

# Private Lesson Handbook

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# Welcome

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Private lessons are a wonderful opportunity for students to grow and develop their technique and performance qualities, and to work independently with teachers to achieve their personal goals. At LCDC, private lessons — particularly those involving solo work — are considered a privilege, not an entitlement, and are offered within a structured training framework that prioritises safe dance practice, strong foundational technique, and long-term student wellbeing.

In 2026, we are continuing to redevelop the LCDC philosophy of excellence. Central to this approach is a clear emphasis on quality over quantity in every aspect of a student's training.

In line with this, families will notice a number of significant refinements to the way private lessons and solo work operate at LCDC. These changes have been implemented deliberately to ensure students are supported with appropriate workload management, sufficient rehearsal and recovery time, and training structures that reduce the risk of injury, fatigue, and burnout, while continuing to reinforce the central importance of regular classes as the foundation of all technical and artistic development.

At the same time, these refinements allow us to uphold sustainable and professional working conditions for our staff. The dance industry has historically undervalued creative and teaching labour, and at LCDC we are committed to ensuring our teachers are appropriately supported, respected, and remunerated for their expertise, time, and creative contribution.

Together, these measures ensure that students are able to step onto the stage with confidence, technical security, artistry, and musical intelligence — within a healthy, sustainable training environment for both dancers and staff.

## Important Private Lesson Information

Private lessons and solo work at LCDC are offered within a clearly defined framework of expectations.

Private lessons to work on solos for competitions are not offered to every student. As such, LCDC has high expectations of commitment, work ethic, and responsibility

from both students and parents. Should a student not demonstrate the necessary commitment in private lessons and/or regular classes, this privilege may be withdrawn.

Private lessons are only offered to students enrolled in Performance Group, as we follow the pathway of the professional dance world — where dancers must first be a part of the corps de ballet before becoming a soloist.

Our number one expectation is that students and their parents remain fully committed to all pre-requisite classes, including Performance Group. If a dancer is unwell (physically, mentally, or emotionally fatigued), or has missed prerequisite classes due to homework, social commitments, or similar reasons, they may not attend their private lesson on that day. Pre-requisite classes must always take priority over private lessons.

In private lessons, an appropriate balance between solo work, technical development, examination preparation, strength, and conditioning is essential if a student is to reach their potential. An agreement will be reached between the teacher and student regarding appropriate goals for the year.

## Solos – Eligibility, Allocation & Expectations

### Style Eligibility

Students may only learn and perform solos in dance styles in which they are currently enrolled in regular classes. This is to ensure that students are receiving the appropriate training and understanding to best present themselves on stage (e.g., Lyrical is a style where the dancer is required to present the emotion of the song lyrics through their choreography and performance – not just a pretty dance.

Solo eligibility is defined as follows:

- Classical Ballet
  - Classical Ballet
  - Demi Character
- Repertoire
  - Classical Variations
- Contemporary
  - Contemporary
- Lyrical
  - Lyrical
- Jazz
  - Jazz
  - Broadway Jazz
- Musical Theatre
  - Musical Theatre Jazz
  - Song & Dance



- Tap
  - All Tap styles

The same eligibility rules apply to Improvisation sections.

### **Acro Solos**

At LCDC, Acro is viewed as a supplementary skill that supports other dance styles, rather than a standalone performance discipline. As such, students are not permitted to learn or enter Acro solo sections at competitions.



Students who train in Acro may incorporate selected Acro skills into solos in other styles (e.g. Lyrical, Jazz, Contemporary) only where appropriate, and only with the approval of Miss Ashleigh and Miss Clark/Ms Jasmin. All inclusions must align with safe dance practice and the student's technical readiness.

### **Number of Solos & Choreography**

As outlined in the introduction, LCDC places a strong emphasis on quality over quantity in solo work.

Students undertaking a 30-minute private lesson may be eligible to perform a maximum of three (3) solos per calendar year, subject to age, experience, workload, and teacher recommendation.

This limitation exists to ensure:

- Adequate one-on-one time for technical development
- Appropriate preparation for RAD and Comdance examinations
- Sufficient focus on strength and conditioning
- Injury prevention and safe workload management
- Appropriate rehearsal time to maintain quality and performance standards

In a standard 30-minute private lesson, time must be allocated for appropriate warm-up (particularly for younger students or those returning after breaks), individualised technical correction and development, rehearsal, and safe progression. Limiting the number of solos ensures that each of these components can be addressed thoroughly and without putting the students at risk of injury.

Approval of the number of solos remains at the discretion of the teacher and Miss Clark/Ms Jasmin, and may be adjusted if a student's workload, health, attendance, or commitment to prerequisite classes is impacted.

### **New Solos & Choreography Sessions**

New solos for 2026 will not be choreographed or taught within regular scheduled

private lesson times. A 30-minute private lesson does not provide sufficient time to safely and effectively complete the creative, musical, and technical work required for the development of a new solo.

All new solos must be choreographed and taught outside regular private lesson times in two-hour choreography sessions. Some students may be able to learn a new solo within this time, while others may require additional sessions, depending on age, experience, learning pace, and the complexity of the choreography.

At the conclusion of each two-hour choreography session, students and parents can expect:

- A filmed reference video of the choreography
- Teacher demonstrations including counts and notes, to support independent rehearsal at home

## Choreography Fees & Rationale

Solo choreography is a specialised component of a dancer's training and is distinct from regular private lesson tuition. Across the dance industry, it is standard practice for choreography to be charged separately, as it involves significant creative preparation, musical planning, technical design, and concentrated teaching time.

At LCDC, choreography sessions include music preparation, pre-planning, choreographic creation, structured teaching time, and filmed reference materials to support independent rehearsal. Separating choreography from regular private lessons allows us to maintain the integrity of technical training, manage student workload appropriately, and ensure teachers are remunerated for their creative expertise. This structure supports high-quality outcomes for students while aligning with contemporary industry standards.

Choreography sessions incur a separate choreography fee, which covers all preparation, creative development, and the two-hour teaching session. Please refer to the teacher rates below.

Teacher	Weekday Rate (9am-3pm)	Sunday Rate
Miss Clark	\$250.00	\$625.00
Ms Jasmin	\$250.00	\$625.00
Miss Chifley	\$225.00	\$562.50
Miss Ashleigh	\$200.00	\$500.00
Miss Charlotte	\$200.00	\$500.00
Miss Natalie	\$200.00	\$500.00
Miss Jacinta	\$200.00	\$500.00
Miss Tiahna	\$200.00	\$500.00

Please note:

- Studios and teachers are not available after 3:30pm Monday–Friday due to regular timetabled classes.
- Choreography sessions cannot be booked on Saturdays due to Performance Group commitments. This is to manage student workload, reduce exhaustion, and minimise injury risk.
- Sessions may be booked on Sundays, subject to teacher availability, and are charged at 250% of standard rates in accordance with Fair Work requirements. Teachers are not obliged to work on Sundays; availability will be confirmed through consultation.
- All solos choreographed by LCDC staff remain the intellectual property of LCDC and may not be taken, recreated, or re-used if a student moves to another school.

## Performance Approval & Eisteddfods

Learning a solo does not guarantee approval to perform at an eisteddfod or competition. Students will only be permitted to perform when the teacher and Miss Clark are satisfied that the solo has reached an appropriate technical and artistic standard and that the student is adequately prepared.

Students may only perform in eisteddfods approved by Miss Clark/Ms Jasmin. Performance approval is granted on a case-by-case basis and reflects the student's readiness, workload, and overall training commitments.

## Teacher Discretion

LCDC reserves the right to limit, pause, modify, or withdraw a solo, performance opportunity, or private lesson focus at any time if a student's commitment, attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, physical readiness, or overall workload — including signs of overtraining, fatigue, or burnout — is deemed insufficient or not in the student's best interests.

This may include reducing the number of solos, temporarily shifting private lesson focus to technique and conditioning, or withdrawing a student from performance or competition opportunities in accordance with safe dance practices and injury-prevention principles.

Decisions will be made by the teacher in consultation with Miss Clark and/or Ms Jasmin and are final. The withdrawal or modification of solos, performances, or lesson focus does not entitle families to refunds for private lessons or choreography sessions already undertaken.



## Parental Boundaries & Artistic Direction

In addition to the workload and well-being considerations outlined above, artistic and choreographic decisions at LCDC are guided by professional judgement and educational priorities.

To maintain the highest standard of training, safe dance practice, and artistic integrity, and all decisions regarding choreography, difficulty level, content, and progression is the responsibility of the teacher, in consultation with Miss Clark and/or Ms Jasmin.



Teacher discretion is based on ongoing professional observation of the student's engagement, capacity, and readiness within regular classes, Performance Group, rehearsals, and private lessons. These decisions reflect what consistently occurs in the studio environment and are made in the student's best long-term interests.

While parents are encouraged to support and advocate for their dancer, requests or pressure to:

- increase technical difficulty beyond a student's current ability
- include skills, tricks, or elements the student is not physically ready for
- alter choreography for competitive advantage rather than technical readiness
- rush progression, add solos, or fast-track development

will not be accommodated.

Choreography is designed to suit each dancer's age, experience, physical development, technical capacity, and injury-prevention needs, as well as syllabus and examination priorities. Decisions are made to support sustainable progress rather than short-term outcomes.

Teachers at LCDC are engaged to act in the best interests of each student's training and wellbeing, and their professional judgement must be respected.

Persistent overstepping of boundaries — including repeated requests or pressure to challenge professional teaching judgement — will result in the withdrawal or cancellation of private lessons and/or solo opportunities, at the discretion of LCDC. Where appropriate, access to private lessons may be reinstated once expectations regarding communication, boundaries, and professional decision-making are clearly understood and respected.

LCDC reserves the right to decline, modify, or reverse choreography decisions if parental involvement or expectations are deemed to compromise student wellbeing,

safe dance practice, or the educational integrity of the program. These decisions are final and will be made in consultation with Miss Clark and/or Ms Jasmin.

## Individual Pathways

Solo opportunities, styles, and allocations are determined on an individual basis, taking into account each student's age, experience, training load, and readiness. Decisions made for one student do not set a precedent for others.

Students and parents are expected to focus on their own dancer's journey and to remain respectful, humble, and supportive of the achievements and progress of other students at all times.

## Private Lesson Prices

Teacher	Weekday Rate (per half hour)	Saturday Rate (per half hour)
Miss Clark	\$50.00	N/A
Ms Jasmin	\$50.00	N/A
Miss Chifley	\$45.00	N/A
Miss Ashleigh	\$40.00	\$45.00
Miss Charlotte	\$40.00	\$45.00
Miss Natalie	\$40.00	\$45.00
Miss Jacinta	\$40.00	\$45.00
Miss Tiahna	\$40.00	N/A

## Payment & Fees

Payment for all private lessons is due by Wednesday of Week 7 each term, unless on a payment plan through StudioLAB.

Choreography sessions and associated choreography fees, as outlined in the *New Solos & Choreography Sessions* section, are due in full within 14 days of the lesson and/or invoice. All payments are processed via StudioLAB, which incurs a 1.75% + \$0.30 transaction fee. If a transaction fails, StudioLAB will automatically reattempt payment until it is successful.



Fees remaining unpaid 14 days after the due date will incur a \$5.00 weekly late fee, with an additional \$5.00 applied each subsequent week until the balance is paid in full. This applies to private lessons, choreography sessions, and any fees prepaid on behalf of the student (including exam entries and costume fees).

All costs associated with solo performances — including entry fees, costumes, and choreography fees, and travel — are the responsibility of the student/parents.

Private lessons may be paid through a payment plan on StudioLAB. This cannot be linked to normal term payment plans, and thus will include a separate 1.75% + 30c surage fee for each transaction.

Cash payments are not to be made directly to teachers under any circumstances.

## Private Lesson Allocation

With approximately 40 students invited to undertake private lessons, availability is extremely limited and the overall LCDC timetable takes priority.

Private lesson allocation occurs as follows:

- The directors review each student's individual needs and training goals and allocate private lessons based on teacher suitability, training level, lesson requirements, and timetable feasibility, with the student's dance training, development, and wellbeing as the primary consideration. Where possible, allocations are aligned with existing dance timetables; however, this cannot be guaranteed due to studio and staff availability.
- Priority for private lesson allocation is given from Senior Performance Group through to Grade 4, recognising that students working at higher levels often have greater technical demands, more complex training goals, and, in some cases, require longer or more specialised lesson durations to support their development.
- Private lesson times are allocated within the constraints of the full LCDC timetable and offer limited flexibility. Families are expected to make every reasonable effort to accommodate the allocated time. Where this is not possible, private lesson availability cannot be guaranteed.

Families should be aware that, for students aiming to achieve the highest standard of training, particularly those working with Miss Clark and/or Ms Jasmin, private lessons may need to occur during school hours. Decisions around school attendance remain the responsibility of families; however, access to preferred teachers or lesson times may be limited outside these hours.



## Cancellations & Make-Up Lessons

For cancellations other than illness, a minimum of 24 hours' notice is required. If less than 24 hours' notice is provided, but more than 3 hours', 50% of the lesson fee will be charged.

For cancellations due to illness, a minimum of 3 hours' notice is required. If less than 3 hours' notice is provided, the full lesson fee will be charged.

All cancellations must be communicated directly to LCDC admin staff. Teachers are not responsible for managing cancellations or credits.

If a student arrives more than 5 minutes late to a 30-minute private lesson, the lesson will be cancelled and the full fee will be charged.

Private lessons are not scheduled on Sundays or Public Holidays unless families agree to pay the 250% rate in accordance with Fair Work requirements. LCDC will not absorb this cost, and all teachers reserve the right to refuse work outside their normal hours.

Where a student's regularly scheduled private lesson falls on a Public Holiday, the lesson fee will be removed from the charge in StudioLAB. A make-up lesson is not included by default.

## Communication

All communication regarding private lesson scheduling, cancellations, and fees must be directed to LCDC admin staff. Teacher contact details may be requested via admin where appropriate.

Teachers are to be contacted via email only and will respond within normal business hours. Teachers are frequently teaching back-to-back classes and cannot monitor or respond to messages immediately before, during, or between classes.

Student reference videos will be provided via Band; however, Band is not a communication platform for ongoing discussion between teachers and parents. Messages sent via Band, social media, or text message will not be monitored or responded to.

Any discussions relating to private lesson content,



progress, or goals must be scheduled outside of class times. Unscheduled conversations immediately before or after classes cannot be accommodated.

## Studio Hire & Rehearsals

Studio hire must be booked through LCDC admin staff and is charged at \$10 per half hour, subject to availability. Students may not rehearse unsupervised.

Parents may be present in the studio to supervise their own dancer, however parents must not rehearse, coach, or direct students their own child or other students at LCDC.

Teachers are not available to supervise or oversee independent rehearsals booked as studio hire. If a teacher is required to supervise, assist, or intervene during a rehearsal, the time will be charged at the appropriate private lesson rate for that teacher.

## Duos & Trios

Students may participate in one (1) duo or trio only. This limit is in place to manage workload, rehearsal demands, and safe dance practice.

All duo and trio choreography and rehearsals must occur outside of individual private lesson times. Duo and trio work must not replace, reduce, or be incorporated into a student's personal private lesson, which remains dedicated to individual technical development and solo preparation.

## Choreography & Rehearsals

Duo and trio choreography is treated as specialist choreography work and must be booked as additional lessons. The same terms, conditions, and pricing structure outlined in the New Solos & Choreography Sessions section apply, including requirements regarding lesson length, scheduling, and teacher availability.

Additional rehearsal lessons must be booked for all duo or trio work. Rehearsals may not "eat into" individual private lesson time, nor be rotated between students' personal private lessons.

## Fees & Charges

Duo and trio lessons are charged as follows:

- Choreography At the respective teacher's choreography rate
- Rehearsals the respective teacher's normal private lesson rate
- Rehearsals At the Saturday rate, where applicable
- At 250% for Sundays or Public Holidays, in accordance with Fair Work requirements



Lesson costs are divided equally between the participating students and charged to each family's StudioLAB account. All other private lesson payment terms apply.

## Costuming

In 2026, LCDC will no longer add new solo costumes to the hire collection. Hireable costumes are limited to classical tutus and demi character costumes only, subject to size availability. LCDC does not hold hireable costume stock for Lyrical, Jazz, Tap, or Contemporary solos.

If LCDC is unable to provide a suitable tutu or demi character costume, it is the parent's responsibility to source an appropriate alternative. This also applies to classical costumes for repertoire or variation solos.

All non-hire costumes are the responsibility of families and must be approved by Miss Clark and/or Ms Jasmin prior to performance.

### Costume Hire Fees (per calendar year)

- Tutu hire: \$120.00
- Variation hire: from \$80.00
- Demi character costume hire: from \$60.00

### Sourcing Solo Costumes

Solo costumes may be sourced through suppliers such as Weissmans, Studio7, or Kelle Costumes, with assistance from LCDC admin staff, as studio accounts are often required to place orders.

All costs associated with costume orders — including purchase price, shipping, international exchange rates, and any applicable duties — must be pre-paid in full at the time of ordering. LCDC will not place costume orders without full payment.

### Ordering Timeframes

Solo costumes must be ordered a minimum of five (5) weeks prior to the commencement date of the relevant competition or eisteddfod. Late orders may not arrive in time and will not be the responsibility of LCDC.

## Betsy Sawers RAD Memorial Awards

Students performing solos in eisteddfods are highly encouraged to participate in the Betsy Sawers RAD Memorial Awards in 2026. This provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate their performance quality, artistry,



and musicality, alongside their technical understanding of the RAD syllabus, within a supportive and educational framework.

## Private Lesson Expectations

All students undertaking private lessons are expected to uphold the standards outlined in the LCDC Performance Group Handbook. Private lessons are an extension of Performance Group training and operate within the same expectations regarding behaviour, commitment, respect, and professionalism.



### Student expectations:

- Always adhere to the LCDC Code of Conduct, both in the studio and when representing LCDC at eisteddfods and competitions.
- Arrive properly groomed and in full dance uniform (leotard and tights) and with hair in a bun.
- Work consistently to the best of their ability and engage respectfully with staff and fellow students at all times, both within the studio, on LCDC premises and when representing LCDC at eisteddfods and competitions.
- Support other students and maintain a positive, respectful training environment, recognising that each dancer's journey is individual.
- Understand that participation in private lessons or solo work does not guarantee performance opportunities. All performances must meet the required standard, and students may be withdrawn from performance if this standard is not met.
- Prioritise compulsory Performance Group and its pre-requisite classes as outlined in the Performance Group Handbook. Private lessons do not replace or override compulsory training requirements.

### Parent expectations:

- Always adhere to the LCDC Code of Conduct, both in the studio and when representing LCDC at eisteddfods and competitions.
- Support the values and expectations of the LCDC, including respect for staff, students, and professional decision-making.
- Understand that private lessons and solo opportunities do not guarantee performance in all dances, solos, or competitions.
- Acknowledge that progression, choreography, and performance opportunities are determined by staff based on student readiness, technical standard and student welfare, and that decisions made for one student do not set a precedent for others.
- Respect that staff decisions regarding training, performance, are final and not subject to negotiation. While explanations may be provided where appropriate, discussion or pressure regarding outcomes will not be entered into.
- Recognise that school commitments may occasionally impact attendance, however compulsory Performance Group and the pre-requisite classes remain the

- the priority, and private lessons do not override these requirements.

## Other

This Private Lesson Handbook forms part of LCDC's broader policy framework and must be read and applied alongside the Performance Group Handbook, and Terms and Conditions and Code of Conduct.

