

Class Dynamics

BHS Class Musicians' Course 2021

Every dance class is different and there will be many factors that will influence this. It might be the standard of the class, the teacher's style of teaching and the class musician's responses to the demands of the teacher and the class, the ambiance of the room or hall, where the class is taking place etc. etc. etc.....

Below are some prompt questions which will help you think about the features of a good class and the demands made upon the class musician. Use them to analyse your own practice and/or highlight areas which you wish to discuss and/or delve into more deeply. Hopefully they can be used as reference points in your Learning Log and feed-back to the group.

Features of a class that have an impact:

- Where should the musician sit in relation to the teacher and the class?
- Does the venue have any particular challenges or benefits which will impact on the musician/music?
- How do you think the teacher will ensure that the class musician knows what is taking place in the class?
- How does the class musician keep track of what is going on?
- Will the teacher specify bar numbers?
- Warm-ups/cool-downs – types of exercise and the types of tunes that could be used.
- Movements and dance technique taught – what genre of tune should be used? – names/composer.
- Might the type of exercise demand anything different from the class musician i.e. change in tempo, particular type of tune etc?
- Will the teacher use 'ready and' to bring in the musician or something similar?
- If the teacher uses rhythmic counting for some exercises, will this have any impact on the musician or the music chosen?
- Will the musician be invited to talk about the music?
- How might the musician use the original tune?
- Will the musician use alternative tunes during the teaching process? If yes, when is this appropriate?
- How many times will the dance be finally danced through?
- How will you play the chord at the beginning and end of the dance?
- How will you sequence the tunes you use?
- Will the standard of the dancing influence the types of tunes you choose and why?
- How might the standard of dancing or what is being asked of the dancers by the teacher influence how the music is played? (Type of tune, nuances, tempo, adjustments of the tempo etc)
- Is there anything that you would require further guidance/help on that has emerged from exploring these features?

Please also note anything else that is missing which you think would be useful to include in this document.