

Performing Arts (Dance) National Foundation Diploma level 3

Course Overview

This highly practical dance course gives you the opportunity to improve your technical and performance skills in a variety of dance styles as well as developing your choreographic ability in projects throughout the course. This course is delivered as a one year plus one year programme. You start by studying the National Foundation Diploma in the first year and then top up to the Extended Diploma in Year 2. Students must pass year 1 to progress to year 2. Both years carry UCAS points and universities recognise the qualification as a method of progressing to relevant degree courses.
If you love to spend your day training in the dance studio and theatre, this course is for you. We welcome dancers from all backgrounds and all dance styles. On this course, you will learn many styles including ballet, jazz, lyrical, contemporary, urban, commercial, afrobeats, musical theatre, tap as well as improvisation, contact work and choreography.
You will develop vocational skills and professional know how to perform at a high level. Our highly qualified dance staff, many with a strong professional background working in theatre and dance, are dedicated to helping you gain those skills. The course will give you an insight into the performing arts dance industry and support you in making decisions about your future dance career.
Whether your interest is in performing in the west end, on cruise ships, in contemporary or urban dance or teaching dance this course will enable you to develop a range of skills.
If you are aged 16 to 18, you will be enrolled on a study programme. This will include retaking GCSEs or undertaking Functional Skills in English and maths if you haven't already achieved a grade 4 or above. You will take part in activities that help you to develop your personal skills, such as building your character and confidence. This will help you to live well and move into your chosen career.
If you are 16-19 years old these activities will be timetabled as will work experience. You can also choose to take part in other activities such as our resident dance company 'Artus' who perform at events across the city including regional dance platforms like Mass Movement.

What you will learn

Year one will focus on establishing technical and performance skills across all styles of dance and developing your contextual and stylistic understanding through practical projects. You will be in the dance studio daily to refine your dance skills. Dance styles on the course include contemporary dance, ballet, urban, jazz, commercial, afrobeat, tap, lyrical and improvisation, as well as choreography, musical theatre, health and fitness. You will study technique classes and perform several short projects guided by your experienced tutors. Examples include performing at events such as Remembrance Day, halloween and making dance for camera on location.
You will also perform in two major performances at the Sue Townsend Theatre, our professional theatre in Leicester city centre. You will have opportunities to develop your own work and choreograph dance pieces for performance. This course allows you to create your own work and develop your own projects, examples include solo dance, group choreography and music video.
You will become a member of our college dance company, Artus, and represent the college at events and competitions both locally and regionally. You will develop your vocal and performance skills, working closely with musical theatre students to develop a broad range of skills for your future career.
Each year we host a range of exciting master classes where visiting dance artists and companies work with you to share their industry knowledge. Additionally, there will be trips to view live performances enrich your experience and develop your understanding of the professional world of dance.

If you continue for the Extended Diploma in year 2, you will focus on further developing your technical skills in all dance styles within technique classes. You will learn routines and repertoire created by tutors and study the work of professional companies in the industry. In addition, you will explore your own work choreographically and create a portfolio around your own personal interests and specialisms which can be used for audition and performance within our final major production showcased at our Sue Townsend Theatre. Students continue to study classes in ballet, jazz, tap, urban, afrobeats, urban styles and musical theatre in year 2.

Entry Requirements

All applicants should have some experience of dance whether that be studying it as a subject at school, college, community dance group or dance school.
Entry to this course requires five GCSEs at grade 4 (C). English and maths are desirable. You will be required to provide one reference and it is desirable that you can demonstrate 90% attendance at your last place of work or study. Should you not achieve English and maths, you will be supported to study them with us.
Should you not meet these entry grades, then we have a 1-year level 2 dance programme (C0162) which can provide an excellent platform to develop your dance skills and academic confidence. We encourage anyone with dance experience to apply and our specialist tutors will guide you to the correct level of study.
You will attend an audition, participating in practical workshops in contemporary and jazz. Additionally, you will be required to prepare and present an audition piece lasting 2-minutes in styles of your choice and attend an interview to show you have a suitable level of experience in dance. This is to support your career choice and ensure that we place you on the right programme for you.
Consideration will be given to all applicants over the age of 19 who do not hold formal English and maths qualifications.

Course Fees

If you are 18 or above when starting this course, you may incur fees if you continue to the second year of the programme. Please see our guidance on 19+ fees on our website.
There are theatre trips and workshops throughout the year which form part of the course and come at an additional expense. There is a

Course Details

Course Code	P00183
Start Date	07/09/2026
Study Hours	Full Time
Duration	1 year
Campus	Abbey Park Campus
Level	3

Apply Here

dance kit list which will be supplied on acceptance on the course which includes practical clothing and dance footwear.

Course Progression

Our aim is to support you into the next steps of your professional training. At the end of the 2-year programme, you will achieve a level 3 National Extended Dance Diploma in Performing Arts Practice (Dance). You will be able to pursue a degree at a university or dance college.

 Our graduates have progressed to Trinity Laban, Northern School of Contemporary Dance, Shockout Academy, Creative Academy, London Contemporary Dance School, Bird College, UCLAN, Bath Spa, LMA and DMU as examples. Many past students are now dancing professionally, running their own companies, choreographing, performing in the west end, working in dance fitness and education.

What Happens Next

Apply online via the college website, or if your school uses the Positive Steps @16 (PS16) application system please apply through this and speak to your careers advisor if you are unsure. You will need details of your qualifications, a reference, and a personal statement to complete your application. Once your application has been successfully processed, you will be sent a conditional offer and be invited to an audition at the college to meet your tutors, learn more about your chosen course of study and tour the facilities. You will then need to confirm your acceptance of the course offered to you.