

## Programme 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 he/she passes the programme. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the programme handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this specification is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

### BPA (Hons) in Contemporary Dance

1. <b>Awarding Institution/Body</b>	University of Kent
2. <b>Teaching Institution</b>	Northern School of Contemporary Dance
3. <b>School responsible for management of the programme</b>	Northern School of Contemporary Dance
4. <b>Teaching Site</b>	Northern School of Contemporary Dance
5. <b>Mode of Delivery</b>	Full-time
6. <b>Programme accredited by</b>	N/A
7. <b>Final Award</b>	BPA (Hons) (fallback awards of non-honours degree CertHE, DipHE)
8. <b>Programme</b>	Contemporary Dance
9. <b>UCAS Code (or other code)</b>	N/A
10. <b>Credits/ECTS Value</b>	360 / 180 ECTS
11. <b>Study Level</b>	Undergraduate
12. <b>Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s)</b>	Dance, Drama and Performing Arts
13. <b>Date of creation/revision</b> ( <i>note that dates are necessary for version control</i> )	April 2015
14. <b>Intended Start Date of Delivery of this Programme</b>	September 2015

#### 15. Educational Aims of the Programme

The programme aims to:

1. Provide a high quality of conservatoire HE provision in the field of contemporary dance
2. Promote knowledge and understanding of professional contemporary dance practice and the aesthetic, artistic and cultural values informing the ways in which dances are made, performed, viewed and shared amongst a variety of recipients and audiences
3. Provide opportunities for students to develop the broad range of skills needed to meet the challenges of a diverse and multi-faceted professional dance environment

4. Encourage the exploration and development of students' distinct strengths and qualities, to realise physical and creative potential and foster an individual artistic voice
5. Instill principles of safe practice and wellbeing to promote life-long career paths within the dance profession
6. Provide an interface with the contemporary profession through which students can both be informed by and impact on the development of contemporary dance practice
7. Enable students to initiate, self-direct and maintain independent approaches to their own learning and to develop their analytical, critical and interpretive skills, appropriate to undergraduate study

### 16 Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes have references to the subject benchmarking statement for Dance, Drama and Performing Arts (**SB**).

#### A. Knowledge and Understanding of: *(i.e. subject-specific knowledge and understanding)*

1. A range of key components and processes by which contemporary dance is created, realised, shared and presented (**SB 4.2**)
2. Processes involved in the physical and creative exploration and development of contemporary dance practice (**SB 4.2, 4.3**)
3. The diversity of beliefs, values and attitudes that encompass and inform contemporary dance practice (**SB 4.2**)
4. A range of key practitioners, traditions, and histories and their relationships to current contemporary dance practice (**SB 4.2**)
5. A technical and creative embodiment of movement at an advanced and of a complex nature, safely and to prevent injury (**SB 4.5**)
6. The interplay of theory and practice within the field of contemporary dance (**SB 4.3**)

#### Skills and Other Attributes

##### B. Intellectual Skills: *(i.e. subject-specific intellectual skills)*

1. The application of knowledge and understanding of contemporary dance practice in order to initiate, undertake and complete extended projects (**SB 5.2**)
2. The application of reflective and independent thinking to personal practice and the practice of others, communicating conclusions verbally and/or in writing (**SB 5.2**)
3. The application of critical thinking to make informed judgments and evaluations of work developed for presentation and performance (**SB 5.2**)
4. The application of an understanding of personal practice within the broad field of current contemporary dance practice (**SB 5.1, 5.2**)

##### C. Subject-specific Skills: *(These will include practise and professional skills)*

1. Highly developed visual, aural and spatial awareness in the making, sharing, presentation and performance of contemporary dance (**SB 5.1**)
2. Advanced technical, creative and interpretive skills to effectively communicate with recipients or audiences (**SB 5.1, 5.2**)

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3. An informed approach to the fluid and adaptable relationship between performers and audiences in the sharing, presentation or performance of contemporary dance **(SB 5.1, 5.2)**
4. Informed engagement with the processes of production, design and rehearsals by which contemporary dance is made, shared and performed **(SB 5.1)**
5. The capacity to engage with a range of dance practices, technical, pedagogic and choreographic, to develop expertise and promote personal and professional growth **(SB 5.1, 5.2)**
6. The maintenance of working practices at a level equivalent to expected norms and standards of the dance profession **(SB 5.1, 5.2)**

### **D. Transferable Skills:** *(Non-subject specific key skills)*

1. The ability to exercise initiative and take responsibility within training and learning situations **(SB 5.2)**
2. The ability to communicate information, ideas and creative responses in a variety of ways and to a variety of audiences **(SB 5.1, 5.2)**
3. The ability to apply creative thinking and imagination to problem-solve and make effective decisions in complex and/or unpredictable situations **(SB 5.2)**
4. The ability to apply reflective and independent thinking in order to understand and evaluate personal learning experiences **(SB 5.2)**
5. The ability to sustain concentration and focused engagement with tasks for extended periods **(SB 5.2)**
6. The ability to work effectively and productively in groups to negotiate and pursue goals with others in practical contexts **(SB 5.2)**
7. The ability to undertake research, develop ideas and construct arguments and to present them in a variety of ways and forms **(SB 5.1, 5.2)**
8. The ability to apply and adhere to academic conventions in the presentation of written work, where appropriate **(SB 5.2)**
9. The ability to make informed and critical evaluations of own work and/or that of others **(SB 5.2)**
10. The ability to manage personal workloads and meet deadlines **(SB 5.2)**
11. The ability to recognise and conform to the accepted boundaries of a professional working environment **(SB 5.1, 5.2)**

### **Teaching/learning and assessment methods and strategies used to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated**

In Contemporary Dance Technique and Classical Ballet Technique modules student learning takes place through participation in tutor led classes. The classes focus on the training and articulation of the body and exercises are used to build the physical strength, flexibility and co-ordination needed to perform dance movement safely and with technical precision. This training is necessarily repetitive building a spiral curriculum of continually refining and sophisticating practice where the content is progressively developed throughout the 3 stages of study.

In Choreography, Improvisation & Movement Research and the Collaborative Arts Project modules skills, knowledge and understanding are acquired through tutor directed practical dance activities and independent creative investigations. These activities promote the exploration and development of an expressive dance vocabulary which enables the student to create, interpret and perform contemporary dance based on an understanding of the genre.

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A professional dance company experience is recreated in Rehearsal and Performance modules, where student learning takes place through the creation/devising and performance of new/restaged contemporary dance works. This process includes directed and independent learning, group work and the development of the interpersonal skills required to successfully work with professional choreographers, composers or designers.

In Performance Practice modules students undertake a self-directed rehearsal process supported by taught delivery of dance repertoire through which they develop an original or adapted solo or duet dance work.

In Contextual Studies modules learning takes place mainly through a programme of classroom based lectures, tutor directed and independent study and one to one tutorials. Modules such as Music and Body and Mind Learning and Ideas in the Arts combine theoretical study with practical activities and therefore learning outcomes are achieved through exposure to a wide range of teaching and learning methods as indicated above.

Uniquely for this programme, the Stage Three module Research Project includes the option to develop teaching practice through a period of placement learning within a school or community setting. Preparation for the placement involves tutor supported and independent study. During the placement students undertake their teaching practice within a professional teaching environment and are supported by a placement supervisor and the module tutor. Following the placement students engage in independent reflection and evaluation to produce a placement report.

### **Assessment Methods**

The College employs a wide variety of assessment methods including formative, continuous and summative assessment.

Assessment evidence is collected through:

- Continuous and summative assessments in technique modules.
- Assessed rehearsal processes
- Showings of solos, choreographic work and Improvisation & Movement Research lecture demonstrations
- Portfolios and notebooks
- Written essays and dissertations
- Written project reports and evaluations
- Individual and small group verbal presentations

Students receive ongoing feedback in practical classes and through the tutorial system in which professional, academic and personal development and progress are considered and evaluated.

Achievement is measured against module assessment criteria and in accordance with programme and module learning outcomes.

Students must meet the specific attendance requirements for the Programme.

For more information on the skills developed by individual modules and on the specific learning outcomes associated with any Certificate, Diploma or BA/BSc non-honours awards relating to this programme of study, see the module mapping.

## 17 Programme Structures and Requirements, Levels, Modules, Credits and Awards

This programme is studied over three years full-time.

The programme is divided into three stages, each stage comprising modules to a total of 120 credits. Students must successfully complete each module in order to be awarded the specified number of credits for that module. One credit corresponds to approximately ten hours of 'learning time' (including all classes and all private study and research). Thus obtaining 120 credits in an academic year requires 1,200 hours of overall learning time. For further information on modules and credits refer to the Credit Framework at <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html>

Each module is designed to be at a specific level. For the descriptors of each of these levels, refer to Annex 2 of the Credit Framework at <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex2.html>. To be eligible for the award of an honours degree students must obtain 360 credits, at least 210 of which must be Level 5 or above, and at least 90 of which must be level 6 or above.

All modules are compulsory and are core to the programme and must be taken by all students studying the programme.

Where a student fails a module(s) due to illness or other mitigating circumstances, such failure may be condoned, subject to the requirements of the Credit Framework and provided that the student has achieved the **programme** learning outcomes. For further information refer to the Credit Framework at <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html>.

Where a student fails a module(s), but has marks for such modules within 10 percentage points of the pass mark, the Board of Examiners may nevertheless award the credits for the module(s), subject to the requirements of the Credit Framework and provided that the student has achieved the **programme** learning outcomes. For further information refer to the Credit Framework.

For Stage 1 credits, which do not count towards degree classification, each module mark is recorded as Pass or Fail only.

Students successfully completing Stage 1 of the programme and meeting credit framework requirements who do not successfully complete Stage 2 will be eligible for the award of the Certificate in Contemporary Dance. Students successfully completing Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the programme and meeting Credit Framework requirements who do not successfully complete Stage 3 will be eligible for the award of the Diploma in Contemporary Dance. Students successfully completing Stage 2 of the programme and achieving 300 credits overall including at least 60 credits at level 6 or above in Stage 3 and meeting Credit Framework requirements will be eligible for the award of a BA non-honours degree.

Code	Title	Level	Credits	Term(s)
<b>Stage 1</b>				

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<b>Compulsory Modules</b>				
BP1CT	Contemporary Dance Technique	4	25	1, 2, 3
BP1BT	Classical Ballet Technique	4	15	1, 2, 3
BP1CH	Choreography	4	15	1, 2
BP1MS	Improvisation & Movement Research	4	10	2, 3
BP1RE	Rehearsal & Performance	4	25	2
BP1BM	Body and Mind Learning	4	5	1, 2, 3
BP1CR	Critical and Reflective Studies	4	20	1, 2, 3
BP1CM	Music	4	5	1
<b>Stage 2</b>				
<b>Compulsory Modules</b>				
BP2CT	Contemporary Dance Technique	5	30	1, 2, 3
BP2BT	Classical Ballet Technique	5	15	1, 2, 3
BP2CC	Choreographic and Creative Studies	5	25	1, 2, 3
BP2RE	Rehearsal	5	10	2
BP2PP	Performance Practice	5	20	3
BP2IA	Ideas in the Arts	5	20	1, 2
<b>Stage 3</b>				
<b>Compulsory Modules</b>				
BP3CT	Contemporary Dance Technique	6	30	1, 2, 3
BP3BT	Classical Ballet Technique	6	15	1, 2, 3
BP3RE	Rehearsal	6	10	3
BP3PP	Performance Practice	6	20	3
BP3CA	Collaborative Arts Project	6	15	3
BP3IP	Research Project	6	30	1, 2

### **18 Work-Based Learning**

Disability Statement: Where disabled students are due to undertake a work placement as part of this programme of study, a representative of the University will meet with the work placement provider in advance to ensure the provision of anticipatory and reasonable adjustments in line with legal requirements.

Where relevant to the programme of study, provide details of any work-based learning element, inclusive of employer details, delivery, assessment and support for students:

As part of the Research Project module in Stage Three a student may choose to undertake a teaching placement in a range of community and/or education settings. Specific students needs are dealt with on an individual basis to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made.

**19 Support for Students and their Learning**

## **Academic Support**

The College provides students with a comprehensive range of support mechanisms to help them with their studies and their professional development.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor who maintains an overview of their tutees' progress and development. Personal Tutors are in contact with module tutors and provide support and guidance on course or progress issues as well as on more practical and pastoral matters. Personal Tutors also arrange appropriate extra support where needed. At Stages One, Two and Three students meet with their Personal Tutor at least once each term.

Module tutors give individual and group feedback in class as well as one to one feedback in module tutorials. Following formal assessments, students receive formal feedback from the module tutor or representative of the assessment panel as appropriate.

## **The Student Review Board (SRB)**

The Student Review Board monitors the conduct, progress and attendance of all students. If any of these areas are causing concern, the SRB alerts the student to its concerns and identifies the appropriate College support mechanisms to help her/him to address them. The SRB can also instigate disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Unsatisfactory Progress Procedures and Disciplinary Procedures.

## **Learner Support**

The College's Learner Support Tutor, a trained dyslexia specialist, is available to offer advice and assistance to students with a disability, medical condition, mental health difficulty or specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia) and who may require support to gain equal access to the curriculum.

Advice and Assistance Available:

- assessment of educational support needs
- training in the use of supportive technology with advice on how to access equipment
- advice on study-related support
- advice on funding
- arranging dyslexia tests and dyslexia tuition
- information visits for disabled students
- negotiating alternative arrangements for assessment
- information on local health and national disability organisations and services

## **Learner Support for Students with a Disability or a Specific Learning Difficulty**

Students are asked to identify support needs before enrolment. However, students are encouraged to disclose their disability at any point in their studies.

The College's policy is to support all students to become independent learners who take responsibility for their own learning. The Learner Support Tutor will work with students with a disability or specific learning difficulty towards achieving this.

If a student is entitled to extra time for assignments or to undertake alternative assessments this will be identified in a Personal Learning Support Plan (drawn up by the Learner Support Tutor in consultation with personal tutors and in negotiation with the student). Any extensions to deadlines or alternative assessment arrangements are agreed by the Learner Support Tutor in consultation



with the relevant module tutor and/or subject coordinator.

Both group and individual tutorials, and/or coaching sessions, are arranged to help students with disabilities/learning difficulties with their studies.

### **Support for Students whose First Language is not English**

All students must meet the stated IELTS level for English Language. Those who require further, course specific, English Language support will be provided with support by the College.

### **Injury Treatment and Rehabilitation**

The College has a range of support available to students with injuries. In partnership with The Good Health Centre and the Leeds Physiotherapy Clinic the College offers a subsidised injury treatment scheme to all NSCD students.

### **Counselling Service**

The College's Health & Well-being Coordinator supports students experiencing emotional difficulties or personal problems. Students may be referred for external counselling as appropriate.

### **Careers Advice and Guidance**

The Programme includes a careers programme which includes presentations and discussions led by specialist tutors on topics such as:

- how to write a C.V. and covering letter
- Equity membership and Graduate Equity cards
- sponsorship and grants
- starting a company
- setting up a project
- working as an independent dancer, choreographer or teacher

Students also have:

- opportunities to talk to professional dancers and choreographers about the professional world of dance

mock audition classes with company artistic directors/rehearsal directors/performers who also discuss the specific requirements of their company

## **20 Entry Profile**

The minimum age to study a degree programme at the university is normally at least 17 years old by 20 September in the year the programme begins. There is no upper age limit.

### **20.1 Entry Route**

For fuller information, please refer to the University prospectus

In order to qualify for admission to the programme of study students must satisfy both a **General Requirement** and a **Course Requirement**.

#### **General Requirement**

Normally candidates should have attained:

- Two A Level passes and five GCSE passes at grade C or above (including English language)

or

- Other qualifications and/or experience equivalent to the above which suggests that the candidate has an equal opportunity of succeeding on the course.

Other qualifications may include one of the following:

- Pass in a BTEC National Diploma
- 4 Scottish Higher passes
- Pass in a GNVQ, or a combination of Academic and/or Vocational Qualifications equivalent to 2 Advanced Level GCE passes
- Successfully complete the College's matriculation procedure

The College's Matriculation procedures require candidates to submit two pieces of work normally comprising written assignments encompassing analytical and reflective writing.

Candidates for whom English is not their native language will need to demonstrate a proficiency in written and spoken English relevant to the demands of the programme of study. This would normally be at least one of the following:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) at 6.5 pass level
- TOEFL IB 87
- Computer based TOEFL of 237 (no less than 4.0 in essay rating)

### **Course Requirement**

In order to qualify for admission to the programme of study candidates are required to pass an audition process.

### **Audition Procedure**

#### *Stage 1*

The practical audition is designed to assess the candidate's physicality, musicality, imaginative involvement and career potential. This normally includes:

- a dance technique class
- a solo performance presentation

#### *Stage 2*

Candidates have the opportunity to participate in a creative dance workshop and/or perform the pre-prepared solo again.

#### *Stage 3*

Candidates who pass the practical audition will be examined by the College's physiotherapist and may be invited for an interview. The interview will seek to establish the:

- relevance of the course to the candidate's aspirations and needs
- candidate's understanding of the course
- candidate's level of motivation and commitment

### **20.2 What does this programme have to offer?**

The Bachelor of Performing Arts (Hons) in Contemporary Dance is a course of study specifically designed for the education and training of professional contemporary dancer artists and choreographers. It encompasses a study of the physical, technical, expressive, creative and artistic nature of contemporary dance performance practice informed by contextual and theoretical aspects of the discipline.

The range of technical training undertaken during the programme is designed to train the body

whilst developing artistic intelligence and an understanding of movement that enables the dancer to respond to the varied and changing demands of contemporary choreography. Classes offer a holistic approach to dance training where strength, stamina and flexibility are developed, underpinned by a practical and theoretical study of how the body moves and of how to work safely. Students are encouraged to explore the physical and expressive potential of a range of contemporary dance techniques and classical ballet. Up to fifteen hours a week are allocated to technical training.

Students' skills, knowledge and understanding of performance are developed through the Rehearsal and Performance module in Stage One and Rehearsal and Performance Practice modules in Stages Two and Three. The work is directly concerned with preparing students for a performing career and focuses on communication in performance and upon the understanding and realisation of the director's/choreographer's intentions. Integral to the work is the simulated work experience element, which is delivered through a programme of visiting professional choreographers. Students are progressively introduced to different choreographic methods and styles and through these opportunities are able to draw upon their studies in other parts of the course. Students are provided with a unique opportunity to develop the skills required by many choreographers during the choreographic process and, through the rehearsal process, to take this through to public performance. Improvisation & Movement Research, in Stages One and Two (as part of Choreographic & Creative Studies), encompasses an investigation of movement as a source of individual artistic development and encourages the development of a range of physical, interpretative skills and presentational skills. Work also focuses on developing students' ability to generate, explore and experiment with movement material.

Choreography, compulsory in Stages One and Two (as part of Choreographic & Creative Studies), is designed to foster an independent approach to choreography whilst developing a deep understanding of the creative process. Alongside the investigation into choreographic tools and elements students have a number of opportunities to explore individual areas of artistic interest.

The Collaborative Arts Project in Stage Three gives students the opportunity to enhance their understanding of other artistic disciplines and explore how these disciplines can relate to contemporary dance. Students work with artists from other disciplines, such as writers, composers/musicians, visual artists or film makers, to extend their creative and performance experience, gain a broader appreciation of different art forms and deepen their understanding of the nature of collaborative working processes.

Contextual Studies modules support work and help to integrate work across the programme. In Stage One the Critical and Reflective Studies module focuses on the development of students' analytical, evaluative and reflective abilities through an exploration of their own development as dance artists in relation to the training context and to the current contemporary dance scene. This exploration is informed by an appreciation of the work of selected key dance practitioners set in their cultural and historical contexts. A broader understanding is then provided in Stage Two in the Ideas in the Arts module which relates to the development of contemporary dance to movements in other art forms, including the visual arts, film and theatre.

Mind and Body Learning, in Stage One, complements and supports technical training and aspects of performance through a practical and theoretical study of anatomical and physiological considerations for the dancer, causes of injury and their prevention and treatment, fitness, nutrition and well-being.

The Music module is designed to develop and extend students' practical understanding of music and its relationship to choreography and performance. The module is compulsory in year one with further theoretical and practical understanding being developed in the Stage Two Ideas in the Arts, Choreography and Solo and Group Practice modules.

Another distinctive feature of the Programme is the opportunity provided in Stage Three for students to draw on their skills, knowledge and understanding of dance and to apply these to the context of teaching and working in schools and the community. Students, as part of the Research Project module, may choose to take a teaching placement in a school or community setting and will gain a firm understanding from which to develop this area of their work and to acquire teaching

skills that can be transferred to other contexts.

In addition to the taught programme, the College provides a range of short supplementary courses and/or projects. These are non-assessed and non-credit bearing but complement student learning across the programme as a whole. This allows for the provision of experiences which explore the breadth of work and ideas informing contemporary dance performance practice. These sessions draw on the expertise of particular teachers and/or choreographers and may include, for example, Physical Theatre, Capoeira, Aikido and other particular forms, styles and approaches to practising dance works not studied as part of the main curriculum. Throughout the course students are encouraged to develop their sound and video skills, exploring new ways in which new media and information technology inform dance creation and performance.

## 20.3 Personal Profile

On entry the student will be able to demonstrate:

- the potential to become a versatile dance artist with strong technical skills and deep artistic awareness
- the capacity for an imaginative and intelligent involvement with the programme of study
- mental and physical stamina and a determination to gain the maximum benefit from the training
- an open approach to independent, directed and collaborative working with a respect for student colleagues, tutors, guest artists and teachers
- a capacity for the acquisition of advanced critical, analytical and reflective skills and the development of original ideas and creative approaches to working
- the capacity to sustain an on-going commitment to the rigorous demands of contemporary dance training and of a career in dance

## 21 Methods for Evaluating and Enhancing the Quality and Standards of Teaching and Learning

### 21.1 Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards

#### Strategic Quality Management

NSCD's senior management team, comprising the Principal and Deputy Principal, is responsible to the Governing Body for the establishment, maintenance and implementation of systems for improving, monitoring and evaluating the quality of all areas of provision and is responsible for the collection of the information which informs the development of strategy and policy and the maintenance of standards.

The Principal and Deputy Principal have delegated areas of responsibility with clearly defined parameters thus ensuring that all aspects of quality management are given equal and appropriate attention, approached with the same degree of rigour and, through regular meetings, dealt with in a coherent and consistent manner.

The broader management team consists of the Head of Performance, Head of Professional Development, Head of Creative & Contextual Studies and Head of Academic Registry who are responsible for the management and delivery of all the College's academic programmes including the operational aspects of quality assurance.

#### Reporting and Procedural Framework

The data/information necessary for effective quality management is gathered through a number of key evaluation instruments. This data/information is measured against specific quality statements to ensure consistency and to make certain that high standards are achieved and maintained.

Information is collected on a systematic basis to an agreed annual timetable.

The College's evaluation instruments comprise:

- Student Surveys
- Internal moderation of assessed work
- External Examination
- The collection and evaluation of:
  - recruitment and retention data
  - progression and achievement data
  - graduate destination data
  - data relating to student support
- Staff feedback
- Employer feedback
- Fixed agenda items relating to quality assurance at meetings of the Academic Board and the Learning and Teaching Committee
- Student Communications Committee meetings
- Annual Programme Monitoring Reports
- External Periodic Reviews

The data once collected is evaluated by the designated personnel or committee and the relevant action determined, taken, recorded and reported.

## **Policies, Procedures and Strategies to Support Academic Quality and Standards**

The College has a complete range of policies, procedures and strategies which articulate its approach to quality management and detail the mechanisms used for quality control. Since affiliation to CDD in August 2003 the College has been cognisant of the need to review these in the light of the development of CDD's central policy framework for the assurance of quality and standards.

The College's approach to assuring quality and standards has evolved over time but certain key principles underpinning its philosophy remain:

- that the day-to-day responsibility for ensuring the quality of the student learning experience should be in the hands of each member of the teaching staff and academic managers
- that students, in moving from supported learning to independent learning during their programme of study, should also be encouraged to take ownership of quality assurance processes by taking an active role in the College's quality systems
- that staff are fully supported by the management team in their engagement with and ownership of quality assurance processes. This is facilitated through participation in discussions on quality enhancement issues at committee meetings and in other forums and through staff development and training activities
- that students are fully supported in their engagement with and ownership of quality assurance processes by staff facilitating the student survey processes and other feedback opportunities

## **Learning and Teaching Strategy**

The College is committed to developing and maintaining the quality of its learning and teaching. This is clearly articulated in the Learning and Teaching Strategy through which the College will seek to:

- provide a framework for the management of the student learning experience through the

programmes of study

- ensure that students receive tuition at an appropriate level and through relevant curricular activities
- be responsive to student, staff and employer opinion
- be responsive to other internal review mechanisms
- be responsive to the changes in policies and systems of relevant external bodies, e.g. HEFCE, QAA, etc.
- be particularly concerned with developments in current professional practice
- address standards of achievement
- provide tuition and curricula which give the student the opportunity to fulfil their career aspirations
- address areas of weakness
- institute change and innovation in pursuit of excellence
- provide a quality framework through which its effectiveness can be monitored

### **Human Resource Strategy**

The Northern School of Contemporary Dance is a specialist College where recruitment and retention of highly qualified and experienced teaching staff from the professional dance world is essential to the effective delivery of its courses. The College has, therefore, developed a human resource strategy that supports the vision and values of its mission and sets out strategic actions for recruiting, supporting and developing high calibre staff. This includes the employment of effective interview and selection procedures and a broad range of external and in-house professional development training programmes. Further development of NSCD's approach to HR management and development is being undertaken to interface effectively with CDD's HR strategy.

### **Annual Programme Monitoring Reports**

Annual Programme Monitoring Reports (APMR) are prepared for each of the College's programmes of study as follows:

- BPA (Hons) Contemporary Dance (October)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Contemporary Dance (October)

The processes leading to the preparation of these reports and the implementation of the recommendations contained within them provide the demonstration of the College's confidence in its quality and standards. Each report is informed by feedback from a wide variety of sources including student surveys and External Examiners' reports as well as by the results of academic discussions which take place at committee and faculty meetings. The APMR report reviews action taken as a result of the previous year's report and identifies any outstanding actions. The report also analyses and offers commentary on statistical indicators in the areas of recruitment and enrolment, retention rates, student progression and reasons for withdrawals. The main body of the report focuses on issues (including quality management issues) relating to programme management and organisation, resources, teaching, learning and assessment and student support and guidance. Recommendations for action are drawn from the commentary and analysis of statistical information contained within the report.

The APMR reports are considered by NSCD's Learning and Teaching Committee where recommendations for actions are confirmed before the reports are forwarded for consideration and ratification by NSCD's Academic Board. The finalised reports are designed to meet both CDD's and the validating university's reporting requirements and are submitted to their respective academic committees.

### **Admissions and Assessment Policies and Procedures**

The Admissions Policy and Procedures details the College's rigorous, transparent and equitable

approach to recruitment, selection and admissions. Assessment Procedures have been developed to meet the needs of a small specialist conservatoire institution and are drawn from the Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education, Section 6: Assessment of Students. They will also be aligned with the Assessment Regulations published by the validating university.

The College operates an annual cycle of reviews, each concerned with a particular area of the College's quality management process. Each review analyses statistical information from the current academic year and compares it with that of previous years in order to identify trends and highlight any areas of concern. Where these are noted, probable causes are investigated further and proposed solutions considered, determined and actioned. The review reports are considered by the Academic Board at the time of year indicated and any further actions proposed as a result of the Board's deliberations are incorporated into the Annual Programme Monitoring Reports.

- Review of Admissions Policy and Procedures (September)
- Review of Assessment Procedures (July)

### **Policies and Procedures relating to Equal Opportunities and Disability**

The College regularly reviews and updates its policies and procedures in relation to applicants/students with disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties. All applicants for courses are offered an audition and those with a disability and/or a specific learning difficulty are given a confidential opportunity to declare this in order that their needs may be met at the audition stage. Successful applicants are given full information regarding the course, including all College policies and procedures affecting students.

### **Review and Analysis of Statistical Information**

The College places great importance on enhancing all aspects of the student experience from initial application through to graduate destination outcomes. Statistical information is gathered via student induction and programme surveys and data produced by the College's student information system. This is then collated and analysed via several review instruments at different points throughout the academic year and presented to the Academic Board for consideration and comment. The full range of review instruments are considered as fixed agenda items:

- Review of Student Recruitment and Selection
  - Review of Student Retention
  - Review of Student Support
  - Review of Student Destinations
  - Review of Completion and Qualification Rates
- The APMR's and annual reviews detailed above have formed the College's main instrument of reflection to identify good practice and the need for change and development in provision. Selected statistical information is forwarded to the CDD Registrar to be collated with information from the other affiliated institutions for the purposes of CDD quality management monitoring processes.

## **21.2 Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards**

### **Academic Committee Structure**

There are a number of academic committees responsible for the improvement and maintenance of quality assurance relating to specific areas of teaching, learning, assessment and all aspects of the student experience.

#### **Academic Board**

The Academic Board is the senior academic committee of the College, and is responsible to the Principal for all issues relating to research, scholarship, teaching and courses. It also has responsibility for the monitoring and review of academic standards relating to all courses. It

normally meets four times during the academic year. Academic Board membership includes teaching staff and there is one student member who provides a student perspective on matters discussed. Minutes of NSCD's Academic Board meetings are forwarded to the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama Academic Board for consideration and comment.

**Learning and Teaching Committee**

This committee, chaired by the Head of Creative and Contextual Studies, is responsible for the monitoring and review of all courses delivered by the College. It makes recommendations to Academic Board for new courses and for the revision of existing courses. Committee membership includes teaching staff representatives from across the faculties and learner support staff. One student member from each programme of study sits on the committee to provide a student perspective on learning and teaching issues.

**Faculty Meetings**

Faculty meetings are held regularly to review learning, teaching and assessment matters with reports going forward as appropriate to the Learning and Teaching Committee.

**21.3 Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience**

**Student Surveys**

Student feedback is gained through a variety of mechanisms as part of the Annual Programme Monitoring Report (APMR) exercise. New students complete an Induction Survey. Thereafter students complete a programme survey and individual module surveys on an annual basis which elicit their feedback on various aspects of the learning experience. In addition all graduating students have the opportunity to attend an Exit Interview and they complete an Exit Survey. The data from these surveys is collated and analysed by module tutors and/or programme/programme pathway/subject coordinators and then incorporated into the Annual Programme Monitoring Report by the Vice Principal who identifies appropriate actions where necessary.

**Student Communications Committee**

Student representatives from each programme of study sit on the College's Student Communication Committee (SCC) which meets every four/five weeks. As well as student representatives, the committee comprises of the Head of Performance, IT & Resources Manager, Facilities Officer and members of the Academic Administration and Communications teams. Student representatives are responsible for eliciting the views of their peers on issues of concern for discussion at SCC meetings. After appropriate actions have been identified an action plan is drawn up which is then reviewed at the next meeting. Student representatives feed back the results of the Committee's discussions to the rest of their cohort. A report on the activities of the SCC is received by Academic Board on a termly basis and is submitted to the Board of Governors for their consideration.

**Other channels of feedback**

In order to receive feedback on important curriculum changes or developments or on other significant College initiatives, the Principal (and other members teaching staff as appropriate) meet with the entire student body to present and discuss the details of such matters. In addition year meetings are held with student cohorts, as necessary, to present information and receive feedback.

**21.4 Staff Development priorities include:**

To provide the necessary support for teaching, administrative and support staff to undertake courses which develop leadership and management skills or appropriate professional/skills development, such as undertaking higher degrees and/or Higher Education Academy recognised teaching qualifications.

**22 Indicators of Quality and Standards**

- Results of the Periodic Programme Review (November 2012)



## UNIVERSITY OF KENT

- QAA Institutional Audit for the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (2010)
- Annual External Moderator reports

Annual Programme Monitoring Reports drawing on:

- Statistical Indicators in relation to recruitment and enrolment, retention rates, withdrawals and reasons for withdrawals, progression and qualification rates
- Student surveys
- Feedback from the Student Communications Committee
- Graduate destinations
- Tutor discussion at Faculty meetings and Teaching Staff meetings
- Formal discussions and recommendations of the Learning and Teaching Committee and Academic Board

External Examiners' Report

### **22.1 The following reference points were used in creating these specifications:**

- QAA Quality Code:
  - Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education
  - Subject Benchmark Statements for Dance, Drama and Performing Arts
  - Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
  - Programme Specifications
- NSCD Assessment Procedures
- NSCD and Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (CDD) Learning and Teaching Strategy 2012-15
- NSCD Critical Evaluation Document for the University of Kent (October 2012)
- NSCD Annual Programme Monitoring Reports

*Template last updated October 2014*