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Tuning Dance Education

TUNING DOCUMENT DANCE EDUCATION

This tuning document has been produced by the ELIA Dance Section (EDS) within the framework of the *inter}artes* thematic network, strand 2.

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE SUBJECT AREA

Dance is the physical language of the human experience celebrating the core experiences that have motivated people to participate in dance across all ages and cultures.

Before one can summarise the subject area of Dance it is essential to recognise that Dance is a diverse and often a multi disciplinary art form that embraces a range of subsidiary disciplines (e.g. performance, choreography, teaching, scenography, research, writing, and criticism). Although possible, few of these areas are studied individually with most being taught as part of a broad spectrum of classes in a multi-disciplinary environment. Dance requires a knowledge and understanding of all the arts it embraces.

Dance education in Europe is provided by a range of institutions including: universities, specialist academies and colleges of higher or further education. The manifold approaches to dance education mirror the variety of the art form. The variety in teaching of Dance runs from the traditional vocational model with its emphasis on intensive practical training, tutor directed learning, high teacher and student contact, an emphasis on the acquisition of technical skills to the academic tradition that implies student led study, tutor/student contact and with an emphasis on individual self-expression and creativity (e.g. coaching and monitoring). The key of all the different learning & teaching models is fostering creativity, which requires a great deal of investment of the student as well as from the educator. Along this continuum there exist many approaches that combine the two methods in a variety of ways.

Dance can be seen as a barometer of social change. Of all art forms dance is most responsive to changes in social conditions, the street dances of one decade are likely to be absorbed into the art dance of another. Dance programmes play an active role in providing the necessary creative human capital.

While Dance has a long history and is in many cases built on practical, philosophical, theoretical and cultural traditions, it is not based in an ossified body of knowledge and skills but is characterised by changing social, political and artistic values and practices. It is the dynamic nature of these cultural practices and their frequently contested nature that sustains the vitality of dance. Taking into account the variety and dynamism of the subject, it is vital that any definition of the subject does not constrain or restrict future innovation. The continuation of well established methodologies and engagement with traditional subject matter should not be endangered.

Dance education involves an holistic approach to training the body (to develop dance technique), choreography, composition, making, performing, improvisation, professional work placement, teaching methods, technical support (sound, site, lighting, costume), critique (articulating critical views and ideas), multimedia (film and video) and dance theory. Further it includes skills to apply dance knowledge, skills and understanding in different contexts. It is usual for Dance programmes to develop a specific and integrated approach to craft (non-gender specific language), aesthetic thinking, critical reflection, making and public manifestation. There are different traditions of teaching dance and there are different traditions of teaching but the role of the 'artist-teacher' is essential to all Dance programmes.

Career paths following the study of Dance include: dancer/performer; choreographer; teacher; community dance artist; dance historian, therapist; critic, scholar. The transferable skills that students acquire during their studies (e.g. communication, ability to work effectively as a member of a team, risk-taking, etc.) are also relevant and valued in a range of other working contexts in particular creative and entrepreneurial contexts and in managerial contexts.

Dance is studied as both a practical and theoretical subject and most programmes of study will seek to provide a blend of these modes according to the declared aims and outcomes of the specific programme. Programmes of study that are taught in a range of institutions of higher education that have quite discrete missions and objectives for learning and teaching

2.2 DEGREE PROFILES

As diversity is a characteristic and a value of Dance education across Europe, it is important that Dance programmes continue to set their own programme philosophies. Defining study programmes and content of Dance education is necessarily the responsibility of the individual institutions.

In Dance there are no countries represented within the subject group where the Bologna process is not being discussed with a view to implementation. A range of practice is currently seen in Dance programmes with regard to the Bologna three-cycle model. While some countries adopted a three cycle system model many years ago, others are at different stages of development.

Dance education comes from a situation where two educational systems exist next to each other. In a vocational system, education pupils start at a relatively early age and finish when they are 18/19 years old. In a higher education system students start when they are around 17/18 years old and are being educated in a three or four years bachelor's system. As a result significant differences in qualifications and recognition of diploma's and degrees still exist between Higher Education and vocational

schools. Although gradually solutions will be found to bridge the gap between these two types of education it makes it difficult to present a coherent picture of Dance education in Europe.

Masters' programmes are in development in some European countries, not yet in all Bologna countries. These programmes focus on specialised areas in the field of dance and on a synthesis of practice and theory. Some countries accept dancers into Masters' programmes, or even distinctly focus on dancers with a long standing professional working experience. In other countries, notably Germany this is still a problem, even though there is a definite need for such programmes as identified by the professional field.

It has been a tradition in dance education to offer post-graduate programmes focusing on personal deepening of practice and/or theory as well as specialised courses (e.g. repertoire, choreography, and teaching). Some of these post-graduate programmes have already been developed into Masters' programmes.

Third cycle programmes in Dance hardly exist at the moment. Some dance practitioners/Dance teachers have acquired an influential doctoral degree but these have been awarded by other disciplines (e.g. philosophy). Development of third cycle degrees is seen as important for the further recognition of Dance as an independent art form and for the further advancement of the sector.

Typical degrees offered in dance

First cycle	Given the variety of ways that subject area is described in the titles of programmes (for example, dance, dance: choreography, choreography, choreography and dance, urban dance, community dance) it is difficult to identify a 'typical' first Degree cycle in the area of Dance. There are a wide range of institutions that offer programmes, courses or pathways that specialise in, or emphasise certain aspects of Dance. However, typical elements of the Degree at this level include: Practical Studio work, staff/student directed productions, the theory and history of dance, research and professional practice.
Second Cycle	The typical Degree at second cycle would also Dance with a number of similar subject specific courses as described for the first cycle. MA-Dance level: a wide range of specialist programmes of continuing professional development, supported by practical and/or theoretical research. *In many European countries MA programmes are still in development*
Third Cycle	Typical Degrees at third cycle are Dance PhD level: A self initiated and directed programme of research and practice with a rigorous evaluation.

	In many European countries PHD programmes are still in development

Typical occupations of the graduate in dance

Typical occupations include:
Dancer, teacher, choreographer, artist-in-residence, ballet mistress/master, costume designer, dance notator, dance therapist, critic, leisure & recreation instructor, artistic coordinator, accounting assistant, fundraiser, journalist, advertising agent, arts council director, public relations manager, rehearsal director, editor, event planner, stage manager, college professor, financial manager, studio owner, Pilates/ conditioning instructor.

The study of dance provides students with a broad range of skills applicable to the performing arts and beyond. A study of dance develops her/his skills in presenting, ability to perform in public, and control of the body. These competences allied with creativity, making skills, and analytical and critical reflection skills, acquired and enhanced during the study that makes them highly employable in relation to the application skills. Dancing also helps students to learn concentrate intensely, listen, observe, solve problems creatively, think critically, work under pressure, meet deadlines, and process constructive feedback The transferable skills that students acquire during their studies are also relevant and valued in a range of other working contexts in particular creative and entrepreneurial contexts and in managerial contexts.

First Cycle	By the end of this cycle students are equipped for professional practice or further professional development as dance artists and will have acquired numerous transferable skills that equip them for employment. *Dancer/performer, choreographer, teacher* It also leads to further study on a postgraduate Dance programme, teaching qualifications or other subject areas.
Second Cycle	The students develop specialisation and depth, selecting from the core competencies mentioned above *Dancer/performer, choreographer, teacher, scholar* It also leads to further study on a PHD in Dance or other subject area's.
Third Cycle	The students undertake further research in order to enhance and deepen their knowledge and may aid career development.

	Academic career or Artistic career

Role of the subject area in other degree programmes

Dance may be taken as a subcomponent in other degrees programmes such as Performance Studies, Cultural Studies, Education, Sport, Health Sciences, Fine Arts, Film Studies or combined with another area in subject degree Programmes.

2.3 LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES- LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

1ST CYCLE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES

Technical/Artistic Skills
Skills in the specific area   By the end of their studies, the students should be able: - to accomplish, both intellectually, technically and creatively, the different challenges that the techniques, knowledge, research places at their disposal in realising his/her expression within the context of a dance production or his/her field of specialisation;   - to collaborate in the interpretation of the ideas and/or intentions expressed within an existing dance production or newly created performance bringing these to an actual physical realisation in a production;   - to respond creatively to the professional opportunities that dance and other   - related expressive forms provide them;   - to demonstrate their awareness of the value of research, the rehearsal process and experience of performance and/or production as form of individual and collective development.
Group Skills   By the end of their studies the students should be able to: - contribute to the effective realisation of a performance or project;   - work securely within a commonly understood professional vocabulary;   - comprehend dance, in the widest sense, where the forms and techniques of expression and creativity are realised in production.
Preparation and Rehearsal Skills   By the end of their studies, the students should be able to: - manage their personal tasks, of establishing recognised goals, and to define and achieve collective objectives;   - demonstrate an awareness of the techniques of rehearsal and production which can lead to performance;   - evidence that they have engaged with the making of and presentation of dance work.
Oral Skills

By the end of their studies students should be able to:
- know how to use the vocabulary of dance as a form of communication between the strands of the dance medium;
- express themselves in an intelligent way in relation to the dances they have worked in/studied.

Theoretical Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding of the Language of Dance

By the end of their studies students should be able to:
- understand the basic elements of the dance language, and to be able to utilise these in analysis;
- make links between theory and practice within dance.

Contextual Knowledge and Understanding

- A place dance works within different historical, ethno-social and artistic contexts;
- identify and recognise the work and thought of the key personalities of his/her
  specific area of intended practice, and of dance in general. They should be able to contextualise the different theoretical currents and aesthetics they represent;
- A evidence that they possess a sound understanding of the technology appropriate to their discipline and how it can serve the theatre;
- A understand the value of technological progress and its potential to optimise
  production procedures and processes, and potentially open new approaches and
  developments within their field of intended practice;
- demonstrate artistic administration skills that enables them to successfully
  develop a professional activity;
- A evidence their awareness of the ethical considerations and implications that are appropriate to their intended field of practice;
- A demonstrate an awareness of the need to continually develop and deepen their theoretical knowledge and understanding in order to support their continued
- demonstrate the ability to be reflective practitioners.

Generic Outcomes

Independence

By the end of their studies students should be able to:
- A collect, analyze and synthesize the information in the pursuit of an investigative attitude;
- A engage in critical self-reflection, develop ideas and construct reasoned arguments;
- be autonomous, self-motivated and be able to self-manage, also within the interest of a performance/production/project.

Psychological Understanding

By the end of their studies, students should be able to make effective use of:
- their capacity to think and solve problems that are presented by production and/or performance challenges and opportunities;
- their emotional awareness, sensibility, imaginative and expressive capacities.

Critical Awareness

By the end of their studies, the students should:
- A be critically self-aware;
- be able to apply their critical capabilities to the work of others;
- have developed a broad social and civic awareness.

Communication Skills

By the end of their studies, the students should possess effective communication and social skills, including the ability to:
- work effectively and in harmony with others on projects and/or activities;
- demonstrate skills in teamwork, the discussion of ideas, the organization of tasks and in their respect for established deadlines;
- present work in a clear and accessible way;
- demonstrate the appropriate information and communication technology skills.

2nd CYCLE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES

Technical /Artistic Skills

Skills in Technical/Artistic Expression

By the end of their studies, the students must have acquired the capacity to:
- intervene in the multiple contexts of a theatrical production revealing themselves as creative professionals, demonstrating a technical maturity and artistic awareness adapted to the expression and realisation of their own expressive concepts;
- demonstrate an attentive, critical and creative commitment – during the production process – as a means of assisting in the development of a consistent and credible performance;
- A recognise research as a form of accumulated knowledge and reflection, using the references found as the spur to new ideas and aesthetics.

Skills in Technical/Artistic Autonomy

By the end of their studies the students must have:
- acquired the capacity to lead others, developing leadership abilities in an expressive and creative way, necessary to the accomplishment of all new projects;
- the ability to organise and administer their own projects, managing both human and material resources appropriately while also

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meeting the required deadlines for the successful execution of a project its different stages

Oral Skills
By the end of their studies the students should: - be able to debate and reflect upon their own artistic projects in an articulate way; - A have the personal resources for presenting creative solutions, in their specific area, as an integral element of the whole production

Pedagogic Skills
By the end of their studies, students whose preferred option is the application of their dance education to broader contexts (such as, education, community and social contexts) should have additionally acquired: - A the capacity to intervene in educational and artistic contexts as dance animators and they should reveal particular artistic and pedagogic maturity in this domain; - secure and developed methodological competences and a mastery of a didactic knowledge in order to elaborate and apply programs structured for artistic educational contexts.

Theoretical Outcomes
Analytical Competences
By the end of their studies the students should have: - consolidated the methodological and auto-reflexive competences developed in the 1st cycle, and they should be able to autonomously apply analytical tools to produce critical analysis.
Contextual Knowledge and Understanding
By the end of their studies, the students must have: - deepened their knowledge and understanding of several genres and styles of Dance; - appreciating them in their historical and socio-cultural contexts as well as recognising the essential bibliographical references; - the capacity to interrelate the theory and the practice in dance; a demonstrable understanding of, and intelligent involvement with, cognate interdisciplinary; elements, as well as to be able to apply knowledge, practices, concepts and abilities of other disciplines or artistic/scientific areas in an effective way.

Generic Outcomes
Independence
By the end of their studies the students must be able to demonstrate: - an advanced capacity to work with a professional level of autonomy; - critical reflection and originality in their creations through the collection, analysis and synthesis of information, and the generative

development of ideas and concepts
Self-Knowledge By the end of their studies, the students must have: - advanced their capacity to make effective use of their imagination, knowledge and emotional understanding to work creatively towards the resolution of problems
Critical Awareness By the end of their studies, the students should be able to: - demonstrate a critical and self-critical awareness fully structured; recognise their individuality as an original contributor within the work of the group**.**
Communication Skills By the end of their studies the students must have deepened their social and communication skills so as to be able to: - co-ordinate projects or collective activities; - direct teams and assume the direction of collective processes where necessary, assuring the organization and transmission of the information; - present projects in an articulate and original way; - collaborate effectively with other individuals in a variety of cultural contexts;

3rd CYCLE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES

Have not been drafted yet, as there is not yet sufficient knowledge and experience within the sector to do this with some authority.

2.4 CONSULTATION PROCESS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The tuning process initially involved a steering group from the ELIA Dance Section. The steering group consulted the following documents and papers: *On the move- sharing experience on the Bologna Process; Four Years, ELIA On the Way to a European Higher Education Area in the Arts; the Dublin Descriptors*; *Milestone document 2004 – The distinctiveness of dance education in Europe* and the UK *Subject Benchmark Statements*.

2.5 WORKLOAD AND ECTS

In the milestone document of 2004, *Four Years, ELIA On the Way to a European Higher Education Area in the Arts*, North and West Europe are identified as the most advanced in implementing ECTS or equivalent and compatible credit systems with the exception of some countries where there remain concerns about the 3 cycle system and the relevance of credits. In other countries progress was being made to convert to ECTS.

First Cycle	3 to 4 years 180 to 240 ECTS

Second Cycle	1 to 2 years 60 to 120 ECTS
Third Cycle	2 to 5 years

2.6 TRENDS AND DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA IN DANCE

As already outlined in the introduction, diversity is both a characteristic and core value of Dance education and programmes may have distinctive characteristics related to national traditions and the nature of contemporary dance. A number of trends have been identified:

- Dance practice is dynamic and constantly evolving. Greater opportunities for dance artists now exist and there is an increased awareness of professional practice in Dance programmes.

- There is a trend towards the study of critical theory as integrated and directly related to students' own developing dance practice. The relationship between and proportion of theory and practice may be negotiated.

- Developments in technology have impacted on the way students learn. How exactly Dance programmes deal with this needs more research.

- Exchanges have become a feature of the curriculum. The universality of body language enables the student to participate in the programmes in other countries. International dance worlds now provide the context for their practice.

- Developments in dance are reflected in the curriculum with courses offering projects or modules e.g. distance-learning.

A number of differences have been identified:

- Some institutions consider that traditional subject disciplines provide students with useful contexts from which they can focus their studies. Others have established courses/ modules where students can engage in multi disciplinary forms of practice.
- There is a diversity of programme lengths. Many countries are moving from a system in which the three-cycle structure did not exist.

- Part time study is offered in a number of countries in a range of formats and over a different numbers of years. Part time students may swap between part time and full time modes or vice versa as

their circumstances change. This has increased participation by 'non- traditional' learners.

2.7 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Dance curricula and teaching and learning practices have developed in response to the wider cultural, ethnic and social context and associated changes in the nature of contemporary dance practice. In order for students to be prepared for and engage in professional dance practice, innovations in curriculum development have been required. At the same time many educations have preserved and deepened longstanding traditions in Dance training, protecting and revitalising cultural heritage.

Students will usually be involved in a wide range of learning activities such as:
independent artistic work, attending lectures and seminars, classes in technical skills; body conditioning, music, design, lighting etc, discussions on their own and others' performances, collective processes, producing their own and others' work and critical and self reflective writing about their own and others artistic work. Although Dance more than the Art or Theatre does rely heavily on traditional teacher student transmission, particularly so the classical techniques of ballet or the long established traditions of contemporary dance, different teaching styles and approaches in response to different learning outcomes e.g. student centred approach, tutor as facilitator are being used and further developed.
Students in dance institutions are, to an increasing extent, expected to take
responsibility for their own learning and artistic development. Assessment methods that stimulate active and independent learning are used with growing frequency, for instance via Progress File/Personal Development Planning and the use of a virtual learning environment (where appropriate).

2.8 QUALITY ASSURANCE

The practical and ephemeral nature of Dance makes it difficult to create transparency in the field. Dance demands a wide range of tacit knowledge and is derived from an oral tradition. On the other hand, after overcoming the first obstacles, the formulation of written quality criteria has for most parts become a welcomed knowledge developing and deepening process.

In most Dance Departments, part-time staff with ongoing artistic careers is mixed with full time teaching staff. This merge of contemporary artistic experience and educational teaching stability creates a foundation for a challenging and inspiring, yet stable and secure learning environment for students.

Teachers in Dance institutions are in different ways regularly encouraged to

develop their educational as well as artistic skills and knowledge. This ongoing professional and personal development combined with the vitality and topicality of staff involvement and is directly reflected in the quality, relevance and vitality of the learning and teaching available to students.

A wide range of monitoring and evaluation procedures provided by the institution are fed into open systems where implications for improvement are discussed, such as student satisfaction questionnaires; student and external representatives discussion and focus groups, staff views, reviews of student assessment.

Annual programme reviews that include students as well as the teaching team and non-judgmental peer observation may occur. In some countries (e.g. UK,
Ireland, Scandinavia, France) external examiners at all degree levels are involved in the process and seen as an essential part of the curriculum.

In some countries periodic (5 yearly) regular monitoring by an internal panel of external experts from Higher Education or related professional agencies appointed by the faculty/department or institution are invited to scrutinise and to assess performance, quality maintenance and enhancement processes of programmes, faculties/departments and institutions. This process is usually based on the analysis of a self-study (evaluated) report and accumulated results, annual reports and documentation covering the period in retrospect and plans for future development.

Processes of quality enhancement vary considerably across Europe. A variety of tools and participants is required. Students are increasingly involved in quality assurance and improvement processes as part of their development as reflective professionals.

External evaluations by national and international quality assurance agencies are playing an increasingly important role. These processes are usually developed on a consultative basis and utilize a self-study/analyses process that provides a focus for faculty/departmental and personal reflection and improvement.

Example 1

Self-managed projects:
These projects are initiated to give students a greater understanding of the entire production process leading to performance and to gain a strong sense of responsibility for their own artistic statements. Early in their studies students are told to start working on their own performance that will be presented during the final year of their dance programme. With supervision they then have to develop a personal performance to be presented to a public audience. They are free to base their work on whatever stimulus is interesting to them. The result as well as the process is thereafter evaluated and documented.

Example 2

Public performances with peer production teams:
Students from different areas of theatre; music, lighting, make up and mask, production, set design, etc are grouped together to produce a joint performance from a given theme under the supervision of tutors. This allows students to know and work with colleagues from the same generation, learning from each other and overcoming professional boundaries. Students are learning about and strengthening the understanding of their different skills and thereby deepening the respect for each others' professional knowledge. This is also a way of developing a common aesthetic ground with future professional colleagues.

Example 3

Public performances with professional production teams:
Students take part in productions with fully professional production staff brought in to the educational institutions. This way, students get to learn about professional standards, expectations, qualifications etc, giving them a chance to understand the demands for future employability. Students are also provided with a chance to start building a professional network, crucial for their future carer. By bringing the professionals in to the teaching institution environment, students' integrity and educational development is protected.