

Programme Specification Northern School of Contemporary Dance	
Programme Title:	MA Professional Dance Pedagogy
Teaching Institution:	Northern School of Contemporary Dance
Final Award:	MA Professional Dance Pedagogy
Alternative Exit Awards:	PGDip Professional Dance Pedagogy (120 credits) PGCert Professional Dance Pedagogy (60 credits)
Credit Level:	7
Credits/ECTS value:	180 (90ECTS)
Modes of Delivery:	2 Years Part Time (distance education)
QAA Benchmarks:	QAA Subject Benchmark Statements: Dance, Drama and Performance (April 2024) Master's Degree Characteristics Statement (Feb 2020) The Frameworks for Higher Education (Feb 2024) – section 4.17 Descriptor for Level 7 (FHEQ)
Validation Date:	Sept 2025
Programme Start Date:	Sept 2026
Review Date:	Sept 2030

Programme Overview & Aims:

The MA Professional Dance Pedagogy offers a flexible approach to PG study for established dance teachers. Students on this programme have the opportunity to undertake a rigorous evaluation of their professional teaching practice through engagement with theories and frameworks for Reflective and Reflexive Practice and Dance Pedagogy, before identifying a specific area of their current practice for deeper interrogation through an MA Research Project. Through this MA, students gain tools to deepen their understanding of dance pedagogy, apply research methodologies, consider ethical dimensions of dance teaching and learning, and enhance their professional identity. The programme combines theory and practice, encouraging critical thinking and transformation within the context of each student's own teaching.

Delivered through dialogic pedagogy, the course promotes learning via discussion, debate, and shared experience. Students engage in an active Virtual Learning Environment with guided tasks, curated resources, and opportunities for both asynchronous and synchronous learning via discussion forums and Microsoft Teams.

Designed for dance teachers working in diverse settings—schools, communities, private studios, conservatoires, and professional companies—the MA allows students to remain embedded in their own practice while studying. It supports those seeking to strengthen their professional credibility or transition into higher education teaching roles.

The programme blends theory and practice throughout the learning experience and offers a pedagogical focus for dance teachers / practitioners who are looking to establish greater credibility in their identity as a dance teacher / practitioner, or to move into higher level teaching environments. Throughout the MA emphasis is placed on the individual professional practice of each student. Success on this programme is through the demonstrable ability to critically reflect, evaluate, analyse, and transform, through research, one's own community of practice and contribution to the field of dance pedagogy.

Programme Learning Outcomes On completion of this stage of study students will be able to:	
Level 7 - Stage 1	
PLO1-1	interrogate a range of reflective and reflexive practice theories, frameworks, and approaches to in-depth critical thinking within their own professional practice
PLO1-2	employ advanced critical thinking skills, evidencing care and applied professional practice in the treatment of complex philosophical and ethical principles emerging from theories and practice within dance pedagogy
PLO1-3	advance their teaching practice through application of existing dance practices and scholarship identifying specialist knowledge within the culture of their own community which contributes the potential for transformation and change
PLO1-4	critically reflect on their own practice and develop professional networking and communication skills across practice-based and academic settings at an advanced level
PLO1-5	manage, synthesise, and contextualise information in the design, development, and articulation of learning through critical frameworks within professional dance teaching and learning contexts.
Level 7 - Stage 2	
PLO2-1	organise, critically evaluate, and synergise the relevant sources and critical thinking of a research area
PLO2-2	identify, frame, and articulate an area of research based on a comprehensive understanding of applicable techniques and theories

PLO2-3	apply advanced research methodologies, considering originality in questions that emerge from dance teaching practices and the critical evaluation and communication of processes and findings from research through relevant formats for a range of stakeholders
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Programme Structure

The MA Professional Dance Pedagogy programme is delivered over two stages. Stage 1 comprises *Critical Thinking in Learning and Teaching, or Reflections on Prior Teaching and Learning, or Professional Practice 1 with Mapping Landscapes: Dance Pedagogies*, and *Research Methods*, bringing the student into focus with their own practice, and wider fields of dance pedagogy and scholarship and devising and shaping practice-centred research. These three modules provide a scaffolded progression enabling students to develop key skills in reflection, reflexivity, critical thinking, and research design in dance. The teaching and learning experience across the first three modules is focused towards preparing students in choice making, and deeper level engagement with subject material for the more extensive and complex research phase of Stage 2.

The stage 1 modules enable students to progress into the stage 2 module; *Independent Research Project*, where they will devise, develop, and articulate an independently led piece of research as appropriate to level 7 MA work.

Module Structure				
Year 1				
Stage 1 (level 7)				
Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Core or Option	Pass Compulsory
NS7CT1	Critical Thinking in Learning and Teaching	30	Option	No
NS7ML1	Mapping Landscapes: Dance Pedagogies	60	Core	Yes
NS7CR1	Critical Reflection on Prior Teaching and Learning	30	Option	No
NS7PP1a	Professional Practice 1	30	Option	No
Year 2				
Stage 1 (level 7)				

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Core or Option	Pass Compulsory
NS7RM1a	Research Methods	30	Core	No
Progression In order to progress onto stage 2, students need to complete 120 credits from stage 1, made up of 90 credits of core modules plus 30 credits from optional modules.				
Stage 2 (Level 7)				
Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Core or Option	Pass Compulsory
NS7IR1a	Independent Research Project	60	Core	Yes
Awards To be eligible for the award of MA, students need to complete 60 credits from stage 2, made up of 60 credits of core modules. Exit Awards Award of credit will be issued to students who complete modules but do not complete stage 1 of the programme. Upon successful completion of 60 credits from any stage the student is eligible for the exit award of PGCert. Upon successful completion of 120 credits from any stage the student is eligible for the exit award of PGDip.				

Programme Aims Module Mapping								
	PLO1-1	PLO1-2	PLO1-3	PLO1-4	PLO1-5	PLO2-1	PLO2-2	PLO2-3
NS7CT1	X	X	X	X	X			
NS7ML1	X	X	X	X	X			
NS7CR1	X	X	X	X	X			
NS7PP1a	X	X	X	X	X			
NS7RME		X	X	X	X			
NS7IR1a						X	X	X

Approach to Teaching

Teaching at NSCD is tailored to the nature of the modules being taken and driven by an inclusive approach to learning, teaching and assessment. Teaching on this distance education programme draws on a dialogic pedagogy approach where learning takes place in community through dialogue and sharing of practice with others. Teaching methods utilise an active VLE to enable synchronous and asynchronous engagement through the MA Professional Dance Pedagogy cohort, and between students and mentors. Sessions on Teams use auto-captions, audio descriptions and are recorded and uploaded for future reference.

Taught hours for each module reflect the nature of the module. These are considerate of a balance between contact time and independent study, approaches of online learning, and critically students' engagement with their own professional practice. Timing of synchronous teaching and learning sessions via Teams are determined by the time zones of the student cohort (for example is a high percentage of students are in North America sessions would be scheduled accordingly) with a large percentage of time on the MA given to asynchronous and independently directed learning. Consequently, study time varies, but average contact time is normally between 2-3hrs per week contact time, plus independent learning and engagement in the students own professional practice as integral to the learning hours of each module.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment on the MA Professional Dance Pedagogy programme is through evidencing critical thinking, embodied reflection, and analysis. Each assessment is designed to reflect the eclectic landscape of the global dance teaching profession with a balance in the diversity of different assessment approaches across the modules, ensuring that students meet the demands of both academic and professional standards in ways that offer meaningful and inclusive articulations of their learning.

Students are given a choice between different modes of submission for summative assessment, for example, reflective work may be presented via multi-modal portfolios comprising of written reviews, presentations, practical workshops/lecture demonstrations, and academic thesis. This is designed so that students can best articulate their ideas, and as part of an inclusive assessment strategy. Wherever relevant, appropriate scrutiny is given to academic conventions.

Work-Based Learning and Placements:

There is no separately defined placement activity on this programme as work-based learning is embedded throughout. Students are situated within the place/site/culture of their professional practice and actively engaged in teaching practice as a requirement of the programme and as part of the learning hours (detailed in each Module Specification and Module Outline published on Moodle at the start of each term). This sits outside of NSCD's Placement Scheme and is integral to the programme.

Engagement with Learning:

As a distance education programme there is no requirement to physically attend any element of the programme in-person at NSCD. There is a requirement to engage with study through attending the Lectures, Seminars and Discussion Groups (hours detailed on each Module Specification and schedules published at the start of each term on NSCD Moodle). Students' engagement with these sessions may be live or through accessing recordings. Engagement is monitored in the following ways; Live Lectures, Seminars and Discussion Groups – a record of attendance is taken by the teaching staff member leading the session. Recorded Lectures, Seminars – a brief summary of the session and learning taken from it is

to be posted in the online discussion forum following accessing the recording (this may be written or voice recorded). Discussion Groups are summarised on the online discussion forum and students must contribute to this asynchronously if they do not participate in the live discussion group. Failure to do this will result in non-attendance for sessions.

Engagement in placement/work-based learning activity (within the students own teaching environment) is not monitored in hours/attendance but forms the basis of the learning and assessments throughout the programme.

Student Support:

NSCD has comprehensive student support that covers 5 key elements: health and wellbeing support, academic support (including learner support provision), English-language support, financial assistance, and bodywork provision (including injury support & rehabilitation).

Student progress and wellbeing is monitored through a number of processes including student review board, with student learning enhanced through use of our Virtual Learning Environment (currently NSCD Moodle). NSCD also offers careers guidance and advice, alongside robust safeguarding procedures.

Entry Profile:

Entry is through a successful application and interview. There is not a requirement for a traditional Undergraduate degree for entry to this MA, but applicants must hold professional qualifications and experience (at or equivalent to Level 6), this is assessed on application/interview on an individual basis. The programme is aimed at experienced professional dance teachers / practitioners engaged in an active professional teaching practice.

Candidates for whom English is not their native language will need to demonstrate a proficiency in written and spoken English relevant to the demands of the programme of study. This would normally be at least one of the following:

- IELTS for UKVI with an overall band of 6.0 with no less than 6 in Reading and Writing and no less than 5.5 in Speaking and Listening.
- Language Cert International ESOL SELT with 33– 37 per skill for Reading and Writing, 25-32 per skill for Speaking and Listening. 38 – 50 per skill to achieve 6.5 across all skills.

On entry the student will be able to demonstrate:

- a recognised body of dance/movement teaching practice that they are able to articulate through evidencing experiential learning
- the potential to further refine and advance their teaching practice and deepen their awareness of wider fields of dance pedagogy
- the potential to further develop academic and research skills, knowledge and understanding and to apply them to their learning and professional practice
- the capacity to gain the maximum benefit from the programme of study through an imaginative and intelligent involvement with all aspects of the learning experience
- the ability to critically reflect upon, appraise and respond to their own professional practice
- an approach to working that is inclusive, creative, reflective and evaluative