

Northern School of
Contemporary Dance

Recruitment Pack: **DIRECTOR OF STUDIES**

April 2024



“An inspirational learning experience, from first contact through into the profession, enabling aspiring dance artists and professionals, regardless of background, to shape the future of dance”



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INTRODUCTION

Established in 1985, Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD) is a leading centre for contemporary dance, internationally recognised for the quality of its education and training. Based in Leeds and funded by the Office for Students (OfS), NSCD provides the only such Conservatoire-level Higher Education and training in contemporary dance in England outside London. NSCD is committed to raising the profile of Leeds as a City of Dance and played its part in making the Leeds 2023 Year of Culture a success.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO & PRINCIPAL

Welcome to NSCD, a space where creativity thrives and is celebrated, and the art of dance is passionately embraced. NSCD is a distinguished institution at the forefront of dance education in the UK. Embodying a vibrant and creative culture, our institution stands out as a beacon of artistic exploration. We foster an environment where both staff and students are encouraged to explore the realms of art and the broader world.

Knowing the pivotal role our students play in the ecology of dance, we understand that their time spent with us is an incubation space for their growth and creative evolution. Our students, characterized by their expressive individuality, engage with dance intelligently and sensitively. They possess the ability to think independently, placing immense value on original thought and diversity.

As a member of our management team your contribution will be instrumental in shaping the growth and development of our students. Your role is integral to cultivating an environment that nurtures their artistic potential. We eagerly anticipate the addition of the right individual to our team, someone who shares our passion for dance education and is ready to contribute significantly to the journey of our students.

Sharon Watson MBE DL
CEO & Principal





VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Vision

A world-leading centre for dance education and creative development

Mission

To provide an inspirational learning experience, from first contact through into the profession, enabling aspiring dance artists, and dance professionals, regardless of their background, to shape the future of dance.

- Through diverse educational programmes, we want the student experience to be transformative and person-centred, where we cultivate an environment of mutual respect and inclusion for all.
- We want to send well-prepared graduates into the industry who can embrace change and difference and enhance the vibrant cultural landscape.
- Our vision is underpinned by our core values which reflect equity and inclusion, from first contact to the excellence of our educational provision, to the support we provide our graduates and their professional development in the years ahead.
- Through work of exceptional merit and highest professional standards, we develop graduates who actively seek collaboration with others.
- We want to encourage and celebrate a student body that engages in knowledge exchange and works collaboratively to develop a challenging body of work that is empowering and provides creative solutions.
- Through the art form and with a dedication to social justice we invest in the future of our creative and cultural society, encouraging an openness and playfulness in artistic discourse that impacts purposefully on individuals, organisations, and society, globally.
- Our approach to pedagogy aspires to harness and nurture creative and academic excellence. Innovation and curiosity sit at the heart of all that we do and through all the support and care we give.

See nscd.ac.uk/strategic-plan for more information about our plans.

OUR CREATIVE PROGRAMME

Home to Riley Theatre, Yorkshire's largest dedicated dance house, NSCD is a dynamic creative hub, programming performances of ground-breaking work from innovative UK and international artists. An estimated 10,000 people attend our performances each year. Recognised by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, the institution makes a significant contribution to both talent and art form development. VERVE, NSCD's postgraduate company, tours specially-commissioned works, and through its far-reaching participation programmes NSCD inspires more than 2,500 people of all ages and abilities, nurturing talented young dancers across Yorkshire.

"Residents of the city benefit highly from the excellent learning and participation activities." Ofsted: Outstanding

OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

Highly regarded by the Office for Students (OfS), the School was awarded Silver overall in the latest Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and received a rating of Gold for the Student Experience.

We provide courses at CertHE, Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels including:

- 1 Year Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) in Contemporary Dance
- 1 Year Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) in Cultural Dance Forms
- BA (Hons) Dance (Contemporary)
- MA Contemporary Dance Performance (VERVE Touring Company or Professional Placement Scheme pathways)
- MA Dance & Creative Enterprise
- MA Interdisciplinary Dance Performance
- MA Dance Teaching & Facilitating





RESEARCH AT NSCD

We are committed to providing a supportive environment for artists and teachers to explore practice as research and education action research and provide suitable platforms or networks to share their work. We ensure that the new knowledge generated has maximum impact by reaching the widest possible audiences, delivering important reputational benefits and clearly demonstrating the quality and value of our arts practice to potential partners. We also encourage staff to engage in research and/or scholarship that supports the development of future artists and the art form. For the last three years, NSCD has curated an annual Knowledge Exchange Conference.

OUR STUDENTS

At NSCD we stimulate a lifelong thirst for knowledge and learning, encouraging a curious, pioneering, innovative and independent attitude and an aspiration to achieve success. Diversity is at the heart of NSCD, and the institution has a reputation for blazing a trail amongst the UK conservatoires. Around 279 students are enrolled at NSCD each year, of which 20% are PoGM (People of Global Majority), 33% have a disability and 67% are from a low-income household.

OUR ALUMNI

NSCD believes that the distinctive mix of excellence, innovation, boldness and entrepreneurial spirit that defines its alumni is creating new definitions of what it means to be an artist in the 21st century. Our alumni include some of the leading dance artists in Europe.

Carlos Pons Guerra, Choreographer and Director of DeNada Dance Theatre - nominated for Best Emerging Artist (2015) and Best Independent Company (2016) at the UK Critics' Circle National Dance Awards.

Tamsin Fitzgerald, Artistic Director of 2Faced Dance Company – winner of the Jerwood Choreographic Research Prize (2013) and founder of THE BENCH, the first UK platform representing women in dance.

Gary Clarke, regarded as one of the UK's leading independent dance artists, has won multiple awards. Originally from a small mining village in Yorkshire, Gary was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by NSCD in 2017. He is also a Governor of the School.

Akram Khan MBE, Artistic Director and Choreographer – winner of two Laurence Olivier Awards, Akram has also won UK Critics' Circle National Dance Awards 8 times. One of the UK's most celebrated and respected dance artists, Akram is proud of his NSCD connections.

“NSCD is where I developed my artistic voice, importantly through my exposure to world-class professional dance artists in public performance. This opportunity to see international performers in Leeds, on my doorstep, was invaluable to me.” - Akram Khan





THE ORGANISATION - STAFFING AND STRUCTURE

NSCD employs 60 staff members. The Chief Executive and Principal is supported by a Personal Assistant and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The Vice Principal and the Chief Operating Officer & Director of Finances both report to the Principal.

Our current organisational structure can be found here nscd.ac.uk/structure

FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The School has a total income of approximately £3.5M per annum, of which almost £3.0M is generated from undergraduate and postgraduate courses, mainly from regulated tuition fees and grants for our UK, with the remainder from international students and independent fee payers. As a registered Higher Education Provider, the regulated funding is received from the Office for Students (OfS). Our Annual Report and Accounts can be found here nscd.ac.uk/governance.

NSCD also receives £200K of funding from the Department of Education for our Centre for Advanced Training and has previously received funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency. In addition, the School has since 2018 received a core grant from Arts Council England of £150K per annum as a result of gaining National Portfolio (NPO) status. Finally, the School receives around £100K from other commercial activities such as theatre box office, studio lettings, weekly classes and short courses.

One of the School's key financial objectives is to increase the overall level of tuition fee income, in expectation that key grant funding from the OfS may be removed or reduced in the near future. This includes significant expansion of the education provision via the introduction of new courses which will increase the number of undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as continuing with further internationalisation. In 2024 the school began the process of applying for full degree awarding powers. Ongoing effective and efficient management of resources and expenditure is achieved by careful cost control and embracing value for money principles, ensuring that the maximum possible level of resource is made available for the School's educational, artistic and participatory activities. Finally, the delivery of expanded facilities, in the form of new premises, will require the generation of substantial funding from public bodies, foundations and other partners as well as using earmarked reserves and raising significant levels of commercial lending.



MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRINCIPAL

This is an exciting period in NSCD's journey as we look forward to awarding our own degrees and forge collaborative partnerships with like-minded small specialist institutions. The support provided by the Director of Studies will enhance the positivity, focus and specific context for development within the school during this time. I am excited to be able to welcome colleagues who will support our ambition to become world-leading and help achieve common goals for the institution. I envisage the growth of this team to include complementary skills and expertise that will support ongoing change. By supporting each other, we can leverage individual strengths to address the diverse needs of the school. This role has considerable oversight delegated by the leadership team to focus on promoting the success and well-being of the students. By supporting myself and colleagues, this role will create an environment that fosters academic excellence and artistic growth for the students.

Darren Carr
Vice Principal



JOB DESCRIPTION

Post	Director of Studies
Department	Shared oversight for the Higher Education Faculties
Reporting to	The Vice Principal
Responsible for	Development and organisation of the academic provision and quality assurance as directed by Vice Principal
Line Management	Head of Undergraduate Studies Head of Postgraduate Studies

NSCD's ambition since leaving the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama was to register to become an Independent Higher Education provider (which it did in 2022). Future ambitions are to gain full degree awarding powers, which we are in the process of assessment for and then to forge new and exciting partnerships with other small specialist providers. The role is to support the present Vice Principal to enable NSCD to achieve these ambitions. This role will enable the Vice Principal to focus upon the strategic vision of the CEO and focus upon future-facing collaborative partnership provision whilst maintaining a steady and ambitious programme of activity.

Purpose of this role

As a member of the management team, the post holder will be a key support to the Vice Principal, contributing towards the strategic direction, corporate policy-making and development and delivery of NSCD objectives. The postholder will support strong effective performance measurement and management systems in the areas of their responsibility.

The role will have delegated responsibility by the Vice Principal for the management of the School's curriculum and academic resource provision. This role is responsible for the effective development and delivery of an evolving, forward-facing curriculum, to meet the needs of aspiring dance artists aiming for careers in the field of contemporary dance.

The Director of Studies will implement and support the ongoing development and quality assurance and enhancement of the Higher Education offer, ensure the effective management of available resources for curriculum and student support. The role includes managing relationships in internal committees and Boards.

The Director of Studies will provide an inclusive, determined and inspirational approach to leadership, and innovation in others whilst establishing a cost-effective and high-performance culture based on stable and continuous improvement. The Director of Studies will deputise for the Vice Principal in their absence as required, ensuring the continual effective leadership of the organisation, whilst maintaining its purpose and vision.

Academic Responsibilities

- Work alongside the Vice Principal and Heads of Faculty to oversee, maintain, manage developments and lead on consistency of excellence in curriculum design, course delivery and assessment strategies. This includes management of resources.
- Work with colleagues to develop the School's research and scholarship vision as appropriate to the School's strategic plan in this area.
- Take over the administration of the School's timetable system to ensure that all classes are timetabled.
- Lead and support Heads of Studies as their Line Manager.
- Support the Vice Principal to oversee programme and course reviews and curriculum and assessment development.
- Oversee the implementation of procedures for contracting all academic staff to ensure high quality, efficient and effective recruitment.
- Act as Vice Chair for Senate and other committee meetings as and when required to support oversight of academic governance.

- Work with colleagues on recruitment planning, to ensure efficient and high-quality support and high-quality student recruitment.
- Contribute towards Periodic Programme Review or Quality Standards Review (6-year cycle) *last undertaken in January 2022.
- Manage ongoing implementation and oversight of NSCD's academic workload allocation model, ensuring maximum utilisation and a fair distribution of workload.
- Partner effectively with students, empowering the student voice and delivering an effective interface between industry-facing education, research and community engagement.
- Contribute to the reporting of excellence and benchmarking of excellence through the analysis of student experience surveys and the National Student Survey (NSS).
- Be present at Boards and Committees including any collaborative partnerships as required by the Vice Principal.

Leadership and Management

- Serve as a member of the institution's Management team, working effectively across the institution to drive sustainable growth in HE provision in critical strategic areas.
- Deliver activities that contribute to improved student access, continuation and success in order to meet the needs and targets of the Access and Participation Plan.
- Support the Vice Principal with the institution's strategic and on-going development strategy in delivering organic and diversified portfolio growth and ensure that any other associate affiliate programmes are compliant with administrative policies and procedures and that the institution adheres to all accreditation and regulatory standards outlined by the OfS.
- Support the development of NSCD's strategy for research and scholarship with a future ambition to enter the Research Excellence Framework (REF).
- Assist the Vice Principal in the development and articulation of the Academic strands of the School's Strategic Plan, outlining key issues for consideration by aligning academic delivery with the vision for the School and its objectives.
- Contribute to the effective management of the School, in relation to cross-organisational issues, integrated business and resource planning, risk management and performance management.
- Feed into the production and maintenance of the Risk Policy and Risk Register, identifying and actively managing any key potential risks to the School.
- Have oversight of the line management of the academic tutors at the school.

Organisational Development & Transformational Change

- Quality Assurance oversight across the departments and leading on outward-facing Higher Education initiatives.
- Ensure recruitment and maintenance of relationships with external examiners for the School's and collaborative partnership HE programmes.
- Support the Vice Principal in critical evaluation documentation, as preparation for Quality Standards reviews and Teaching Excellence Framework submissions. Ensure effective and timely delivery of Annual Programme Monitoring Reports across HE programmes.
- Work with the Vice Principal to ensure that NSCD's provision meets the Office for Students statutory requirements, in relation to conditions of registration.
- Undertaking key projects with the Vice Principal involving analysis, interpretation and assessment of options including the impact on performance and service delivery, policy development and implementation, including benchmarking against comparative institutions.
- Support the Vice principal in the implementation of academic procedures, course design and validation processes leading to successful partnerships.

Additionally, to assume responsibility for at least 1 of the 5 areas below which represent 0.1 FTE of the post:

Teaching, Learning and Assessment of research

- I. To feed into and module-lead the delivery of Educational Action Research on the MA Dance Teaching & Facilitating programme.
- II. To lead and deliver an Arts Project management and/or production skills to the MA Dance & Creative Enterprise programme.
- III. To contribute to a module around arts project fundraising strategy on the MA Dance & Creative Enterprise programme
- IV. To contribute to the delivery of a digital marketing module on an MA programme.

Bid Writing

- V. To be prepared to contribute to the process of application writing for additional funding streams which support students.

The above duties will inevitably change as the work of the School develops. The post-holder should therefore expect periodic variations to this job description. This job description may also be supplemented on a regular basis by individual objectives derived from School strategies as directed by the Vice Principal.

Operational Management

1. To follow NSCD's Code of Practice in matters such as Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Data Protection and Safeguarding.
2. To support all agreed Quality Assurance Systems within NSCD.
3. To undertake any other relevant duties as required.
4. To work towards the values of the school in its ambitions of inclusion and equality.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person specification describes the skills, experience, knowledge and aptitude required to perform the duties of this post effectively. The criteria order listed should not be taken to imply their relative importance. Paid and unpaid experience may both be relevant.

Education	Essential	Desirable
Professional arts training to postgraduate level and/or equivalent professional experience	✓	
Evidence of a research profile	✓	
Working towards or near completion of a PhD in related field	✓	
Possession of an approved teaching qualification in Higher Education (PG Cert/ Dip HE or PGCE) and a willingness to complete one in service		✓
Experience		
Proven managerial experience within a Higher Education Department/preferably in the Arts	✓	
Experience of line management of staff	✓	
Proven record of recent teaching in HE environment. Knowledge and understanding of one of the seven areas identified for teaching or fundraising at NSCD	✓	
An understanding of the demands of high-level Higher education provision	✓	
Proven management skill record, with experience of successfully leading and managing individuals and groups to achieve common objectives, including line management responsibility	✓	
Experienced in making judgements and taking informed decisions within their area of responsibility, balanced with providing assurance and seeking advice as appropriate from the leadership team	✓	
Strong analytical capability, with the ability to understand, assess and distil complex strategic, financial, and operational data to enable informed strategic decision-making in the academic provision	✓	
Knowledge and understanding of HE policy, funding and regulatory landscape	✓	
Ability to support teaching staff in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning	✓	
Minimum of 5 years' experience in a faculty or department lead role		✓
Internationally published research profile		✓
QAA training or experience as an external adviser, assessor or examiner		✓

Working practitioner knowledge of the professional arts industry		✓
Working knowledge and experience of related disciplines		✓
Significant knowledge and understanding of the HE policy, funding and regulatory landscape		✓
Skills		
Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to assimilate, summarise and convey complex information, which is accurate and concise, and tailored to meet the needs of different audiences and a multitude of purposes	✓	
Excellent record of organisation, collaboration and an ability to work with others in a HE environment	✓	
Excellent IT skills	✓	
Self-motivated with ability to work on own initiative	✓	
Ability to contribute strategically to specialist educational development	✓	
Ability to contribute to strategic educational development across departmental boundaries		✓
Interest and ability to pursue further research and scholarly activity		✓
Personal Attributes		
Aspiration to aim for the highest standards, and to work flexibly and with dedication to assure they are achieved	✓	
An effective problem-solver, with a proactive, solutions focused approach	✓	
Sound judgement, with the ability to work with sensitivity and tact, retaining a clear focus on outcomes	✓	
Ability to demonstrate a commitment to own personal development and that of others	✓	
Willingness and enthusiasm to work inclusively and strategically as part of a small and diverse management team	✓	
Willingness to work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends	✓	
Affinity with the education and training ethos of NSCD and its culture and values	✓	
A willingness to undertake ongoing professional development	✓	
Generosity to contribute to related areas and support colleagues		✓
Safeguarding		
Have proven knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications, and any other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with students and vulnerable adults	✓	

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Full terms and conditions of employment will be supplied to the successful candidate, but in brief these are:

Place of employment	NSCD, 98 Chapeltown Road, Leeds, LS7 4BH
Hours	Minimum of 37 hours per week (full time, on-site) Some evening and weekend working may be required
Remuneration	£50,000 - £55,000
Contract	4 years fixed term
Probation	10 months
Leave entitlement	35 days plus 8 bank holidays and up to 3 discretionary days between Christmas and New Year
Notice period	4 months on either side
Pension	Teachers' Pension Scheme, Local Government Pension Scheme (West Yorkshire Pension Scheme)
Other benefits	Staff training and development opportunities, free or reduced-price tickets for performances

Equal Opportunities

The school is committed to providing a non-discriminatory and harassment-free working environment for our employees. All School employees are expected to have due regard for those policies when carrying out their duties.

Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

NSCD believes that diversity and a diverse workforce is critical to its future development. As an equal opportunities employer we actively encourage interest from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, age, race, cultural background, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief.

Safeguarding

NSCD follows Safeguarding provision and all staff require a full DBS check. NSCD is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

Health and Safety

All employees will maintain a positive attitude to Health and Safety in carrying out personal responsibilities and co-operate with Health and Safety policy/local rules/codes of practice relating to Health and Safety.

Environment and Sustainability

NSCD recognizes and is aware of its Social, Economic and Environmental responsibility, the postholder is required to minimize environmental impact in the performance of the role and actively contribute to the delivery of NSCD's Environmental and Sustainability Policy.



HOW TO APPLY

[Click here](#) to download an application form.

Please send a completed application form to Geraldine McDowall, HR Manager via email at geraldine.mcdowall@nscd.ac.uk along with completing an equal opportunities form online [found here](#).

For any queries, please contact Geraldine McDowall, HR Manager on 0113 219 3046 or via email geraldine.mcdowall@nscd.ac.uk

Unaccompanied CVs will not be considered.

Northern School of Contemporary Dance is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and vulnerable adults and requires all staff to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work. The School is an Equal Opportunities Employer and welcomes applications from suitably qualified people from all sections of the community.

SCHEDULE

Applications must be received no later than **12 noon on Friday 3 May 2024**.

Interviews for shortlisted candidates will take place at the School during week commencing 3 June 2024.

If you foresee any difficulties attending an interview during that week, please let us know in your covering letter.