

Sonja Dene is a highly respected teacher with over 32 years of experience in dance education with many guest teaching appointments throughout Australia. Sonja began her dance training in 1971 with Ransley Studios where she studied Classical Ballet, Jazz, Tap and Irish. On completion of all her Vocational Exams and under the guidance and directorship of Joy and Dawn Ransley, Sonja moved to the Gold Coast in Queensland where she undertook the Student Teachers Training Course which she completed with Distinction. In 1994 the Royal Academy of Dance awarded Sonja the Teachers Diploma of Dance with Distinction. In this time, Sonja was seconded to the Gold Coast Youth Ballet and the Sydney Youth Ballet in the position of Ballet Mistress.

With Sonja's popularity growing as a Teacher of distinction she was a natural choice for election in 1990 to the NSW Regional Advisory Panel for the Royal Academy of Dance. In 2006 Sonja was elected Chair of the Panel, a position she retired from after **23 years**. In this position Sonja initiated a new format for the prestigious Isobel Anderson Awards Scholarship Competition which was adapted throughout Australia and most recently established the Joan & Monica Halliday Awards (NSW).

In 2015 Sonja was honoured by the Royal Academy of Dance with the President's Award and in 2016 Sonja was awarded "Most Outstanding Performing Arts" by the Local Business Awards.

Sonja is the Director of Sonja Dene Dance Studios , Vocational Ballet College NSW, and Happy Feet Ballet Studios and has a Diploma of Dance Teaching and Management CUA50311RAD, RAD Diploma of Teaching, Cert IV TAE 40110 and is an RAD Registered Teacher (since 1986) and is an International Freelance Coach & Adjudicator.