

Programme Specification

Every taught course of study leading to a UAL award is required to have a Programme Specification. This summarises the course aims, learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment methods, and course structure. Programme Specifications are developed through course validation and are formally approved by UAL Validation Sub Committee (VSC). They are available to prospective students through the course web page, and must be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure currency of information (for example, following any modifications or local developments).

Awarding Body	University of the Arts London (UAL)
Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB)	N/A
Teaching Institution	London Contemporary Dance School (LCDS)
Final Award	MA Dance: Performance
Length of Course	12 months FT
UCAS code	N/A
Date of production/revision	March 2023

Course Aims

The aims of the course identify the rationale underlying the student's educational experience and own personal achievement from studying on the course and its affect upon the student's long-term achievement and career.

1. To offer in-depth performance training to dance artists, developed through collaborative creative processes, research enquiry, and guided individual exploration.
2. To create a community of learners who investigate the means of developing, testing and reflecting upon the wide range of specialist technical skills and contextual understandings of the dance field that are needed for a portfolio career as a dance performer.
3. To promote a balanced approach to creative processes, attending to the performer's autonomy, empowerment, and agency, alongside developing the ethics of collaboration, the nourishing of intrinsic motivation and self-worth, a safe and healthy practice built around longevity and sustainability.
4. To facilitate an exploration of the varying needs and challenges of diverse performance contexts and approaches, reflective of the current and future employment landscapes and discourses around dance performance.
5. To support students in establishing professional networks relevant to their aspirations, and in developing the freelance skills and portfolio approaches needed to advance their careers.

Course Outcomes

The course enables the student to demonstrate the following subject knowledge and understanding, intellectual and academic skills, practical subject skills, key attributes and transferable skills. Each outcome should be detailed below.

On completion of this course you will be able to:

1. Contribute confidently and meaningfully to collaborative and enquiry-driven creative processes as an informed dance artist.
2. Understand how to sustain a self-practice which facilitates relevant technical development, artistic availability, and longevity.
3. Critically reflect on and evaluate the shifts in performance qualities and artistic tool application necessitated across a range of professional contexts and artistic media.
4. Initiate, manage, realise, and reflect upon a self-directed period of research, training, exploration and artistic actualisation.
5. Disseminate and promote work to diverse audiences, among relevant professional networks, and through a portfolio of different employment contexts.

Learning and Teaching Methods:

Provide a summary of the relevant learning and teaching methods for the course (i.e. lectures, seminars, independent learning).

The course will focus on embodied learning through practical technical skills classes and workshops; creative development through a variety of industry relevant performance projects; lectures and seminars in related topics from the fields of dance science, performance psychology, practice-as-research, performance studies, performance philosophy and related research methods, as well as feedback methods, reflective and critical thinking; sessions on freelancer and career development skills; and independent learning and self-directed project management. The students will receive ongoing developmental mentoring from faculty and appropriate industry professionals.

Scheduled Learning and Teaching

State the notional learning hours and provide a percentage breakdown of timetabled teaching and learning activities per level.

	Scheduled L&T Hours		Guided Independent Study		Placement		Total Hours		Total credit-bearing hours (exc. personal tutorials)	
	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours		Hours	
Unit 1	360	60%	240	40%	0		600		600	
Unit 2	330	55%	270	45%	0		600		600	
Unit 3	65	11%	535	89%	0		600		600	
Total	755	42%	1,045	58%	0		1,800		1,800	

Assessment Methods:

Provide a summary of the relevant assessment methods for the course.

The three units are assessed holistically in order to emphasise the portfolio approach cultivated through the course content and the different potential trajectories within the study of dance performance. These will include:

- Reflective document/portfolio including articulation of emerging research questions (Unit 1)
- Embodied practice sharing proposal (Unit 1)
- Professional Trajectory Realisation Project proposal including analysis of mentorship, collaborative and ongoing training needs (Unit 2)
- PTRP Freelancer Skills submission including budgets, timelines, technical specifications and sample contracts (Unit 2)
- Mock funding application submission (Unit 2)
- Professional Trajectory Realisation Project reflective portfolio, presentation of artistic research and documentation, including strategic communications portfolio (Unit 3)

Reference Points

List any policies, descriptors, initiatives or benchmark statements used in the development of the course.

The following reference points have been used in designing the course:

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of Degree-Awarding Bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)
- QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Dance, Drama & Performance (2019)

The FHEQ Level 7 Descriptor and the Quality Code have informed the conceptualisation and design of how skills and attributes are embedded within the course aims and unit outcomes. The course is grounded in providing students with the means to critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in the field of dance performance, noting that this field is diverse and intersects with many other artistic fields and sites of knowledge production and exchange. The design of the final unit ensures that graduates possess the ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility through the decision-making needed to devise a final performance portfolio project. The two prior units provide the skills needed for systematic enquiry and independent research located within continuous learning and professional development.

Programme Summary

Programme structures, features, units, credit and award requirements:

List the course details that constitute the agreed student entitlement for this course. This should include unit titles and credit, types of learning, and details of tutorial support. If the course includes a work or study placement (including Dip Professional Studies), the duration and a summary of expectations around arrangements must be highlighted.

The course consists of three compulsory units. The academic year is structured in three terms. Each unit lasts for one term.

Unit 1 Performance encounters (60 credits)

This unit focuses on experiential learning through exposure to different processes of researching, creating and sharing dance performance. This will serve to establish a community of practice within the cohort, fostering a sense of belonging and developing a supportive peer group, alongside familiarising students with the demands of project work and the rigours of daily training experiences.

Students will explore methodologies for contributing to, and reflecting upon, devised performances, the learning of existing repertory and the use of improvisation skills in performance. These will be investigated through their application to modes of presentation in various audience contexts, both live and virtual. Students will be exposed to different performance media representative of established and emerging modes of performance in the professional environment. They will critically investigate strategies for self-evaluation and peer feedback as methods for enriching motivation and disseminating their embodied research. These will be supported by practical classes for physical and mental preparation and seminars which explore discursive contexts and professional frameworks alongside seminars drawing on theoretical ideas and academic literature from fields such as Dance Science and Performance Psychology, Performance Studies and Practice-as-Research methodologies.

Unit 2 Performance contexts (60 credits)

This unit builds on the experiential learning in the previous unit and continues to expose students to new collaborative processes for researching, devising, learning repertoire, and improvising. Students will be encouraged to further interrogate how these processes can be adapted across contexts for performance. They will be introduced to a range of mentors from across the professional sector and investigate how to initiate and resource self-directed research into performance experiences, resulting in a proposal for an independent portfolio project whereby they develop their own professional trajectory (Unit 3).

The unit emphasises ongoing self-practice as the means by which the professional dance artist maintains and develops a base of technical proficiency and artistic availability. Students will be supported to lead sessions with the cohort, sharing the development of their individual practice as a means of exploring how to disseminate their interests and research in training and skill building. Further seminars will explore freelancer skills, such as those required for negotiating contracts, for devising and managing budgets, for network building and for the development of multi-stranded communication and promotional skills.

Unit 3 Professional Trajectory Realisation Project (60 credits)

This unit (PTRP) consolidates the learning from the previous units and enables the student to plan, realise and reflect upon a period of independent exploration into the career trajectories of contemporary dance performing artists. With support from the course team and a mentor, the student will actualise a pre-planned process through which they will investigate their own performance practice within a wider industry setting. They will initiate

the communications support required for this independent exploration and resource the technical skills and training needed to support this process. The final presentation of a reflective portfolio will draw upon the previous encounters with performance alongside the consolidation and integration of the knowledge gathered through their independent process. The students will be required to explore multimedia modes and strategies for documenting, framing, and disseminating their experiential learning from these events. There will be a final festival/symposium where live work and documentation will be shared with peers, audiences and the wider profession.

Tutorial and academic support

Tutorial support is embedded in all units through a system of formative assessment, which is designed to prepare for the final summative assessment and provide constructive feedback throughout each unit. Students also have access to individual academic support by the Learning Support Coordinator.

Exit awards

Students who have successfully completed at least 60 credits are eligible for a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) award in Dance Performance. Students who have successfully completed at least 120 credits are eligible for a Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) award in Dance Performance.

Distinctive features of the course:

Identify and list those characteristics that distinguish your course from other, similar courses. Refer to both the student experience on the course and future possible career opportunities.

1. The course provides in-depth ensemble, independent and increasingly self-directed performance training for dance artists, developed through collaborative creative processes and engagement with discourse, with input from a range of artists, thinkers and industry experts working in a variety of performance media and in different performance contexts.
2. The course emphasises the agency of the dance performer in developing a portfolio career, enabling the student to investigate the skills, techniques and ethical working practices that will facilitate their sustainable artistic development.
3. The course embeds experiential learning within The Place as a major employer of freelance dancers and connects with a wider professional network, expanding the opportunities for performers to apply their practice.
4. The course draws upon the various strands of research at LCDS to provide students with the opportunity to devise and evaluate their own practice-as-research enquiries, training and skills development plans.

Recruitment and Admissions

Selection Criteria

The criteria used to make a decision on selection must be fully listed. It must be clear how an applicant's suitability to study on the course as demonstrated at the pre-selection and/or interview stage will be judged (Good practice examples are available through the Programme Specification Guidance). Procedures for selection must adhere to the Equal Opportunities Policy of UAL.

Admission process:

The applicant must attend an admissions workshop and submit a statement outlining how they intend to use the course to expand their dance performance practice. The workshop is accompanied by an interview.

Selection criteria:

- Enquiry: Commitment and willingness to challenge their methods and practices evidenced in the personal statement
- Knowledge: Awareness of an appropriate range of practical, conceptual and technical knowledge(s) evidenced in the admissions workshop
- Process: At interview critically reflect and evaluate their practice.
- Communication: Clear and critical articulation of artistic intentions, in both workshop and statement.
- Realisation: Evidence in the workshop of the capacity to reveal creativity and innovation in relation to individual, professional and academic standards of dance performance.

Entry Requirements

List the academic entry requirements relevant to the course, noting any requirements that are above the UAL minimum, or any course specific grade requirements. Language requirements such as IELTS must also be provided. Entry requirements will constitute the standard, conditional offer for the course.

Standard minimum entry requirements:

- BA (Hons) degree or equivalent academic qualifications
- Alternative qualifications and experience will also be taken into consideration
- Personal statement
- Attendance at admissions workshop (online where necessary)

APEL - Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning

Applicants who do not meet these course entry requirements will still be considered. The course team will consider each application that demonstrates additional strengths and alternative evidence. This might, for example, be demonstrated by:

- Related academic or dance performance experience
- The quality of the personal statement
- A strong academic or other professional reference
- A combination of these factors

English language requirements:

IELTS level 6.5 or above, with at least 5.5 in reading, writing, listening and speaking

Course Diagram

Insert a course diagram which includes; units and their credit values, plus credit values per year/level, category of units (i.e. core or specialist), progression routes, years/levels of the course, any other relevant characteristics that distinguishes the course

