



British DanceSport Association Ballroom and Latin American Competition Code of Dress Rules

1. Purpose

The purpose of these Competition Dress Code Rules is to ensure that dance sport performances across all age categories are consistent with the principles of dance sport, education, and widely accepted ethical standards.

Competition attire must always be age-appropriate, modest, and suitable for a sporting environment, whilst also reflecting the formal and aesthetic nature traditionally associated with dance sport competitions. All costumes must ensure that intimate areas of the body are properly covered.

Within these rules:

- **Ballroom** refers to the ballroom dance discipline: Waltz, Tango, Viennese Waltz, Slow Foxtrot, Quickstep.
- **Latin** refers to the Latin American dance discipline: Samba, Cha-Cha-Cha, Rumba, Paso Doble and Jive.

2. General Section

The Chair of Adjudicators, hereinafter referred to as “the Chairperson”, has the sole authority to interpret and enforce the Code of Dress Rules during a competition. The Chairperson has the right to prohibit, modify, or require the removal of a part of a costume or styling element that does not comply with these rules’ principles, regardless of whether the specific element is explicitly referenced within the regulations.

The Chairperson has the right to prohibit, require modification to, or require the removal of a part of a costume or styling element that does not comply with these rules, regardless of whether the specific element is explicitly referenced within the regulations is appropriate following consultation with the panel of Adjudicators. The Chairperson shall consider the views of the Adjudicators before reaching a decision. The Chairperson's decision shall be final and binding after consultation with the panel of adjudicators. Where the Adjudicators are equally divided in their opinion, the Chairperson shall exercise a casting vote.

The Chairperson may prohibit a competitor or couple from dancing where their costume does not comply with these Rules, and any required modifications cannot be made to achieve compliance before the commencement or continuation of the relevant competition. Before reaching such a decision, the Chairperson shall consult with the Panel of Adjudicators, consider the views of the Adjudicators and the Promoter, and thereafter make a determination in accordance with the procedure set out in this Policy. The Chairperson's decision shall be final and binding following such consultation. Where the Adjudicators are equally divided in their opinion, the Chairperson shall exercise a casting vote.

3. Definition of Provocative Materials

Provocative materials are defined as materials, or the manner in which they are used, that create an excessively revealing, sexualised, or age-inappropriate visual effect which is inconsistent with these rules.

Such materials include, but are not limited to:

- Transparent or semi-transparent fabrics, with the exception of tights.
- Skin-tone materials that create the visual impression of nudity.
- Latex or vinyl-effect materials.
- Mesh fabrics or cuts positioned close to intimate areas of the body.

When assessing whether a costume is provocative, the Chairperson shall consider the combined effect of the material, cut, design and overall presentation. The final decision rests with the Chairperson, after considering the views of the Adjudicators in accordance with Section 1.

4. Enforcement

- In the event of a breach of these rules, the Chairperson may require immediate correction of the infringement as defined in section 1.
- The competitor or couple may not be allowed to compete until the breach of the rules has been remedied.
- If the issue cannot be corrected within the time specified by the Chairperson and to the standard required by the Chairperson, the Chairperson may remove the competitor or couple from the competition as defined in section 1.
- In the event of any dispute, the decision of the Chairperson is final and cannot be appealed during the competition but can be appealed to the BDSA Selection Committee after the event as defined in section 1.
- All competitors, coaches and representatives acknowledge the authority of the Chairperson as defined in section 1, to interpret and apply these rules at each competition and accept responsibility for any consequences resulting from a breach of these regulations.

5. Juvenile General Principles

Ages up to and including 11 years

The following are not permitted:

- Flesh-coloured (skin-tone) garments, with the exception of nude tights.
- Provocative materials
- Make-up age appropriate
- Battery or electronic elements as part of a costume

6. Sponsorship Logos

Three sponsor logos are permitted per couple or solo, but must not exceed a total of 40cm

7. Boy Ballroom Attire

7.1 Attire

- White long-sleeved collared shirt
- See-through or white buttons
- Full-length black dress trousers in a block material only, normal, or high-waisted, with an optional underfoot strap. Black satin side stripes are permitted
- A long black tie must be worn around the neck
- The shirt must be tucked in
- Fabrics must be plain i.e. cotton, polyester, cotton/polyester blend, wool blend.
- No satin or shiny fabrics
- No rhinestones, glitter, metallic thread, patterns or sequins allowed
- Decorations (rhinestones, sequins, lace motifs, glitter, pearls, cut-outs, feathers, or fringe) and religious or political statements are not allowed
- Single or double cuff with buttons or small plain cufflinks
- Sleeves must be buttoned or plain cufflinks
- Plain black belt with a small buckle only is acceptable

7.2 Shoes and Socks

- Dance shoes with a maximum heel height of 3.5 cm
- Preferably black shoes
- Black socks

7.3 Hairstyle

- Short hair or hair to shoulder length is very flexible in style.
- Shoulder length, or longer hair, must be tied back in a ponytail with a plain hair tie

8. Boy Latin Attire

8.1 Attire

- White or black long-sleeved collared shirt tucked in
- A black bow tie must be worn around the neck
- Full-length black dress trousers in a block material only, normal, or high-waisted, with an optional underfoot strap. Black satin side stripes are permitted
- Fabrics must be plain i.e. cotton, polyester, cotton/polyester blend, wool blend
- No satin or shiny fabrics
- No rhinestones, glitter, metallic thread, patterns or sequins allowed
- Decorations (rhinestones, sequins, lace motifs, glitter, pearls, cut-outs, feathers, or fringe) and religious or political statements are not allowed
- Single or double cuff with buttons or small plain cufflinks
- Sleeves must be buttoned or plain cufflinks
- Plain black belt with a small buckle only is acceptable

8.2 Shoes and Socks

- Dance shoes with a maximum heel height of 3.5cm.
- Preferably black shoes.
- Black socks.

8.3 Hairstyle

- Shoulder length, or longer hair, must be tied back in a ponytail with a plain hair tie.
- Short hair or hair to shoulder length is very flexible on style.

8.4 Jewellery

- Decorative jewellery is not permitted.
- Small personal stud earrings are permitted only.
- Jewellery of a personal/religious nature may be worn and must be worn inside the clothing.

9. Girl Ballroom and Latin Attire

9.1 Attire

- Only simple, single-colour or black and white costume options are permitted.
- A simple single-coloured dress.
- A simple single-colour bodysuit with a matching skirt.
- No decorations may be added to the dress, i.e., rhinestones, sequins, lace motifs, glitter, pearls, cut-outs, feathers, or fringe.
- All fabrics used within the dress must be of the same colour throughout.
- Material examples: Dance crepe, lycra, lace, Stretch satin, chiffon, velvet or similar materials.
- No metallic fabrics are allowed; however, materials with a slight shine are, e.g. satin, chiffon, twinkle or similar materials.

9.2 Skirt/Dress Length and Cut

- The skirt/dress may be:
- No shorter than 10cm above the knee, or no longer than 10cm below the knee. Measured from the back of the knee.
- A plain or pleated skirt with a maximum of 3 half-circles and up to 2 underskirts all the same length.
- No frills, cutouts or split skirts.
- No godets may be inserted into the garment.
- Crinoline may be used on the hem but not on the outside of the skirt.
- Satin ribbon may be used on the hem.
- Belt/sash is permitted no wider than 5cm to cover the skirt waist join.
- A small bow may be used on the belt/sash as fastening. Buttons and sashes for fastening only.

9.3 Necklines

- Not to be lower than the top of the armpit, may be V-neck, high neck, boat, sweetheart, keyhole on the back and Peter Pan collar and regular collar are allowed with simple edging as well as a simple 7cm ruffle around the collar.

9.4 Sleeves

- Long, elbow, and short lengths are permitted.
- Cap sleeves and short puff sleeves are allowed.
- All sleeves must be symmetrical.
- No dolman sleeves or frills.

9.5 Shoes, Tights and Socks

- Block-heeled dance shoes with a maximum heel height of 3.5cm.
- Socks or skin-tone tights may be worn.
- Fishnet tights are not permitted.
- No Sparkly shoes.

9.6 Hairstyle

- Coloured hairspray is not permitted.
- Hair must be tied up if longer than shoulder length.
- A small bow or flower no more than 10cm in width may be worn.
- No rhinestones, glitter, headbands or tiaras are allowed.

9.7 Jewellery

- Decorative jewellery is not permitted.
- Small personal stud earrings are permitted only.
- Jewellery of a personal/religious nature may be worn and must be worn inside the clothing.

10. Junior I, Junior II, Youth, Adult and Senior (all categories)

From the Junior I age category onwards, competitors may wear competition costumes of their choice, if they comply with the General Principles set out below.

11. General Principles

- Generally accepted aesthetic standards of dance sport.
- Intimate body areas must be covered appropriately with non-transparent material.
- Materials that resemble bare skin must not be visible. Any skin-toned materials must be fully concealed by decorative elements, so the design does not give the impression of nudity.
- Thongs, tangas and provocative cuts are not permitted.
- The side panel of the undergarment must measure at least 6cm at its narrowest point and provide full side coverage of the hips.

- The gusset of the undergarment must measure a minimum of 6 cm at its narrowest point when laid flat. The undergarment must provide full coverage of the crotch during all dance movements.
- There are no restrictions on costume cuts, materials, colour combinations, make-up or decorations, provided that the costume remains appropriate for the sporting environment and the above general principles are complied with.

12. Solo Dance Categories

In solo dance categories, there are no restrictions on decorative elements or costume styling, provided that:

- Intimate body areas are fully covered.
- The attire remains age-appropriate, aesthetically suitable and appropriate for Dance sport competition.

13. Authority

In all circumstances, the interpretation and enforcement of these Rules, including decisions regarding costume compliance, shall remain the responsibility of the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall have the authority to prohibit, require modification to, or require the removal of any costume or styling element that does not comply with these rules and principles, regardless of whether the specific element is expressly referenced within these Regulations. Before reaching a decision, the Chairperson shall consult with the Panel of Adjudicators, consider the views of the Adjudicators, and thereafter make a determination. The Chairperson's decision shall be final and binding following such consultation. Where the Adjudicators are equally divided in their opinion, the Chairperson shall exercise a casting vote.

14. Revision

The British DanceSport Association has the right to change or amend these regulations or add supplementary documentation. Any amendments will be announced through official BDSA communication channels.

15 Related Documents

These Rules should be read alongside:

- BDSA Safeguarding Handbook;
- BDSA Competition Rules: including a detailed breakdown of competition Age categories.
- Competitor Entry Terms and Conditions
- and any other BDSA policy, procedure or guidance relevant to the interpretation, enforcement or application of these Rules.

Annex 1: Terminology

For the purposes of this policy

- “Adjudicator” means a person appointed to judge the relevant competition or event.
- “Panel of Adjudicators” means the adjudicators appointed to judge the relevant competition or event.
- “Promoter” means the person or organisation responsible for organising and running the competition.
- “Competitor” means any person entered to take part in the competition, including a dancer competing as part of a couple or as a solo dancer.

Version	2.0
Policy Owner	National Safeguarding Lead
Approved By	Board of Directors
Approval Date	
Effective Date	
Review Date	(12 months from approval)

Early Review

This policy may be reviewed and amended at any time before the scheduled review date where there are changes in applicable legislation, statutory guidance, case law, regulatory requirements, safeguarding practice, organisational structure, operational requirements, or where lessons learned from incidents, complaints or investigations indicate that revision is necessary.

-Policy End-