial awareness	Assesses clarity, flow, use of space, and dynamic variation.
Expressive Timing & Delivery	• Dance: phrasing, timing, expressive delivery • Acting: pace, intention, emotional timing • Singing: rhythm, breath timing, expressive shaping • Public Speaking: pacing, emphasis, flow • Choreography: timing choices	Distinction – confident timing and expressive delivery Merit – generally responsive with developing expression Pass – basic awareness with emerging expression	Assesses the learner's ability to respond to timing, pacing, cues, and expressive intention.
Engagement & Learning Behaviours	• All Genres: focus, willingness, adaptability, participation • Acting/MT: ensemble awareness, risk taking • Choreography: creative exploration, collaboration • Public Speaking: confidence, audience connection	Distinction – highly engaged, responsive, and focused Merit – generally engaged with some support needed Pass – participates with developing focus	Assesses the learner's focus, participation, and responsiveness to teacher direction.

Overall Distinction

Award Distinction when the pattern is:

- 3 or 4 Distinctions, OR
- 2 Distinctions + 2 Merits

This means the learner is consistently performing at the highest level across most domains.

Overall Merit

Award Merit when the pattern is:

- Mostly Merits, OR
- 1 Distinction + 2 Merits + 1 Pass, OR
- 2 Merits + 2 Passes

This means the learner is secure and competent, with some areas stronger than others.

Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Overall Pass

Award Pass when the pattern is:

- Mostly Passes, OR
- 1 Merit + 3 Passes, OR
- 2 Merits + 2 Passes but with weaker consistency

This means the learner demonstrates the basic level of attainment with developing consistency.

Timings

Timings shown are a maximum limit, content shown will need to be fitted into these times. Teachers may present a class that is shorter in length if this suits the level and ability of the candidates.

Grade Equivalent	1-2 Learners	3-4 Learners	5-6 Learners
Preparatory and Primary	15 mins	20 mins	25 mins
Grade 1	20 mins	25 mins	30 mins
Grade 2	25 mins	30 mins	35 mins
Grade 3	30 mins	35 mins	40 mins
Grade 4	35 mins	40 mins	45 mins
Grade 6, 7 & 8 or Intermediate & Advanced 1	40 mins	45 mins	50 mins

Key Principles

- Holistic understanding over isolated skills
- Supportive guidance over formal critique
- Class-based learning over examination conditions

Guided Graded Awards provide a structured yet supportive class-based assessment experience, where learners are observed in a familiar teaching environment and recognised for their developing skills across four holistic categories. These awards help learners build confidence, consistency and performance readiness without the pressure of solo examination or regulated assessment conditions.

GUIDED GRADED AWARDS

1. How To Deliver I-PATH's Sparkle Awards

Nurturing confidence, creativity and joy through movement, music and play.

We offer these unregulated Sparkle Awards in:

- Acting
- Ballet
- Broadway Dance
- Commercial Dance
- Jazz Dance
- Lyrical Dance
- Musical Theatre & Singing
- Tap Dance

For full details, please see the Sparkle Teacher Handbook.

How It Works

These assessments are:

- Led by the teacher, not the examiner
- Delivered in a familiar class-style format
- Calm, inclusive and pressure-free

Teachers lead the session as usual, using:

- Familiar music and routines
- Age-appropriate exercises from the Sparkle programme of study
- Encouragement and reassurance throughout

Please note: Teachers may select which exercises to present for assessment. The full programme of study does not need to be shown, except for the warm-up, which is compulsory.

The exam class should last no longer than 20mins.

The examiner's role is to celebrate each child's strengths. They carefully observe what every child does well and reflect this in an individual report, written to nurture confidence, self-esteem and a sense of pride in their achievements. The focus is on participation, effort and engagement, not performance quality.

A fantastic way to introduce students to their very first exam class in a supportive and inclusive format!

2. What Do Students Receive?

Every student who takes part in an I-PATH Sparkle Award receives:

- A Certificate – Officially recognising their achievement.
- A Personalised Report – Includes positive, confidence-boosting feedback with helpful tips for progression (always focused on encouragement and self-esteem).
- A Sparkle Award – The award they've been entered for, making their accomplishment even more special.



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Report formats may also occasionally change depending on systems.

Rest assured, all awards will always be high quality!



Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Content and Delivery

Teachers lead the session as they normally would the class, using:

- Familiar music and routines
- Age-appropriate exercises from the Sparkle programme of study
- Encouragement, reassurance and positive reinforcement throughout

Teachers may:

- Select which exercises to present for assessment
- Adapt or simplify activities to suit the class
- Maintain a natural flow, just like a regular lesson

A warm-up is compulsory, but the full programme of study does not need to be shown. The exam should last no longer than 20 mins.

Role of the Teacher

The teacher plays the central role in creating a positive and successful experience.

Their focus is to:

- Create a safe, happy and engaging environment
- Encourage participation and enjoyment
- Support learners through demonstration and guidance
- Build confidence and reassurance throughout
- Keep the session flowing in a familiar class format

Teacher interaction is constant and expected, helping every child feel supported and included.

Role of the Examiner

The examiner is a supportive observer, not a judge.

They:

- Watch the class presentation as a whole
- Focus on what each child can do and enjoys doing
- Celebrate individual effort and participation
- Write a warm, encouraging report for each learner
- Support to create a relaxed environment

The examiner does not:

- Assess against technical standards
- Expect independent performance

Assessment • Criteria • Timings

Examiner Focus

Assessment is gentle and observational, with a focus on:

- Participation – joining in and trying their best
- Engagement – interest, focus and enjoyment
- Confidence – willingness to take part and express themselves
- Creativity and expression – use of movement, imagination or character
- Listening and responding – following the teacher and music
- Interaction – working alongside others in the class

The emphasis is always on effort, enjoyment and involvement, rather than performance quality.

Written Reports

Each child receives a short, personalised report written in a warm and age-appropriate style.

Reports aim to:

- Celebrate what the child enjoyed and did well
- Highlight positive behaviours and participation
- Reinforce confidence and self-belief
- Create a sense of pride and achievement

Language is:

- Simple, positive and encouraging
- Focused on success and effort
- Designed to be meaningful for both children and parents

Where appropriate, a very gentle developmental note may be included, framed positively (e.g. “It will be lovely to see even more big, confident movements next time!”).

Key Principles

- Joyful, play-based learning
- Confidence before technique
- Participation over performance
- Encouragement at every step

Timings

The class presentation should last between 10 and 20 minutes.

Sparkle Awards provide a magical first experience, helping young learners develop a love of movement, music and performance in a nurturing, confidence-building environment.