

21 Learning and Teaching (QC Chapter B3)

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21.1 Learning and Teaching Strategy

- 21.1.1 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”.
- 21.1.2 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.
- 21.1.3 The Dance Company to which all students belong is an essential vehicle in providing opportunities for them to gain vocationally relevant experience of performing. It also provides the knowledge required for students to be safe and healthy dance practitioners.
- 21.1.4 The Dance Company 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.
- 21.1.5 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 theatre visits to see live performances are crucial in extending this understanding of current practice and its derivative sources.
- 21.1.6 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.
- 21.1.7 Students are given opportunities to learn a number of digital technology skills, including music editing for dance and power point presentations.

21.1.8 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”

21.1.9 Those included in this foundation degree include

- coursework, for example:
 - Continuous assessment in practical classes
 - Continuous assessment in rehearsal and performance (live or mediated)
- essays
- critical evaluations
- journals
- examination
- Practical (for example, internal(restricted) and/or public performances)
- Oral presentation
- viva voce

21.1.10 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.

21.1.11 For further information relating to learning outcomes for the programmes and modules see the programme specifications and module descriptors.

21.2 Additional Student Support

21.2.1 **Before Programme** - Students new to Ballet West 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, Student Services and Learning 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

21.2.2 **During Programme** - The induction programme includes:

- Welcome lecture,
- Health and safety briefing
- ICT induction
- GP registration
- Nutritional information

- Student Services induction talks/demonstrations.
- 21.2.3 **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 Student Rules, and terms and conditions concerning behaviour.
- 21.2.4 **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 production process. Nonetheless, Student Advisors, are available to students.
- 21.2.5 During all levels of study students are entitled to discuss their progress and any problems encountered. Records of these meetings and any necessary actions are kept by the adviser. Students have the right to apply to the programme manager for a change of adviser.
- 21.2.6 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.
- 21.2.7 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.
- 21.2.8 Module leaders are the first point of contact for information or academic advice regarding their particular module.

21.3 Student Advisor Tutorial

[B3/9]

[B6/6]

- 21.3.1 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.
- 21.3.2 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.
- 21.3.3 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.

- 21.3.4 All such tutorials are recorded on a Student 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. The form is attached in Appendix 1 to this document.
- 21.3.5 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.
- 21.3.6 Similarly, students are aware that they can discuss any issues with their tutors, the vice principal or the programme manager in an informal way.

21.4 Careers Advice

- 21.4.1 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.
- 21.4.2 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.