

Admissions Policy

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1. Admissions Policy Statement

As an affiliate of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (CDD), Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD) is one of eight small specialist schools with international reputations for high quality delivery and excellent success rates in the number of students gaining sustained employment in the dance, drama and circus professions. Affiliates select students with the greatest talent and aptitude for training underpinned by a commitment to widening participation and to promoting programmes to young people who are unlikely to participate in further or higher education.

Northern School of Contemporary Dance offers the following programmes:

Access to HE Diploma: Contemporary Dance

BA (Hons) Dance (Contemporary)

MA Contemporary Dance Performance (Company Pathway)

MA Contemporary Dance Performance (Postgraduate Apprenticeship Scheme)

MA Dance & Creative Enterprise (Subject to validation)

The policy details below relate to all programmes including the Access to HE Diploma: Contemporary Dance. Although a Further Education programme it is delivered alongside the higher education programme and thus the same policies apply.

The Northern School of Contemporary Dance admissions policy coheres with that of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama.

1.1 Conservatoire for Dance and Drama Admissions Policy Statement

The Conservatoire for Dance and Drama exists to train artists who will match the world's best and, on entering their professions, shape the future of dance, drama and circus arts. Established in 2001, the Conservatoire is a Higher Education Institution with a unique structure, comprising eight schools. All of these are small, specialist institutions with international reputations for high quality delivery in their respective fields.

Conservatoire students are registered jointly with the affiliate school and the Conservatoire. The affiliate school determines its own approach to admissions within the following guidelines.

Affiliate schools of the Conservatoire will:

- audition all applicants that meet the basic criteria for the discipline and programme as outlined by the affiliate school;
- accept individuals based on talent and potential for training alone (i.e. not discriminating on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, economic background or otherwise); and
- consider each particular applicant's suitability for the programme of study.

Applicants must demonstrate:

- the ability and capacity to study at the higher education level within a conservatoire setting;
- the facility to receive and potential to benefit from vocational training;
- evidence of suitable preparatory training and/or experience;
- an awareness of the rigours of the training and its vocational nature;
- an understanding of the nature of the industry; and
- an understanding of the aims and objectives of the programme.

1.2 Equality and Diversity

Celebrating diversity and working to achieve the creative potential in all our students, is at the heart of the work of Northern School of Contemporary Dance.

As part of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama, the School is committed to selecting, training and supporting students, regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or religion. Applicants to Conservatoire schools are chosen solely on the basis of their talent and potential to develop the skills required for their chosen profession. The School does, however, judge applicants on their suitability for a programme and their potential to successfully complete the training, as the work is rigorous and requires high levels of energy and commitment.

In our admissions process, we are committed to supporting students with disabilities. Disabled students are encouraged to disclose their support requirements so that we can endeavour to meet them during the audition process and subsequent training.

We recognise that everyone is an individual and we will work with students to identify potential barriers to training and do what we can to remove those barriers. We will also make any necessary reasonable adjustments, to ensure that disabled students can train at Northern School of Contemporary Dance.

1.3 Criminal Convictions

Applicants applying for a place to study on a programme at the CDD should not disclose any criminal conviction upon initial submission of their application to the CDD. However, once a candidate has been made an offer of a place, they must declare any relevant criminal conviction at that point.

It is important to note that a failure to declare a relevant unspent criminal conviction, whether at the relevant point of the application process or in the event of being convicted once admitted to a programme of study at the CDD, is taken very seriously, and could result in expulsion from School and the CDD.

2. Entry Requirements

Entry requirements for all programmes, as detailed below, are available on the Northern School of Contemporary Dance website.

2.1 Age

The minimum age to study

- The Access to HE programme is normally at least 16 years of age at the start of the programme. There is no upper age limit.
- The BA programme is normally at least 18 years of age at the start of the programme. There is no upper age limit.
- An MA programme is normally at least 21 years of age at the start of the programme. There is no upper age limit.

2.2 Audition and academic qualifications

Entry for all programmes is via a successful audition and interview as well as the following academic requirements:

- Access to HE: A minimum of four GCSE's passes, including English Language (at grade C/4 or above) or equivalent level qualifications. (i.e. BTECs level 2, NVQ 2, or other qualifications at level 2)
- BA (Hons): Two A' level passes or equivalent level qualifications. (i.e. BTECs level 3, Access to HE or other qualifications at level 3)
- An MA programme: Bachelor degree in dance or equivalent professional experience.

2.3 English language

Applicants are required to demonstrate a proficiency in both written and verbal English language. This will normally be at B2 Level of the Common European Framework which, for UK students, is English GCSE (Grade C/4 or above). Applicants whose first language is not English are required to have a B2 Level in an approved English language examination such as International English Language Testing System (IELTs) level 5.5 or above.

2.4 Overseas applicants

The School is a UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) Tier 4 Sponsor, which allows us to recruit a specified number of international students over all programmes. International applicants who have been offered a place will need to apply for a tier 4 visa as soon as they accept their offer and should request further information about this process from the Admissions Manager.

3. Recruitment

Target recruitment numbers are agreed annually between Northern School of Contemporary Dance and the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama. The School will normally accept approximately 115 new students each year across the Access to HE (30), BA (Hons) (60) and the MA programmes (25).

3.1 Marketing

Marketing and promotional activities include:

- Information available on the School website: www.nscd.ac.uk
- Taster days
- Promotional material for overseas auditions
- Riley Theatre events
- Student performances
- Facebook, Twitter

3.2 Participation and outreach

The school has a strong commitment to widening participation and engages in a range of activities which seek to widen access to contemporary dance and target identified under-represented groups through the Learning and Participation department, including:

- Schools programme (primary, secondary and colleges)
- Open evening and weekend classes (at child, youth and adult level)
- Children and Young People's (CYP) Dance network
- Summer schools
- Centre for Advanced Training
- Application and audition toolkit workshops to support the transition from training towards a career in the performing arts.

4. Selection

Northern School of Contemporary Dance will seek to ensure that selection policies and procedures are transparent, effective, consistent and fair in accordance with the School's Equality & Diversity Statement. Information concerning applicants will be subject to the School's Data Protection Statement.

Selection for all programmes will normally be through audition and to ensure equality of opportunity the School will:

- Ensure that recruitment, selection and admissions procedures adhere to the principal of fair admissions in a professional manner by authorised and competent representatives of the School.
- Welcome all applicants regardless of disability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or religion. We encourage students to tell us about any disabilities, impairments or conditions (for example dyslexia, a physical, sensory or mental health condition) at the earliest opportunity so that support can be put in place.
- Audition all applicants.
- Offer applicants a choice of;
 - audition dates (usually between December to April for September entry)
 - location of audition (at NSCD in Leeds and various locations outside the UK)
 - remote audition for international applicants.
- Offer places based on;
 - physical ability, experience and/or potential
 - performance ability
 - creativity
 - critical thinking
 - reflective engagement
 - suitability for the programme of study
 - attainment of the academic entry requirements before the start of the programme.
- Provide successful applicants sufficient information to enable them to make an informed decision of acceptance and enable the transition from prospective student to current student.

4.1 Application Procedure

Admissions information for all programmes, as detailed below, is available on the Northern School of Contemporary Dance website.

- **Admissions Questions & Answers:** aims to answer questions from pre-application through to offer and acceptance.
- **Application guidance:** details all the required fields in the application form.
- **Auditions dates:** lists all dates and venues. Applicants select their chosen date, subject to availability, as part of their application submission. Access/BA auditions are usually held weekly or fortnightly between Dec to March/April. MA auditions are usually held daily during an identified week in mid-January to mid-February.
- **Application opening and closing dates:** applications usually open in October, in the year prior to the entry year, and close at the end of January (Access/BA) or the end of December/early January (MA).
- **Audition information:** includes the schedule and audition content.
- **Remote audition information** (for international applicants): includes the required audition content and the date and methods by which the footage should be submitted.
- **On-line application form link:** a user-friendly form with help text throughout which enables the applicant to complete an application, book an audition and pay the audition fee.

The Equality and Diversity information, collected via a section of the application form, is considered as confidential and information is used for statistical purposes only.

Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered at the discretion of the Director of Studies. The School reserves the right to extend the deadline via the Northern School of Contemporary Dance website at short notice.

4.2 Audition Fees

The audition fee is set annually by the Director of Finance & Resources and is published on the website. This non-refundable fee is payable by applicants for all programmes, venues or audition types. Payment is made via a secure on-line payment provider although alternative payment methods can be arranged if required.

4.3 Audition Fee Waivers

In line with NSCD and CDD's commitment to widening participation, applicants who meet the following criteria are able to apply for an audition fee waiver:

- UK Resident
- applying to an undergraduate programme (BA Hons Degree)
- new to higher education (no previous degree-level qualification)
- annual household income of less than £25,000

The fee waiver system is administrated by CDD. Full information is available on the NSCD website which includes a link to direct the applicants to the CDD website for further information and how to apply.

4.4 Withdrawals Prior to Audition

Applicants must inform the School if they decide to withdraw their application and do not intend to attend audition. Applications cannot be deferred and application fees cannot be refunded. Any applicant who wishes to be considered for the next round of admissions must reapply the following year.

4.5 Information to Applicants Pre-Audition

Details of the audition procedure are available on the NSCD website and can be viewed at any time. Applicants receive an automated email to confirm their application submission and audition date which also directs them to view the relevant documents on the website.

4.6 Audition and Selection Procedure

Applicants are auditioned by the School's selection panel, which will comprise of at least two members of staff with relevant expertise as determined by the Director of Studies. The selection panel will be provided with each candidate's application information taken from their application form. The selection panel will judge and score applicants against the audition selection criteria (appendix A).

- Access/BA auditions: a judgement on which applicants will be shortlisted to complete stage 2 of the audition day is made by the panel at a deliberation meeting on the audition day. A judgement on which of these shortlisted applicants will be offered a place is made by the panel at a deliberation meeting following each audition. Some offers are then made throughout the audition season and the remainder after the final audition.
- MA Contemporary Dance Performance auditions: a judgement on which applicants will be shortlisted to complete stage 2 of the audition day is made by the panel at a deliberation meeting on the audition day. A judgement on which of these shortlisted applicants will be invited to the recall audition is made by the panel at a deliberation meeting following each audition. Offers are then made after the final audition.
- MA Dance and Creative Enterprise: a judgement on which applicants will be shortlisted will be made following the submission of the required application content. These applicants will be invited to a telephone/Skype interview.

4.7 Remote Audition Procedure

Applicants who are based outside of the EU may submit a video recording to demonstrate their ability to meet the practical requirements which will be viewed on pre-arranged dates by the

selection panel and followed by a post-audition deliberation as with all other auditions. The remote audition information is available on the NSCD website.

4.8 Confirmation of Outcome

Confirmation of audition outcome will be emailed to all shortlisted applicants within approximately 10-15 working days of their audition date (or final audition date for MA applicants). This may be a place on the reserve list or a conditional offer. Offers will be conditional upon receipt of documents to prove the academic entry requirements have been met. Applicants who are offered a place will also be sent links to all relevant policies and full terms and conditions that they must agree to on acceptance of an offer. They will also receive information about arranging accommodation and the term dates.

These applicants will be asked to confirm by a given deadline whether they would like to take up their place and will be required to pay a non-refundable registration fee with their acceptance. Once an acceptance of an offer is received, the applicant will receive confirmation of receipt.

The administration team will contact all reserve list applicants within 5 working days of the final deadline to confirm whether or not they will be offered a place, determined by how many places are not accepted by those candidates originally holding an offer.

Applicants who are not offered a place can request feedback from their audition by contacting admissions@nscd.ac.uk. Who can provide standardised feedback based on the scores that the panel awarded them for each section of the audition. An applicant cannot appeal a decision reached by the audition panel.

4.9 Communications with a Third Party

All communications regarding an application and audition outcome will be conducted directly with the applicant and not with a third party, including relatives.

4.10 Progression to a Higher Level NSCD Programme

Successful completion of the Access to Higher Education Diploma: Contemporary Dance does not guarantee direct passage to the BA (Hons) Dance (Contemporary). Access to HE students must formally apply for the BA (Hons) Dance (Contemporary) programme by following the same procedure as all applicants.

Equally, successful completion of the BA (Hons) Dance (Contemporary) does not guarantee direct passage to the MA programmes. Final year BA (Hons) students must formally apply for the MA programmes by following the same procedure as all applicants.

4.11 Complaints and Appeals

An applicant cannot appeal a decision reached by the audition panel.

For information about submitting a complaint regarding the admissions process, please refer to the Admissions Appeals and Complaints Procedures, which can be accessed here: <http://www.nscd.ac.uk/study/student-handbook/>.

5. Enrolment

Place on a programme at Northern School of Contemporary Dance will be conditional on compliance with enrolment conditions including any conditions relating to fees, enrolling at the start of a programme and at the start of each subsequent academic year.

Enrolment must be at the designated session at the start of your programme, as set out in your introductory information and induction pack, unless agreed otherwise. If you cannot or do not enrol

at the designated session you must provide NSCD with a reason for your non-enrolment which is acceptable to NSCD in order to be permitted to enrol on another occasion, otherwise you will not be entitled to enrol for that year of study (or any future year of study) and your relationship with NSCD and this contract shall be terminated.

See the Northern School of Contemporary Dance Terms and Conditions, available on the NSCD website, for further information about obligations and contracts.

5.1 Pre-enrolment Information

Prior to enrolment applicants holding an offer of a place will be provided with induction information, normally in July and August. The induction information will include:

- Registration procedures on the first day of term
- Registration form and accompanying notes, including CDD's Data Protection Statement
- Induction Week Timetable
- Northern School of Contemporary Dance Codes of Practice & Conduct
- Information about private health insurance
- Other information relevant to joining the programme.

5.2 Enrolment

At enrolment students are asked to submit a completed registration form, a copy of which is kept at Northern School of Contemporary Dance and a copy sent to CDD, where they are formally registered as CDD students. They are also asked to provide the following if not previously submitted:

- A working and current e-mail address and a working land-based or mobile telephone number
- Term time address
- Confirmation of loan payment from the Student Loans Company, if applicable

All registration forms and photocopied documents are kept in secure files subject to the Data Protection Statement.

5.3 Withdrawals

Applicants who hold an offer of a place and wish to withdraw prior to the start of their programme of study must inform the Admissions team as soon as possible. Any applicant who wishes to be considered for the next round of admissions must reapply the following year. Students who withdraw after the start of the programme will be subject to pay tuition fees in line with the NSCD Fee Policy available on the website.

5.4 Intermission (interruption of studies)

Please refer to Appendix D of the Student Handbook for information about interrupting periods of study at NSCD.

6. Allocation of Scholarships and Bursaries

Access to HE students who meet the criteria may be eligible to apply NSCD for one of the bursaries available as outlined in the Fees and Finance section of the website.

BA (Hons) Dance (Contemporary) who meet the criteria may be eligible to apply to the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama for a scholarship. To be considered for scholarship, an applicant's household income must be assessed and the Conservatoire relies on the Student Loans Company's assessment of their household income to determine any fee waivers. They must, therefore, apply through the relevant agency (such as Student Finance England for English students) for their income to be assessed.

Applicants may also provide evidence of their household income using the Conservatoire's Interim Income Assessment form. An electronic version of the form can be found on the Conservatoire's website. The financial assessment based on this form will be used as guidance for likely fee waivers only, and applicants will still need to apply through the relevant Student Finance agency before any fee waivers can be confirmed. Fee waivers are normally confirmed by the second term of study, but may very occasionally be confirmed prior to enrolment.

7. Monitoring and Review of Policies and Procedures

This policy is subject to periodic review by Academic Board. Academic Board also monitors the following annually, all of which are relevant to admissions:

- recruitment, marketing and the prospectus/information on the NSCD website
- data related to admissions and the methods used to collect that data
- support for students and applicants with disabilities
- external requirements of CERTA, which validates the Access the HE programme, the University of Kent, which validates all other NSCD programmes and CDD

In certain exceptional cases we reserve the right to vary these procedures. When we do so, the circumstances will be monitored and recorded through quality assurance measures.

Appendix A: Audition Criteria and Scoring

0 = a response to the tasks/movement material set which demonstrates insufficient ability to meet the demands of the programme applied for at this time.

1 = a response to the tasks/movement material set which inconsistently demonstrates an ability to meet the demands of the programme applied for at this time.

2 = a response to the tasks/movement material set which consistently demonstrates the candidate would be able to meet the demands of the programme applied for.

3 = a response to the tasks/movement material set which consistently demonstrates the candidate would be able to achieve at a high level in relation to the demands of the programme applied for.

When scoring each element of the audition the following criteria should be taken into account. To denote potential, or particular aptitude in any/all of these areas a score of +1 can be awarded to further distinguish between candidates.

Access and BA criteria

Creative/improvisation

- Openness to exploration of ideas
- Appropriate response to instruction
- Ability to collaborate with peers
- Development of ideas through improvisation
- Spatial awareness
- Assimilation of information and feedback

Technique

- Coordination
- Alignment
- Range of motion and potential for increasing range of motion
- Balance/Proprioception
- Strength and control
- Elevation
- Musicality – rhythm, phrasing and timing
- Expressive/performance abilities
- Spatial awareness
- Assimilation of information and feedback

Solo

- Expressive/performance abilities
- Musicality – rhythm, phrasing and timing
- Spatial awareness
- Presence/focus
- Development of movement ideas
- Engagement with material

Group discussion/interview and written task

- Capacity for reflection and critical thinking
- Self-awareness
- Interaction with a group

- Articulation of ideas
- Capacity for original thought

MA Contemporary Dance Performance criteria

Choreography, Creative work and Technique

- Performance quality – the ability to transcend basic technical execution, layering material with individual creative interpretation whilst retaining original detail
- The ability to work with and manipulate energy/dynamic
- Physical form/control of physical form
- Ability to pick-up complex movement material
- Creative responses to set tasks in improvisation and in the devising of movement material
- Appropriate responses to direction
- Strong observational skills
- An ability to relate to others

Academic Task

- The selection and evaluation of relevant materials to support your discussion
- The way in which you have considered and interpreted those materials within your discussion
- How you have established, developed and explored your idea
- Your ability to effectively communicate your idea, whilst accurately acknowledging your research sources (adhering to academic conventions)

MA Dance & Creative Enterprise criteria

Choreography, Creative work and Technique

- A strong interest in creating and devising movement based artwork
- A desire to learn about and implement the production of dance works in a variety of settings
- An awareness of where these works sit within the wider artistic landscape
- The ability to contribute in a performance capacity to artworks created either by yourself or others with a high level of artistic and technical skill
- A curiosity to investigate aesthetics and context
- The ability to work well as part of a team in a variety of roles

Academic Task

- The selection and evaluation of relevant materials to support your discussion
- The way in which you have considered and interpreted those materials within your discussion
- How you have established, developed and explored your idea
- Your ability to effectively communicate your idea, whilst accurately acknowledging your research sources (adhering to academic conventions)