

Programme Specification Validated by: Northern School of Contemporary Dance (2026 entry)	
Programme Title:	MA Contemporary Dance Performance (Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble)
Teaching Institution:	Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble
Final Award:	MA Contemporary Dance Performance (Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble) (180 credits)
Alternative Exit Awards:	PGDip (120 credits) PGCert (60 credits)
Credit Level:	Level 7
Credits/ECTS value:	180 (90ECTS)
Modes of Delivery:	1 Year Full Time
QAA Benchmarks:	QAA Subject Benchmark Statements: Dance, Drama and Performance (Apr 2024) The Frameworks for Higher Education (Feb 2024) – section 4.17 Descriptor for Level 7 (FHEQ)
Validation Date:	September 2025
Programme Start Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2030

Programme Aims and Overview

The **MA Contemporary Dance Performance (Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble)** is a dynamic, one-year, full-time programme designed for aspiring professional dancers seeking to refine their artistry and performance skills within an immersive and challenging environment. The course offers two distinct pathways, each providing unique opportunities for growth, development, and preparation for the professional dance industry.

Joining Equilibrio Dinamico ensemble places students at the heart of a touring contemporary dance company. This pathway offers a safe and inspiring space for dancers to rigorously develop their physical and creative capabilities, engage with diverse choreographic approaches, and gain invaluable insight into the realities of a professional performance career. Through intensive studio practice and touring experience, students hone their artistic voice while building the resilience and versatility required for the demands of the contemporary dance profession.

Programme Learning Outcomes Upon successful completion of this programme students will be able to:	
Level 7 - Stage 1	
PLO1-1	Equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for employment, further study, and personal growth.
PLO1-2	Promote an in-depth appreciation of contemporary dance practices, including the aesthetic, artistic, and cultural values shaping the creation, performance, and reception of dance.
PLO1-3	Critically refine students' performance practice, develop their unique artistic identity, and engage critically with the demands of the contemporary dance field.
PLO1-4	Extend students' range of analytical, critical, and interpretive skills, fostering independent learning and the ability to undertake meaningful research into their growth as dance artists.
PLO1-5	Engage with the contemporary dance profession, enabling mutual influence and preparing students to contribute to and shape the evolving field of contemporary dance.
Level 7 - Stage 2	
PLO2-1	Students will be prepared to design and conduct an independent practice-based research project, contributing to the field of dance with insights that support evidence-based practices and innovation in creative or performance practice.
PLO2-2	Students will demonstrate the ability to uphold professional and ethical standards in creative and performance practice, exhibiting sensitivity to cultural, ethical, and individual differences in their work.

Programme Structure

The **MA Contemporary Dance Performance (Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble)** offers a carefully structured curriculum designed to equip students with the technical, creative, and professional skills necessary for a successful career in contemporary dance. The programme is divided into core and optional modules, allowing students to tailor their learning experience to align with their chosen pathway and professional aspirations.

The structure of stage 1 of the MA Contemporary Dance Performance (Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble) is designed to mirror the required skills and expectations of a dance repertoire company environment. The Company and Technical Practice module runs throughout stage

1, equipping the students with the skills to effectively utilise class to continue to develop their technical ability and to effectively prepare for the demands of creation, rehearsal and performance. The module also serves to unpin the students reflective and artistic development, feeding how they can contribute and collaborate effectively in a company environment.

The first half of stage 1 sees students undertake the Devising and Creation module, in which they develop performance material through the creation of new work and/or potential restaging of existing works. This leads into the Performance Practice module, where the students take the work devised, learnt and rehearsed and realise it over a number of performance opportunities.

The stage 1 modules enable students to progress into the stage 2 module Research Project, where they will develop and evaluate an independently led piece of research as appropriate to level 7 MA work. This can take the form of practice as research, lecture demonstration or a dissertation reflective of their learning to date. Practical outcomes will be supported by contextualising information.

Module Structure				
Stage 1 (level 7)				
Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Core or Option	Pass Compulsory
ED7CTa	Company and Technical Practice	60	Core	Yes
ED7DCa	Devising and Creation	30	Core	No
ED7PPa	Performance Practice	30	Core	No
Progression <p>In order to progress onto stage 2, students need to complete 120 credits from stage 1, made up of 120 credits of core modules.</p> <p>Before starting Stage 2 all students with English as a second language will need the following (or equivalent):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 				

Stage 2 (Level 7)				
Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Core or Option	Pass Compulsory
ED7RPa	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 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 Learning Outcomes Module Mapping							
	PL01-1	PL01-2	PL01-3	PL01-4	PL01-5	PL02-1	PL02-2
ED7CTa	X		X	X	X		
ED7DCa	X	X	X	X	X		
ED7PPa		X	X		X		
ED7RPa						X	X

Approach to Teaching

The course aims to develop employability and support students' progression into the professional dance community through the acquisition and refinement of high-level skills relating to movement, creation and creativity, performance, self-awareness and reflection, together with the strong interpersonal skills needed to thrive in the industry.

Students will engage in a range of professional-level situations/environments and be introduced to networks that can support them well beyond the end of their journey at Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble. Learning and teaching methods include tutor-led sessions, work with choreographers and dance professionals, directed and independent study, group work, practical workshops, lectures, seminars, rehearsals, performances, professional performance programme, professional practice (simulated and real) and experiential learning.

The training offers a range and variety of dance techniques and movement forms demonstrating topicality and relevance, including ballet and contemporary classes, where the content develops refined precision, artistry and confident, sophisticated practice. Students work as members of a professional dance company, participating in company classes and contributing to the development of the company's repertoire. They may also perform and/or contribute to the company's educational/community programmes.

The programme offers an in-house simulated company experience, where students work with an Artistic Director and engage in rehearsals to gain a realistic understanding of the demands of working in a professional environment. This includes working with leading professional choreographers, participating fully in the company's rehearsal and production processes, and taking part in technical lessons. This experience culminates in a performance in the UK as part of the exchange with Verve, along with other performances in Italy and/or across Europe, allowing students to encounter the real challenges of a professional performance programme.

In addition to technical lessons, students undertake a series of practical sessions supported by theoretical studies aimed at physical development and improving performance practice. All students examine contemporary dance performance practice and the aesthetic, artistic, creative and cultural values that inform the ways in which dances are created and performed, and the emerging implications for their professional, artistic and creative development. Lectures, seminars and workshops further develop students' understanding and engagement with practice-as-research in preparation for an independent research project towards the end of the course.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment is designed to align closely with professional practice, supporting employability and individual artistic development. Negotiated learning contracts provide a framework for students to set individual career goals, informed by an analysis of current skills and aspirations for the future. These contracts create realistic, challenging and developmental targets that are integrated into practice and assessment outcomes.

The close working relationship with the Artistic Director, choreographers and other professionals within the simulated company context ensures that assessment reflects authentic industry expectations. Students are evaluated on their technical proficiency, creative contribution, professionalism, and reflective engagement with their own practice. The emphasis on autonomy and individual goal-setting promotes responsibility for learning and supports ongoing professional development beyond graduation.

Work-Based Learning and Placements:

There is no placement activity on this programme.

Student Support:

Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble is committed to providing a comprehensive framework of student support that covers four key elements: health and wellbeing support; academic support (including learner support provision); English-language support (in preparation for Stage 2); and bodywork provision (including injury support and rehabilitation).

Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble will actively monitor student progress and wellbeing through a range of processes, ensuring that each student's development is tracked and supported. Learning will be enhanced through the use of the Virtual Learning Environment, where students will be able to access key resources and find signposting to relevant support services.

Where specialist input is required, Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble will refer students to local support agencies and staff, ensuring that individual needs are met through appropriate expertise and provision. Alongside this, Equilibrio Dinamico Ensemble offers careers guidance and advice and maintains robust safeguarding procedures to promote a safe and supportive learning environment.

Entry Profile:

Entry is through a successful application and interview. The programme is aimed at graduates of two/three-year dance training programmes at Higher Education level, or dance artists with professional experience and equivalent vocational dance training.

Students entering the programme without a formal undergraduate qualification must follow the NSCD RPL policy and procedure.

On entry the student will be able to demonstrate:

- the potential to further refine and advance their acquired technical skill and deepen their artistic awareness
- the potential to further develop other dance-related skills, knowledge and understanding and to apply them to a professional contemporary dance context
- the capacity to gain the maximum benefit from the course 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 professional contemporary dance performance practice
- an approach to working professionally that is typically creative, reflective and evaluative.

Before starting Stage 2 of the programme all students with English as a second language will need the following (or equivalent):

- 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.