



UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION FOR:

FdA Professional Dance Performance

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/22]**

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content of each unit can be found in the Unit Descriptors.

## Section A – Material Course Information

<b>Validating Body</b>	University for the Creative Arts <sup>1</sup>			
<b>Teaching Body</b>	London Studio Centre (LSC)			
<b>Final Award Title and Type</b>	Foundation Degree (FdA)			
<b>Course Title</b>	Professional Dance Performance			
<b>Course Location and Length</b>	Campus: LSC		Length: Full Time, 2 years	
<b>Mode of Study</b>	Full-time	X	Part-time	
<b>Period of Validation</b>	2021/22 to 2025/26 (For LSC delivery)			
<b>Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body</b>	Not Applicable			
<b>Type of Accreditation</b>	Not Applicable			
<b>Accreditation due for renewal</b>	Not Applicable			
<b>Entry criteria and requirements<sup>2</sup></b>				
<p>Applicants will be assessed through their formal application which includes a live or recorded audition for the specialist pathway of classical ballet, contemporary dance, jazz dance or musical theatre. Details on the audition and criteria by which they are assessed can be found in LSC's Audition Criteria document online.</p> <p>Applicants are normally expected to have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of Grade 4 in English Language (Grade C if awarded prior to 2017), or the equivalent qualification, plus four other GCSEs</li> <li>• Current dance skills, practical knowledge, understanding of technique and style and the capacity for critical reflection on performance at Level 3 (for example A-Level Dance or graded subject specific examinations) demonstrated at audition and interview in addition to formal qualifications or where no formal qualifications may be provided as evidence</li> <li>• The aptitude for professionally orientated practical study of performance techniques at Levels 4 and 5 and potential to benefit from dance training as judged through audition</li> <li>• The level of health and fitness necessary to study intensively as confirmed at a physical examination by a specialist physiotherapist</li> </ul> <p>Applicants who have non-standard qualifications (or who wish work or life experience to be taken into account as part of their application) will be considered on an individual basis, in line with the general aims and principles of the Admissions Policy and within the terms of the Accreditation of Prior Learning policy.</p>				

<sup>1</sup> Regulated by the Office for Students

<sup>2</sup> This should be the standard University Criteria unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board and include UCAS entry profile for undergraduate courses.

If your first language is not English, you will need an IELTS score of 6.0 or equivalent. If you require a visa to study in the UK, you will also need a minimum score of 5.5 in each individual component.

We are unable to accept applications for deferred entry, or defer offers for this course as applicants must retain a high level of fitness prior to enrolment.

<b>Overall methods of assessment<sup>3</sup></b>	Written exams:	Practical exams:	Coursework:
<b>Stage 1</b>	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%
<b>Stage 2</b>	0.0%	63.3%	36.7%
<b>Overall Learning &amp; Teaching hours<sup>4</sup></b>	Scheduled:	Independent:	Placement:
<b>Stage 1</b>	58.8%	41.3%	0.0%
	705 hours	495 hours	0 hours
<b>Stage 2</b>	52.7%	47.3%	0.0%
	632 hours	568 hours	0 hours
<b>General level of staff delivering the course<sup>5</sup></b>	LSC's staffing for this course is in line with the University's current recruitment policy for Lecturers and Senior Lecturers which states that they must have either an MA or equivalent professional practice in a relevant discipline or field. This is a particular highlight of LSC's teaching staff as most staff have had substantial professional experience in the industry with many staff still playing an active role within a variety of high profile dance professions. All lecturing staff are encouraged to work towards a teaching qualification or professional recognition by AdvanceHE and this is a requirement for Senior Lecturers. Senior Lecturers are required to be professionally active or engaged in research in their discipline. All Lecturers and Senior Lecturers undertake scholarship in their disciplines. There are also Peripatetic Staff to link courses with professional practice and Technicians to provide technical support.		
<b>Language of Study</b>	English		
<b>Subject/Qualification Benchmark Statement:</b>			
The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) <i>Subject Benchmark Statement Dance, Drama and Performance</i> (2019), has been used alongside the QAA <i>Characteristic Statement Foundation Degree</i> (2020).			
The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of Degree-Awarding Bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) Levels 4 and 5			

<sup>3</sup> As generated by the most popular unit descriptors and calculated for the overall course stage data.

<sup>4</sup> As generated by the most popular unit descriptors and calculated for the overall course stage data.

<sup>5</sup> Include general information about the experience or status of the staff involved in delivering the course, for example Professor, Programme Director, Senior Lecturer

## The Course Structure

The structure of all of the University's awards complies with the University's [Common Credit Framework](#). The Common Credit Framework includes information about the:

- Rules for progression between the stages of a course;
- Consequences of failure for reassessment, compensation and exit awards;
- Calculation and classification of awards;

Unit codes and titles	Level	Credit value	Elective/ Core	Most popular student choice of optional elective units or elective options in core units
<b>Year/Stage 1</b>				
UPDP4001: The Healthy Dancing Body	4	40	Core	
UPDP4002: Work-Integrated Learning in Performance Practice	4	20	Core	
UPDP4003: Creative Practice and Employability Development	4	20	Core	
UPDP4004: Introduction to Contextual Studies and Collaborative Dance Practices	4	40	Core	
<b>Year/Stage 2</b>				
UPDP5001: Personal Development of Dance Practice	5	20	Core	
UPDP5002: Work-Integrated Specialist Performance Practice	5	40	Core	
UPDP5003: Professional Skills Development	5	20	Core	
UPDP5004: Global Contexts of Dance and Theatre	5	40	Core	

## Section B - Course Overview

This course provides a thorough grounding in key dance techniques with a critical understanding and development of established skills in one specialist pathway of: classical ballet, contemporary dance, jazz dance or musical theatre. Students can tailor parts of their timetable to explore different styles to become versatile performers ready to enter the industry. Students will develop their knowledge of dance science, choreographic and contextual studies, which are integrated to enhance professional performance practice. Through working with specialist teaching faculty and connections with industry professionals, students will develop transferable skills to ensure they are employment ready and have extensive performance opportunities that are integrated into the curriculum throughout each year.

The course offers versatile professional training in one of the four specialist pathways of ballet, contemporary dance, jazz dance and/or musical theatre. Extensive performance opportunities are integrated into the curriculum throughout and the specialist teaching

faculty at LSC has wide-ranging and current industry experience. With a clear focus on work-integrated learning and performance, this course is distinctive to other courses offered at LSC.

The course has been designed to develop graduates who are able to:

1. Demonstrate a thorough grounding in established dance and performance skills and knowledge and critical understanding of the art form, which they are able to apply in a range of choreographic and performance contexts
2. Work collaboratively and independently in a variety of different employment settings to creatively contribute to the performing arts industry
3. Organise their own learning and demonstrate resourcefulness and self-motivation, so as to continually adapt to a developing performing arts industry

The course offers:

- Versatile professional training in ballet, contemporary dance, jazz dance and musical theatre
- Extensive performance opportunities integrated into the curriculum throughout the course
- Specialist teaching faculty with wide-ranging and current industry experience

This course provides a thorough grounding in key dance techniques with sound development of specialist skills leading to specialisation in one of four pathways, which will be established upon audition to the course: classical ballet, contemporary dance, jazz dance or musical theatre. In addition, students can tailor parts of their timetable to explore different styles and become versatile performers enhancing their employability. Knowledge of dance science, choreographic and contextual studies are integrated to enhance professional performance practice. Students have frequent opportunities for work-integrated learning and to perform, from informal, in-house presentations of work to full-length performances usually at established London venues.

Each year of the FdA provides a year-long, 30-week teaching cycle for each of the four units. This model suits the requirements of dance and performing arts training, providing time for a repetition of a range of techniques throughout the year. Each student will have an individual timetable supporting their pathway, career goals and ambitions, so no two timetables are the same. A student's timetable typically provides a high level of contact hours a week, which would normally include a mixture of classes in ballet, jazz or contemporary dance, lectures, seminars, training relating to their particular pathway such as pointe work or singing and acting, and a versatility skill. Each year provides clear progression in all techniques, with the development of specialist skills over the academic year from technique classes moving onto repertoire and ultimately culminating in an end of year performance.

## Section C - Course Aims

This course enables graduates to:

- Develop knowledge and critical understanding of the embodied practice of professional dance theatre performance
- Explore and critically analyse subject knowledge including: historical and global contexts, professional expectations and transferable skills relating to professional dance theatre

- Develop potential as creative artists working both independently and collaboratively to explore, reflect, problem solve and critically evaluate different approaches
- Acquire effective communication skills and clearly articulate arguments in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences

## Section D - Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course students are able to:

### Knowledge

1. Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and critical analysis of the development of dance and musical theatre as performing arts and demonstrate an understanding of the limits of this knowledge

### Understanding

2. Demonstrate critical understanding, reflection and application of technique and performance skills relevant to the dance theatre profession

### Application

3. Demonstrate the ability to employ technique, technology, and/or an integrated knowledge of dance science to different situations including professional contexts to develop transferable skills
4. Evaluate multiple perspectives of industry expectations to inform the performance of new and established repertoire and in the creation of new work
5. Collaboratively and independently work within professionally orientated academic, rehearsal and performing contexts to research, drawing on scholarly sources, problem solve and explore as creative artists
6. Effectively communicate techniques, performance, information, arguments, ideas and/or analysis to both specialist and non-specialist audiences

## Section E - Learning, Teaching and Assessment

### Learning and Teaching Strategy

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy at LSC keeps students at the centre, working in partnership toward a safe, stimulating, active and meaningful learning environment. As such, learning, teaching and assessment for the FdA Professional Dance Performance has been designed to be high quality, supportive, meaningful, effective, and engaging and to prepare students for a career in performance.

LSC operates an Enhancement Strategy with a specific section for Learning, Teaching and Assessment, which details the precepts against which learning, teaching and assessment initiatives, strategies and procedures are set. The main strategic objectives are to:

- Ensure the teaching faculty continues to reflect a level of excellence in the disciplines of dance and musical theatre education
- Maintain effective (online) learning environments to engender active student engagement as creative artists and educators during their programme/course of study
- Design assessment to be meaningful and structurally aligned to learning outcomes
- Support teaching faculty to undertake CPD and assess its impact on the quality of the students' learning
- Provide access to data and research to inform the enhancement of teaching practice

These objectives are achieved through a number of strategies including: supporting, developing and mentoring staff; creating high quality course content; continually enhancing teaching facilities, learning resources and the VLE; and gathering evidence and impact narratives of concerted learning, teaching and assessment enhancements.

LSC assess the impact of this strategy regularly by monitoring student feedback, staff engagement with CPD, and student achievement and progression. LSC are proud of achieving Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) Gold (2018 and 2019) and take pride in the high-quality learning, teaching and assessment that takes place across the institution.

On this course, students receive a higher number of scheduled contact hours than most courses. This is because much of the work is collaborative with artists creating, rehearsing and performing work and honing techniques. This mirrors the industry and offers students practical application opportunities alongside independent study. As such students learn practical skills through daily and weekly dance, singing and/or acting technique classes depending on their pathway. The techniques taught in the studio are enhanced through performances generated either by the students themselves or collaboratively with staff, who are often professional choreographers and directors working with the students as visiting artists allowing for work-integrated learning. These performances take place in a range of venues: namely, the dance studio, studio theatres, commercial theatres, public site-specific venues, and/or screen presentations.

Students are also expected to engage in independent study for each unit through readings, study tasks, independent rehearsals and individual skill development.

Students gain subject knowledge and understanding through lectures, workshops, tutorials, technique classes, rehearsals, personal research and viewing performances. Cognitive skills are developed through reflective practice, the analysis of performance, through discussions in tutorials, through students' own research and through specific lecture programmes. The successful student acquires knowledge of new and established repertoire and is able to analyse and evaluate it perceptively.

Students studying on the FdA have the exciting opportunity to work alongside other like-minded students studying on LSC's BA (Hons) Theatre Dance Programme. These co-learning opportunities extend to combined opportunities for performance, shared supervised use of performance and rehearsal space and work-integrated shared learning experiences. An example of such a co-learning opportunity exists in dance technique classes. It is a common practice to separate the learning of dance technique by level of technique ability. This means that a first year FdA student may work alongside a first year BA (Hons) Theatre Dance student in an advanced ballet technique class. This is wholly appropriate co-learning and mirrors industry expectations and standards.

Students benefit from such co-learning opportunities by working alongside others studying at their level of achievement which helps prepare them for working in a dance company with other artists and professionals. In addition, students are always supervised by an appropriate member of staff with safeguarding training. While co-learning opportunities take place, students from either course are always assessed against separate learning outcomes, assessment criteria and mark descriptors for each course, which are vastly different. This means that co-learning is undertaken where and when appropriate to both courses.

The course meets the educational aims of the University's Creative Education strategy through its creative performing arts roots; its holistic, inclusive, challenging and developmental curriculum design; its supportive and clear assessment strategy; its use of digital technologies as they relate to professional dance performance; the student-centred approach to course design and enhancement, and education for sustainable design and exchange.

The course is designed to provide graduates with the attributes and skills to innovate and create opportunity within the dance performance sector; to work within and beyond this sector in all areas of professional performance and beyond; and to bring the values of their creative practice to bear on the world in diverse and unexpected ways.

While this course is designed to be majority face-to-face learning and teaching due to the nature of its provision, there may be some online lectures and seminars which students will have access to. These activities will be set out in advance and will usually be supplementary activities to regularly scheduled face-to-face learning.

### Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy for the FdA enables the learning outcomes to be tested through a fair and inclusive assessment process that is clear to both staff and students.

Course Learning Outcomes have been mapped alongside the individual Unit Learning Outcomes, which are clearly assessed through both formative and summative assessment tasks. Such tasks allow students to be given feedback on how they are meeting the learning outcomes on a routine basis.

Wherever possible, inclusive modes of assessment are offered to ensure that students can meet threshold expectations without the need for alternative assessment based on individual needs. Assessments have been designed based on the good-practice advice from the guidance document: *Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Higher Education as a Route to Excellence published by the Department for Education (DfE) (2017)*. For example, some assessments have elements of individual choice allowing students to approach the assessment from their own perspective, interests and/or abilities.

Offering a wide variety of assessment modes and types ensures that students are both supported and stretched during their studies. Students will undertake a mixture of individual assessments of both practical skills dance assessments and coursework assessments alongside a small number of group assessments such as collaborative projects where students will work together as a group but receive individual marks based on their submissions.

Students' practical skills are assessed through a range of different assessment modes in order to be inclusive, mirror industry expectations and enhance students' transferable skills. Students' practical skills are assessed in technique classes in set or unseen material. Their skills in performance are assessed in the studio, in the theatre, and/or in alternative venues. Peer and self-assessment and reflective practice all play a part in the



assessment process. Students' subject knowledge and understanding is assessed through written assignments, projects, presentations, and practical demonstrations. Cognitive skills are assessed either through assignments on performance, choreographic methods and strategies, through reflection on practice, through the performance presentation of choreographic assignments, or the presentation of work that they have devised and directed.

Beyond informal formative feedback points across the delivery of each unit, students will additionally have the opportunity to engage with formal formative assessment. These assessment points allow students to demonstrate their progress in achieving the Unit Learning Outcomes and receive feedback that they can apply directly to their summative assessment.

All assessments, both formative and summative, offer variety in assessment mode, reflecting the requirements of the profession. This variety contributes towards an inclusive approach in assessment, one of the aims of the UCA's Creative Education Strategy.

## **Section F - Employability**

LSC has an existing strong track record of preparing students to enter industry as demonstrated by our most recent undergraduate Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) (2019) statistics showing that 97% of students were either in work or further study 6 months after leaving LSC.

The course has been designed in consultation with employers within the professional dance performance industry to ensure that the curriculum matches industry expectations and requirements. This consultation will continue in annual course monitoring to ensure that LSC keeps on top of changes and enhancements to employment expectations. In addition, employers will often be part of the course delivery, giving students direct access to those contacts, which may be useful upon graduation.

The ethos of developing employability skills is integrated and thoroughly embedded into this course through work-integrated learning. The one unit on the FdA that simulate workplace practices in the industry is UPDP4002 Work-Integrated Learning in Performance Practice which achieves this through study with industry-experienced professionals to introduce students to a range of techniques and performing opportunities. This foundation is built on in Level 5 through UPDP5002 Work-Integrated Specialist Performance Practice encouraging students to learn, rehearse and perform established repertoire and newly devised work in the context of a professional working environment.

UPDP4003 Creative Practice and Employability Development allows students to broaden their skills as professional dancers by choosing from a range of optional classes, giving them responsibility and agency in their development as performers.

UPDP4004 Introduction to Contextual Studies and Collaborative Dance Practices helps students locate their performance in a wider professional context and aims to cultivate curiosity and a spirit of enquiry while developing scholarly and analytical skills. UPDP5003 Professional Skills Development furthers this by enabling students to develop strategies to increase their employability through cultivating a reflective attitude to professional development.

The development of employability skills is integral and thoroughly embedded into the course through work-integrated learning. Relevant transferable employability skills include

communication, self-motivation, collaborative working, openness, curiosity, commitment to personal development and challenge, time management and problem solving. These attributes are characteristic of students' work in repertoire, in public performances, and choreography, indeed, wherever and whenever they have to collaborate with others on the course.

## **Section G - Enhancing the Quality of Learning and Teaching**

The course is subject to the University's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 5 years. This process ensures that the course engages with the applicable national Subject Benchmarks and references the FHEQ.

All courses are monitored on an annual basis where consideration is given to:

- External Examiner's Reports
- Key statistics including data on retention and achievement
- Results of the Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Feedback from Student Course Representatives