

Course Fact File

MA Contemporary Dance Performance (VERVE)

Entry 2019 | Course validated by University of Kent

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| Award: | MA Contemporary Dance Performance (VERVE) |
| UCAS Code: | At present you apply directly through www.nscd.ac.uk/study/how-to-apply/postgraduate |
| Location: | Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD), Chapeltown, Leeds |
| Awarding body: | University of Kent Students who complete 120 M level credits of study may choose to exit the programme in June with a PGDip in Contemporary Dance Performance. Students who choose to stay on until August will complete an additional 60 M level credits towards the award of MA. The validation of this course between NSCD and the University of Kent is reviewed every five years for developmental purposes and was last renewed in January 2018. |
| Duration: | 1 year (full-time only) |
| Academic year: | 10th September 2019 - 16th August 2020 |
| Entry requirements: | Entry is through successful audition and interview, plus completion of a written task. Our postgraduate programmes are open to graduates of two / three year dance training programmes at Higher Education level, who would therefore usually be 21+ years of age, or to dance artists with some professional experience. Application to VERVE can also be made through a remote audition for EU, EEA and International applicants www.nscd.ac.uk/study/international |

Please note: This course is for recent graduates or graduates with extensive performance experience. If you are an independent artist or dance graduate who is looking to shift your focus from performing to becoming a creative independent producer, you may wish to consider applying for our MA in Dance & Creative Enterprise programme.

Course overview

VERVE is the postgraduate company of Northern School of Contemporary Dance. This MA equips students with professional performance skills as members of a touring contemporary dance company. Each year VERVE commissions choreographers to create a distinct, engaging, and thought-provoking programme of work.

Course overview continued

The programme offers emerging dance artists the opportunity to challenge and develop their skills across a varied repertoire of work, guided by the Artistic Director, alongside an exciting range of guest teachers and visiting artists. The programme enables students to take creative risks with their practice, to grow their individual artistry and develop their identity as a performer. VERVE undertakes a tour across the UK and to select international venues seeking connection with partner institutions, industry professionals, choreographers, and companies, to broaden and enrich the dancers' understanding of the professional dance world and their future options within it. VERVE works with established and emerging choreographers, giving dancers an appreciation of the breadth of what is currently happening in dance theatre.

Choreographers who have worked with the company include: Akram Khan, Gemma Nixon and Jonathan Goddard, Ben Wright, Ben Duke, James Wilton, Kerry Nicholls, Anton Lachky, James Cousins, Luca Silvestrini, Lea Anderson and Frauke Requardt.

The course operates on a modular basis. Most modules count for either 15 or 30 academic Level 7 credits, with the final major research project being worth 60 credits. Each credit taken equates to a total study time of around 10-20 hours. Total study time includes scheduled teaching, independent study, directed study and assessment activity. Students on this programme take modules worth 60 credits per term. All students take a total of 180 credits for the MA as a whole.

Level 7 (Autumn Term) develops a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and / or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the dance discipline. There is a focus towards a comprehensive understanding of techniques and creativity which may later be applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship. This term focuses on technique and performance skills with a development of advanced 'practice as research' methodologies.

Level 7 (Spring & Early Summer Term) There is opportunity to bring originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline. It is expected in this term that students demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level, in order to continue advancing their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level. The focus of this term is the further development and application of technique and performance skills, through intensive periods of rehearsal and performance.

Level 7 (Extended Summer Term) During the third term of study (usually early June to August) students from all of our MA Programmes undertake a substantial independent or collaborative project and carry out research at an advanced level, relative to the field of study. The research project facilitates in-depth investigation into an aspect of contemporary dance practice, likely to be drawn from the experience and learning encountered through an earlier aspect of their course. The MA stage of study is characterised by practice as research, with the guidance of a supervising tutor or mentor. Students who do not complete this term of study (Stage Two) may be eligible for an award of Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip).

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Module Map

This module map provides an overview of the modules that make up your course and when these are studied. Each module is worth a specified number of credits: all modules on this programme are compulsory modules, enabling you to cover key subject knowledge whilst developing your own interests. You will take modules worth a total of 180 credits at Level 7. Our teaching is informed by research, and module content changes periodically to reflect developments in the discipline.

| LEVEL 7 | | | |
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| Autumn Term | Spring Term | Early Summer Term | Extended Summer Term |
| Technical Practice (30 credits) Compulsory module | | | Final Major Research Project (Dissertation) (60 credits) Compulsory module |
| Company (60 credits) Compulsory module | | | |
| Performance Practice (30 credits) Default option module | | | |

Timetables: Timetables are normally available one month before registration. Please note that while we make every effort to ensure that timetables are as student-friendly as possible, scheduled teaching can take place on any day of the week. There is usually one reading week in each term, with allocated vacations at Christmas and Easter.

Teaching and learning

You are taught through a combination of practical classes and workshops, lectures and seminars. Seminars and small group tutorials enable you to discuss and develop your understanding of topics covered in smaller groups. In addition, you have timetabled meetings with your academic tutors. You use industry-standard facilities throughout your course.

At Level 7 (as a guide) you typically have around 24-30 contact hours per week, typically consisting of:

- approx. 24 hours of practical classes or workshops
- 1 hour of seminars / tutorials
- 2 hours of lectures
- 3 hours directed study

Teaching staff

You will be taught by an experienced teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. The team includes senior academics who are dance artists in their own right, professional practitioners with industry experience, demonstrators and technical officers. NSCD typically commissions 3 - 4 professionally-renowned choreographers to create work with the company, and invites a significant number of visiting guest artists to deliver aspects of the curriculum including daily classes and workshops. For more information on who will be teaching you, visit our staff biography pages:

www.nscd.ac.uk/about/staff

www.nscd.ac.uk/people/matthew-robinson-verve

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Independent learning

When not attending timetabled sessions you will be expected to continue learning independently through self-study. Typically, this will involve reading journal articles and books, working on individual and group projects, undertaking research in the library, preparing coursework assignments and presentations, and preparing for assessments. Students also use independent study time for using the gym and attending / having rehearsals. Your independent learning is supported by a range of excellent facilities, including the library, studios, video edit suite, gymnasium, Pilates equipment, online access to NSCD VLE and access to Riley Theatre.

Assessment and feedback

NSCD 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 performance, choreographic work, improvisation and movement research

Students receive ongoing feedback in practical classes and through the tutorial system in which professional and academic development 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.

Overall workload

Your overall workload consists of class contact hours (around 24 - 30 hours per week), in addition to independent learning (expected to be at least 2 hours per module), rehearsals (varies) and assessment activity. Each credit taken equates to a total study time of around 32 hours. While your actual contact hours may depend on varying aspects of delivery e.g. intensive rehearsal periods, technical weeks or touring, the following information gives an indication of how much time you will need to allocate to different activities at each level of the course.

Level 7: 90% of your time is spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Student support

The School provides students with a comprehensive range of support mechanisms to help them with their studies and their professional development. All students have access to academic support and guidance from tutors who maintain an overview of students' progress and development.

Our student support team and academic tutors help in the following areas:

- Study skills (including reading, note-taking and presentation skills)
- Written English (including punctuation and grammatical accuracy)
- Academic writing (including how to reference)
- Research skills (in conjunction with the library)
- Critical thinking and understanding arguments
- Pastoral care and counselling services
- Injury prevention and support
- Finance support

Our Disability Advice and Student Support Services help students with additional needs resulting from disabilities such as sensory impairment or learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Students have access to module learning materials through the use of Moodle (our Virtual Learning Environment or VLE).

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Cost and financial support

Eligible postgraduate UK or EU students can apply for a postgraduate loan from the Student Loans Company to help with tuition fees and living costs. Students are not expected to pay a student loan back until after graduation, and only then, once earning over the repayment threshold (currently £21,000 a year). Information about the variety of financial support available for Postgraduate / MA applicants can be found here:

- The Conservatoire Scholarship Scheme www.cdd.ac.uk/students/fees-and-financial-support
- Government grants and loans www.gov.uk/funding-for-postgraduate-study

For the academic year 2019-20 the tuition fees for this course are:

UK / EU £8,000

EAA / Overseas £17,500

The following course-related costs are not included in the fees:

- the estimated cost of your dance clothing
- the cost of any materials which you choose to use in your research project
- additional printing over and above the £50 annual allowance
- the cost of books that you might wish to purchase
- the cost of initial DBS checks (£28 approx) or enhanced DBS (£60) should you be required to have one

Accommodation and living costs not included in the fees This information can be obtained from our admissions team or online at: www.nscd.ac.uk/study/student-life/accommodation

Sources of financial support If you receive funding from Student Finance you may be eligible to apply for additional benefits. Details can be obtained from our admissions team or online: www.nscd.ac.uk/study/fees-finance/postgraduate

EAA / International students: Applicants may be able to apply for a bursary of up to £3,000. Details can be obtained from our admissions team or online at: www.nscd.ac.uk/study/fees-finance/postgraduate

‘NSCD value for money’ (based on a comparison with other HE Dance Masters degrees of the same price) NSCD is devoted to the experience we give our students and to what we try to offer them as ‘value added’ for their course fees:

- Additional tuition including classes, support and guidance

Plus:

- Enrichment classes are offered in the evening, some of which are free to NSCD students – these have included pointe work, fitness, men’s ballet vocabulary, yoga, percussion and lighting for dance
- Visiting workshops with guest choreographers and companies
- Health and well-being days
- On-site injury intervention and support
- Reduced price theatre tickets and deals
- On-site counselling service
- Access to additional rehearsal spaces
- Access to projects and research run by staff and our network of partner organisations