

Programme specification

(Notes on how to complete this template are provided in Annexe 2)

1. Overview/ factual information

Programme/award title(s)	Foundation Degree Dance
Teaching Institution	Ballet West
Awarding Institution	The Open University (OU)
Date of latest OU validation	
Next revalidation	
Credit points for the award	240
UCAS Code	
Programme start date	September 2017
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	Dance, Drama and Performance
Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes	
Professional/statutory recognition	
Duration of the programme for each mode of study (P/T, FT, DL)	Full time only 2 years
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	
Date of production/revision of this specification	

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in student module guide(s) and the students' handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

2.1 Educational aims and objectives

The overarching aim of the programme is to produce Foundation degree graduates who are capable of progressing to further study to gain employment as dancers.

Direct access to the world of work is possible and, in common with other Foundation degrees, a significant proportion of the programme is focused on work related learning. Students experience the daily professional routine of morning ballet class and devise/learn, rehearse and publicly perform four dance productions over the two years of the course. These activities give students the genuine experience of being members of a touring dance company. In total 180 of the 240 credits in the programme relate directly to the professional practice of dancers, in technical classes and preparation for performance. Specifically, the 60 credits in the Professional Practice and Performance strand are equivalent to students receiving an apprenticeship in a dance company.

On completion of the Foundation degree, students will be skilled dance practitioners, who possess a developing personal appreciation of the nature and potential of dance as an art form and be able to reflect on their own abilities and areas of potential growth.

The philosophy of the programme is to provide structures in which students can test out and develop their skills, working methods and principles predominantly as performers but also as choreographers, researchers and writers. The programme seeks to expand their knowledge, experience and appreciation of the nature of dance practices within a variety of contexts.

This two-year intensive programme draws students from a variety of dance experiences. Curriculum design therefore seeks to provide all students with a secure foundation in the principal dance styles of classical ballet, contemporary and jazz dance, with an emphasis on classical ballet and, to a lesser extent, contemporary dance. It also offers other areas of study (choreography and the cultural contexts of dance) to broaden the students' experience and the potential for further study and career opportunities.

The programme seeks to provide a learning environment that is both challenging and supportive. The first year aims to build student confidence, deepen and widen the different previous experiences students are bringing to the programme and embed vital skills and competencies. The second year provides greater opportunities to develop dance technique and encourage creative expression and risk-taking in a safe and supportive artistic environment. Through providing students with knowledge and experience of different practical approaches and critical perspectives, the programme seeks to encourage an awareness of students' dance practice and development as reflective practitioners.

The programme aims:

1. To provide students with well-developed abilities, competencies and skills central to dance performance, choreography and critical analysis.
2. To produce graduates with a well-developed, embodied understanding of the expressive dancing body.
3. To promote reflection on the nature and potential of dance as an art form.
4. To promote appreciation of the relationships between dance practice and its aesthetic, cultural and social, contemporary contexts.
5. To prepare students to transition to further study or careers in dance.

6. To ensure that students acquire a range of more general, transferable skills in problem solving and effective communication, teamwork and working independently, to facilitate access to a broad range of educational and employment opportunities after graduation.
7. To provide a supportive environment for students and staff which encourages independent thinking, creative risk-taking, and freedom of artistic expression.
8. To encourage students to progressively take ownership and direction of their learning so that they may develop as independent life-long learners.

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

The Foundation Degree is designed to articulate with the one-year BA(Hons) degree offered at Ballet West. This structure provides the opportunity for students to leave after two years to start a career, having achieved a recognised qualification. The opportunity is then available for the students to return to study after a period of work and complete the BA(hons) degree.

3. Programme outcomes

Intended learning outcomes are listed below with paragraph references to QAA Subject benchmark statements for Dance, Drama and performance, July 2015 <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Dance-Drama-Performance-15.pdf>)

LTA strategy

(see also Ballet West Learning and Teaching Strategy)

Consideration is given to both the diverse backgrounds of the students and the intensive nature of the degree year. The design of the degree seeks to reflect the QAA Benchmark Statements *Dance, drama and performance 2015*, notably 6.5 that “experiential learning is a key principle of study”.

Regular technique classes form a fundamental basis in enabling students to cultivate, maintain and progress an articulate and expressive dancing body/mind able to meet the demands of performance and choreographic work.

The Professional Practice and Performance strand is an essential vehicle in providing opportunities for them to gain work related experience of performing. It also provides the knowledge required for students to be safe and healthy dance practitioners. The performance tour is a significant event within the student learning experience, a motivational goal to work towards, and an opportunity no doubt to hone skills in dealing with new situations, problem-solving and working effectively with others.

The study of choreography brings together practical, studio-based exploration with seminar discussion thus seeking to connect acquisition of skills in dance making with an intellectual appreciation of, and verbal dexterity in, discussing questions of cultural relevance, aesthetics and key concerns in current choreographic practice. Workshops with professional choreographers and viewing dance performances are crucial in extending this understanding of current practice and its derivative sources.

These many experiential learning opportunities are complimented by learning opportunities which seek to broaden students’ knowledge and appreciation of dance and other art forms in relation to notions of dance in wider culture. Lectures are delivered alongside seminars drawing on a variety of learning methods including discussion and observation of work on recorded media. While essay assignments here offer opportunity to expand skills in writing, other modules provide the chance for students to further their oral communication skills, through

presentations and viva voce assessments.

Students are given opportunities to learn a number of digital technology skills, including music editing for dance and power point presentations.

The degree aims to reflect the Benchmark Statement 6.11

“Opportunities for formative and summative assessment are provided in a variety of modes, which assess critical understanding, knowledge, ability, technique, creativity, artistry and application”

Those included in this foundation degree include

- coursework, for example:
 - Continuous assessment in practical classes
 - Continuous assessment in rehearsal and performance
 - Essays
 - Critical evaluations
 - Journals

- examination
 - Audition classes
 - Practical (for example, internal (restricted) and/or public performances)
 - Oral presentation
 - viva voce*

The variety of learning methods and assessment tasks within the programme include many opportunities for students to receive formative feedback. Formative assessment includes verbal feedback, physical/kinaesthetic information, feedback from peers, self-observation including use of video, as well as written feedback. Feedback on summative assessment may be in written form or given verbally during individual tutorials.

3A. Subject Knowledge, understanding and abilities		
Learning outcomes :	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods	
On successful completion of this programme students will be able to demonstrate:	Learning and Teaching	Assessment
A1 A knowledge of well established modes of performance and of concepts in cultural theory as a framework for contextualising artistic practice.	Lectures and seminars Rehearsals	Essays & Critical reviews Logbook
A2 A detailed understanding of the range of processes by which dance performance can be created and an ability to select some of the processes to own practice with support.	Choreographic workshops, rehearsal, lectures	Performance of choreography Logbook presentation viva voce
A3 A developing awareness of well-established dance practices and key dance practitioners.	Lectures and seminars	Essays Critical reviews

3B. Subject specific skills		
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods	
On successful completion of this programme students will be able to demonstrate:	Learning and Teaching	Assessment
B1 An ability to execute advanced technical dance skills in class and performance, across a range of styles.	Dance technique classes and rehearsals	Continuous assessment of technique classes and rehearsals. Assessed classes Performances, internal and external (public)
B2 An ability to apply a level of personal artistry in performance which is moderately developed in confidence and consistency.	Dance technique classes and rehearsals	Continuous assessment of technique classes and rehearsals. Assessed classes Performances, internal and external (public)
B3 An ability to undertake independent research to demonstrate understanding of dance within cultural contexts.	Lectures and seminars	Essays Critical reviews

3C. Generic and Graduate Skills		
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods	
On successful completion of this programme students will be able to demonstrate:	Learning and Teaching	Assessment
C1 Ability to utilise a limited range of critical and analytical skills to demonstrate an understanding of own and other's artistic practice and be able to communicate in both oral and written form demonstrating understanding of basic scholarly conventions.	Lectures and seminars	Presentation Viva voce Essays & Critical Reviews
C2 Ability to engage in teamwork, supporting other team members and pursuing joint goals	Choreographic workshops, rehearsal, lectures	Performance of choreography Performances, internal and external (public) performances
C3 Ability to work with limited support, pursuing own objectives, managing workload and meeting deadlines.	Choreographic workshops, rehearsal, lectures	Performance of choreography Essays & critical reviews Presentation
C4 Ability to utilise basic information retrieval skills; gathering, sifting and evaluating materials for specific and well defined purposes	Lectures and seminars	Presentation & viva voce Essays & critical reviews

4. Programme Structure

Programme Structure - LEVEL 1			
Compulsory modules	Credit points	Optional modules	Credit points
Ballet Techniques 1	30		
Dance Techniques 1	30		
Choreography 1	30		
Professional Practice and Performance 1	30		

Programme Structure - LEVEL 2			
Compulsory modules	Credit points	Optional modules	Credit points
Ballet Techniques 2	30		
Dance Techniques 2	30		
Choreography 2	30		
Professional Practice and Performance 2	30		

5. Distinctive features of the programme structure

- **Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:**
 - **where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression**
 - **any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules**
- where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route**

6. Support for students and their learning

Induction

It is essential that all students admitted to the programme receive the necessary induction to prepare them for the nature of study on an undergraduate programme. The induction programme will include an introduction to the following:

- ◆ the aims and objectives of the programme
- ◆ the structure of the programme
- ◆ programme regulations governing progression and degree awards
- ◆ regulations governing the conduct of assessments
- ◆ Ballet West regulations governing student behaviour
- ◆ the individual modules which make up the programme
- ◆ the assessment methods for each module
- ◆ the module tutors responsible for delivering each module
- ◆ teaching and learning methods to be used in delivery of the programme
- ◆ the use of library facilities and other information sources
- ◆ study skills

The above information will also be provided in the Student Handbook and on the student website.

The Ballet West Programme manager will be responsible for ensuring the handbook is distributed to all students.

Ballet West Additional Student Support

Before Programme

Students will attend for audition and interview which will include a tour of facilities. Students will receive information about the structure of the programme, financial support, accommodation, and Student Services. All students will be interviewed in order to discuss their expectations and suitability for degree level study, as part of the longitudinal induction process. This will evaluate an individual student's requirement for additional support/training. If additional support is required, action will be taken by the student and Ballet West, as appropriate. This may involve intensive training in a particular dance style, language competency test or study skills course

During Programme

The induction programme includes: Welcome lecture, Health and safety briefing, ICT induction and Student Services induction talks/demonstrations.

Academic induction takes the form of group sessions led by student advisers, during which student handbooks and module briefs are distributed and discussed. Prior to enrolment, students are required to sign the Ballet West regulations concerning behaviour.

Student Support and Guidance

The nature of the practical study of dance ensures a high level of staff contact. As a result of this, personal and academic issues are usually quickly identified and resolved within the learning and teaching process. Nonetheless, Student Advisors, will be available to students.

During all levels of study students are entitled to 4 individual meetings per year to discuss their progress and any problems encountered. Records of these meetings and any necessary actions are kept by the advisor. Students have the right to apply to the course leader for a change of advisor.

Student Services staff will deal with those problems that fall within their remit and expertise and otherwise refer students to local counselling and support agencies for further support or advice where necessary.

Following the identification of additional student needs at interview, induction or beyond a referral will be made to the local student services office for a full diagnostic assessment to be made. Following receipt of this guidance, special arrangements will be made wherever reasonable and achievable. This will be regularly reviewed and monitored by the programme leader.

Module leaders are the first point of contact for information or academic advice regarding their particular module.

Student Advisor Tutorial

The Programme Team recognises that in the nature of performer training, the student is regularly called upon to draw on aspects of their own life experience. By definition, this means that students are required to look very carefully at themselves, at their own responses to situations, and at their own ability to take responsibility for themselves.

In turn, this means that it is often virtually impossible to separate the pastoral from the academic. For this reason, the Ballet West tutorial system allows for support and exploration of both aspects of the student's likely need. In addition, it allows for both formal and informal tutorial input.

The purpose of the Student Advisor Tutorial is two-fold:

- To offer the student regular opportunity to discuss their training and personal issues with an objective listener
- To offer a formal system for the addressing of difficulties, problems and concerns.

All such tutorials are recorded on a Tutorial Record Form. This ensures that there is an accurate record of all discussions. The form is placed in the student's file, and the student is aware of all details written on the form.

In addition to this formal system, students receive tutorial academic input on a daily and informal basis throughout classes and projects. The nature of the contact between students and tutors in dance is such that tutors are receptive to changes in a student's behaviour and performance on a daily basis. Tutors will often discuss these changes with students in an informal way and take the necessary steps to alleviate concerns, whether they are personal or academic, or refer students to the programme leader, trained student support staff or other appropriate agency.

Similarly, students are aware that they can discuss any issues with their tutors or the programme leader in an informal way.

Careers Advice

In this subject area, often the most important source of careers advice is the teaching staff, who are all active practitioners and will give advice freely whenever asked. In addition, the institution runs career seminars and lectures by industry professionals regarding career progression.

Near the end of the programme, students will review their overall progress with their Student Adviser. Appropriate guidance will be given to help students finalise and implement decisions about their future. Student Advisers will collect post-course

destination data for the group as a whole.

7. Criteria for admission

The **minimum** academic entry requirement is

- 5 GCSEs at A*-C or 4-9 including English OR
- 5 National 5 qualifications at A-C including English OR
- 5 credit Standard grades OR
- Equivalent local academic qualifications

The **minimum** dance entry requirement is to pass an audition ballet class and to be familiar with the Royal Academy of Dance Intermediate syllabus, or equivalent.

It is recognised that successful completion of the programme is dependent upon the ability of the students in the English Language. All students must have an adequate command of written and spoken English. The **minimum** normal pre-entry requirement for Overseas Students is CEFR B2, which is an overall IELTS score of 6.0 with no individual element score of less than 5.5

Evidence of attainment of the required level of English or equivalent level of English Language competence must be provided to Ballet West prior to admission to the programme.

8. Language of study

English

9. Information about assessment regulations

Open University regulations as amended by Ballet West and approved at validation

10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

Careful monitoring of quality assurance and the active process of quality enhancement are key to the school's success. The responsibility for ensuring the quality of the learning experience for students lies primarily with the Ballet West staff. As such the following is a description of the procedures in place to assure quality is evaluated and improved in teaching and learning.

The programme team believe that quality enhancement should be continuous and cultural: 2-way verbal feedback is a feature of the operation of Ballet West, and this will be encouraged and articulated with the more formal procedures set out below. Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement is key and students will be encouraged to participate in enhancement issues through

- Giving feedback, both informally and through formal questionnaires
- Engaging with student representatives
- As student representatives, taking a proactive role in course meetings

The team are committed and enthusiastic practitioners, and are well aware of the importance of a culture of continuous quality enhancement through professional dialogue. The work of the team will be enhanced through regular contact with industry and practice-based research.

The Programme Committee will convene at least two times in each academic session, and two student representatives will be elected at the beginning of the session to raise student concerns or points for discussion relating to learning and teaching at these meetings

Quality Enhancement Policy

Ballet West supports the definition of quality enhancement as 'taking deliberate steps to bring about continuous improvement in the effectiveness of the learning experience of students'.

The primary purposes of the Policy are to make clear to students, staff and stakeholders the importance of Quality Enhancement of student experience at Ballet West, and how structures and processes are used to ensure that Quality Enhancement is robustly embedded within our activities.

Ballet West aims to assure and maintain appropriate academic standards in all provision. We achieve this through a range of quality assurance systems, which are designed to:

- engage with national standards and expectations (including the QAA Quality Code) through development and annual review processes
- ensure that action is taken to safeguard standards and to enhance the quality of programmes and learning opportunities
- provide feedback to students and programme teams on actions being taken to improve quality
- annually review quality assurance activities and procedures to check their relevance, value and achievability for all partners
- identify areas of good practice and contribute to quality enhancement.

Roles in the QA & QE Process

The Academic Board

The academic board will:

- exercise the overall academic and operational responsibility for the programme and its development within defined policies, procedures and regulations
- be responsible for maintaining and enhancing the quality of the programme through the:
 - preparation of the annual review for the QAA and considering reports following QAA monitoring visits.
 - monitoring and evaluation of the aims, objectives and structure of the programme
 - review of academic regulations, admissions policy statements, assessment instruments
 - development of teaching and learning methods.
 - Consideration of recommendations from the programme committee
- monitor student admission and student progress
- monitor and evaluate the provision of student advice tutorials and welfare provision
- Consider, and take action on, feedback received from staff through the programme committee
- Consider, and take action on, feedback received from students through the programme committee and through module evaluation questionnaires

Membership consists of the following:

- Programme manager (Head of quality) - chair
- Vice principal for learning and teaching
- Head of dance
- Admissions administrator
- Two student representatives from the programme

The academic board will normally meet at least two times a year,

The Programme Committee

The programme committee will:

- be responsible for maintaining and enhancing the quality of the programme through the establishment and development of mechanisms to ensure student feedback
- ensure that programme delivery is effectively managed, including time-tabling, access to teaching rooms, access to specialist facilities, etc.
- monitor and evaluate the provision of student advice tutorials and welfare provision
- Record areas of best practice from students
- Record module specific comments from staff and student representative
- Set action points for quality improvement
- Report to the academic board

Membership consists of the following:

- Vice Principal of Learning and teaching
- Programme manager (Head of quality)
- Module leaders

- Two student representatives from the programme

The Programme Committee will normally meet at least two times a year,

Vice Principal of Learning and teaching responsibilities are:

- as convener of the Programme Committee to ensure the effective organisation and conduct of the programme within agreed policies and regulations
- to monitor the operation of the programme on an ongoing basis, and to co-ordinate its annual evaluation
- to allocate appropriate staff for teaching and other duties required by the programme
- via regular meetings with year groups and academic tutors, to be aware of the academic welfare and progress of students in the programme, and to be closely aware of students' views about the programme
- in consultation with the module leaders to agree an assessment schedule
- to take executive action as agreed by the Programme Committee
- to ensure that all staff involved are undertaking their duties appropriately and make arrangements for someone to act in their place if necessary
- to take responsibility for the academic development of the staff in terms of their research, scholarly and professional activities.

The Programme Manager

The Programme Manager will administer the programme on a day-to-day basis and be responsible for the following aspects of the programme:

- The production of the student handbook, the annual programme report and quality assurance documentation
- Maintaining effective feedback links between students and staff and co-ordinating relevant committees
- Acting as programme admissions tutor and to liaise with the Admissions department regarding student applications
- Co-ordinating and leading the student induction programme
- Administering and arranging academic support
- Liaising with assessors, internal moderators and the external examiners to ensure that marking deadlines are met.

The Staff Team

Will jointly co-ordinate the following aspects of the course:

- Ensuring adequate provision of learning and teaching and overseeing the incorporation of visiting staff within the programme
- Monitoring of general operation and development of the award
- Considering applications and making offers for places on the programme
- Providing academic leadership
- Maintaining effective feedback links between students and staff.

Annexe 1: Curriculum map

Annexe 2: Notes on completing the OU programme specification template

Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level	MODULE	Programme outcomes									
		A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	C4
4	Ballet Techniques 1				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	Dance Techniques 1				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	Choreography 1	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓
	Professional Practice and Performance 1				✓	✓			✓	✓	

Level	MODULE	Programme outcomes									
		A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	C4
5	Ballet Techniques 2				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	Dance Techniques 2				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	Choreography 2		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓
	Professional Practice and Performance 2				✓	✓			✓	✓	

Annexe 2: Notes on completing programme specification templates

- 1 - This programme specification should be aligned with the learning outcomes detailed in module specifications.
- 2 – The expectations regarding student achievement and attributes described by the learning outcome in section 3 must be appropriate to the level of the award within the **QAA frameworks for HE qualifications**: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/Pages/default.aspx>
- 3 – Learning outcomes must also reflect the detailed statements of graduate attributes set out in **QAA subject benchmark statements** that are relevant to the programme/award: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>
- 4 – In section 3, the learning and teaching methods deployed should enable the achievement of the full range of intended learning outcomes. Similarly, the choice of assessment methods in section 3 should enable students to demonstrate the achievement of related learning outcomes. Overall, assessment should cover the full range of learning outcomes.
- 5 - Where the programme contains validated **exit awards** (e.g. CertHE, DipHE, PGDip), learning outcomes must be clearly specified for each award.
- 6 - For programmes with distinctive study **routes or pathways** the specific rationale and learning outcomes for each route must be provided.
- 7 – Validated programmes delivered in **languages other than English** must have programme specifications both in English and the language of delivery.