

Programme Specification

Award and title: **BA (Hons) Drama and Dance**

<i>School:</i>	School of the Arts
<i>Subject area:</i>	Performance
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2020/21
<i>in the month(s) of</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York St John University
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	Not Applicable
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Certificate of Higher Education Drama and Theatre Diploma of Higher Education Drama and Theatre BA (Ord) Drama and Dance

UCAS code / GTTR / other:

Joint Honours combinations: Not applicable

QAA subject benchmark statement(s): Dance, Drama and Performance (2019)

Mode/s of study: full time 3 years
part time 6 years

Language of study: English

Paired with Foundation Year No

Study abroad opportunities: Yes

Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity: Yes

Introduction and special features

This course is a unique opportunity to combine dance and drama in a practice-led, creative and socially engaged programme. It is for students that want to work between and beyond the disciplines of dance and drama and therefore offers a range of module choices that give the freedom to explore a number of aspects of performance: voice, movement, acting, choreography, devising, ensemble, physical theatre. You will study ways of devising performance that draw upon contemporary performance making and asks you to think about the relationship between movement and texts, physicality and performance. The course will include content from both disciplines, with optional specialisms at level 5.

You will be in the studio broadening your dance and drama skills, learning how a range of techniques feed into today's performance scene. You will 'get your hands dirty' devising original choreography, creating theatre images, facilitating others to make work and researching and writing about performance histories and practices.

You will engage in a range of enhancement activities, including a residential field trip with all first-year drama and dance students to create work as groups in a site-specific context. Other enhancements include theatre trips, in house performances, and the opportunity to perform work made by students in other years, the dance society, theatre-orientated societies and workshops by visiting artists.

Supported by our studio facilities and a cross-disciplinary staff team you will work both independently and in ensemble, learning the craft of contemporary practice in the 21st century and performing and producing work at a professional standard.

Special Features

- Take part in multiple performances across all years

All students perform at events throughout the year, platforming work devised and choreographed on module projects and by visiting professional artists.

- **Professional development sessions that run through your entire degree**

These might include intensive weeks with artists such as Lea Anderson, Rita Marcalo and Gary Clarke. Students work with a variety of visiting artists and lecturers that work in the performance 'world' from solo artists to community specialists, and also work beyond the campus with work related learning opportunities which engage directly with the 'industry'.

- **Engage in regular practice, in and outside of modules**

Students are encouraged to engage in a range of styles including ballet, yoga, contemporary and hip hop, through which you may develop your own individual daily practice. There are opportunities to join University Societies that offer Musical Production, Drama, Cheerleading and Dance competitions.

- **Opportunity to study abroad, as part of the University exchange programme**

In semester 1 of Level 5 you may study at one of our international exchange partners.

- **Opportunity to take part in a field trip in each year of the programme**

Field trips are a valuable part of your learning that ensures you are immersed in the real world of work. Recent expeditions have included Featherstone Castle, where site specific work was created, Krakow Poland where students spent a day at Auschwitz and, in year three, a trip to a European city where an organised series of workshops and performances were set in place to underpin 3rd year research practice. Please note that if you wish to attend field trips then you may be required to fund, or part fund your trip, particularly if these trips are abroad.

- **E-Portfolio**

As part of developing your professional practice, you will be introduced to the e-portfolio in level 4 and continue to build this digital platform throughout your degree. The integration of an e-portfolio into different modules as a learning and reflective tool demonstrates how virtual material can be transformed from a product for consumption to an area of critical discussion, exploration, exchange, dissemination of work and ultimately, the creation of a community.

- **Dialogue day**

Dialogue days are held between staff and students each year. These provide a valuable space for academics and you, the student, to think about and discuss issues that concern us all, e.g. assessment, feedback, learning outcomes, module choices, future careers and the next steps after graduation.

- **Transferable skills**

The learning activities you will take part in during your time on the degree will include the opportunity to accumulate a set of skills which are highly valuable to employers, such as; creativity, team work, the ability to collaborate, contextual awareness, problem solving, independence and the ability to meet deadlines. In the 1st year you will be asked to compile an audit of transferable skills you already have, then to consider what is your long-term career plan and construct other skills you need to acquire and where on the programme you can get them.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the minimum entry requirements which are published on the programme specific webpage.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

1. Develop the students' practical and theoretical interest, knowledge and understanding of established, new and emergent drama and dance practices.
2. Facilitate students' understanding of the political, social and cultural significance of drama and dance making and spectating through the analysis of historical and contemporary practices.
3. Encourage individuals and groups to creatively harness their intellectual skills and making skills to compose thoughtful, imaginative and articulate performance works for diverse audiences/spectators/participants.
4. Produce motivated graduates capable of contributing, individually or collaboratively, in drama and dance practice and allied fields as well as employing their skills in a wide variety of presentational and interactive contexts.
5. Foster the continued desirability and significance of embracing new learning opportunities and in making positive, creative contributions to the world around them.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 4

- 4.1. Demonstrate knowledge of underlying concepts and principles of movement and drama practices and evaluate and interpret these concepts within performance contexts.
- 4.2. Evaluate performances, as visual and textual artefacts within a historical and practical context communicating results in a coherent manner.
- 4.3. Develop new skills within a structured and managed environment and apply these skills and approaches in making and critiquing dance and drama.
- 4.4. Reflect on skills, processes and evaluation of performance in order to refine, select and present work.
- 4.5. Demonstrate understanding of professional attitudes, disciplinary boundaries, and cultural frameworks that affect dance and drama practices.

Level 5

- 5.1. Apply established principles, and concepts outside the context in which they were first studied, across dance, drama and physical theatre contexts.
- 5.2. Critically analyse performances, as visual and textual artefacts within cultural, social and political contexts and effectively communicate arguments and analyses.
- 5.3. Apply a range of techniques and approaches to movement, physicality and theatre engaging with the interplay between practice and theory.
- 5.4. Reflect critically on their learning, on appropriateness of different approaches and on the limitations of their own knowledge and skills.

5.5. Exercise personal responsibility and decision-making skills with regard to professional attitudes and disciplinary boundaries within the cultural framework of dance, drama and physical theatre.

Level 6

6.1. Demonstrate a systematic understanding of dance, drama and performance concepts and critically evaluate arguments, assumptions and abstract concepts in order to make judgements, frame appropriate questions, and achieve a solution.

6.2. Critically evaluate and cultivate uncertainty, ambiguity and contingency in the knowledge and practice of dance, drama and physical theatre practices in disciplinary and inter-disciplinary contexts.

6.3. Engage creatively and critically with the creation of performance through a developed, theoretically underpinned, and sensitive understanding of performance vocabularies, techniques, crafts, structures and methods.

6.4. Apply the practices of reflection, reviewing, consolidation and extending knowledge and understanding to the initiation and execution of projects.

6.5. Demonstrate an independent, agile and professional deployment of approaches to movement, physicality and theatre exercising personal responsibility and effective decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensatable (NC) or compensatable (X)
PER4005M	4	1	Acting	20	C	X
PER4010M	4	1	Making Ensemble Performance	20	C	X
PER4012M	4	1	Workshop Facilitation	20	C	X
PER4009M	4	2	Big Ideas in Performance	20	C	X
PER4011M	4	2	Ensemble Political Performance	20	C	X
PER4014M	4	2	Movement for Performance	20	C	X
PER5001M	5	1	Politically Engaged Practice 1	20	C	X
PER5002M	5	2	Politically Engaged Practice 2	20	C	X
PER5005M	5	1	Physical Theatre	20	C	X
PER5010M	5	1 or 2	Site Specific Dance	20	C	X
You must choose two of the following modules:						
PER5013M	5	1 or 2	Re-Performing Dance Archives	20	O	X
PER5006M	5	1 or 2	Acting for Screen: The Performer as Auteur	20	O	X
PER5011M	5	1 or 2	Acting Vignettes	20	O	X
PER5008M	5	1 or 2	Artist as Witness	20	O	X
PER5003M	5	1 or 2	Auto/biography & Performance	20	O	X
PER5004M	5	1 or 2	Children and Young People	20	O	X
PER5014M	5	1 or 2	Contemporary Storytelling	20	O	X
PER5012M	5	1 or 2	Funny Bones	20	O	X
PER5015M	5	1 or 2	Performance and Digital Media	20	O	X

PER5016M	5	1 or 2	Performance & Ecology	20	O	X
PER5009M	5	1 or 2	Performance in Social Context	20	O	X
PER5007M	5	1 or 2	Politics & the Play	20	O	X
PER5017M	5	1 or 2	Writing after Beckett	20	O	X
PER6001M	6	1&2	Dissertation	20	C	X
PER6002M	6	1	Company: Research and Development	20	C	X
PER6003M	6	2	Company: Commission and Actualisation	40	C	NC
PER6005M	6	1 & 2	Independent Project: Drama and Dance	40	C	NC

Please note that not all options may be available every year as they depend on student demand and staff availability.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensatable. A non-compensatable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level (with a mark of 40) in order to progress.

Learning, teaching and assessment

Central to teaching of BA (Hons) Drama and Dance is the focus on the physical, visual and community-based approaches to performance making and dance performance and choreography. Embedded in your modules are weekly dance and movement classes, such as Yoga, Contemporary dance and various other styles such as Street, Jazz, taught by our staff and visiting lecturers. For all Drama routes learning takes place through physical, intellectual and emotional engagement. The objective being the creation of drama/dance processes, dance/theatre images and experiences that are resonant with meanings for an audience. The creation, composition, performance and documentation of these images occur with a strong sense of social engagement, i.e. these images and experiences have a purpose.

On this programme you will develop your understanding through a feeling-thinking-action loop embracing critical enquiry, contextual awareness and creative actualisation.

The programme is designed so you, the student, can work, create and study alongside the tutors through project-based learning, and take charge of developing the individual direction of your learning. This will be captured through the creation of live works for public consumption, field trips, meeting and working with various 'community' groups and creating documents. You will be required to think and analyse practical and theoretical texts in order to deepen your own learning and bring this understanding to bear on the creation of drama and dance processes, theatre images and experiences.

Building your CV and gaining valuable real-world experience and technique is central to the course. There are optional modules where you will be able to go on work placements with guest artists and community values such as those listed above. All teaching staff are research active and/or produce professional theatre, so there are frequent opportunities for students to assist with professional practice and research in theatre through our Student Internships scheme. We also offer students the opportunity to publish their written work in our very own publication, Theatre Pages, that we distribute throughout the UK. There are study abroad opportunities in the U.S. for those students who wish to expand their connections internationally. We encourage and support festival and competition entry and have professional technicians who can support these activities, including the development of individual design ideas for theatre, lighting and sound operation training.

Our curation of professional touring theatre artists in *Performing House* will also offer professional workshops in the company's particular house style. Finally, you can showcase all of these skills through your final projects that can be presented in our professional 200+ seater theatre venue in the heart of York.

The complementary combination of practice and theory enriches the learning experience allowing skills and knowledge introduced in year one to evolve throughout the duration of the programme. You will have the opportunity to:

- Develop your dance vocabulary and presence as a performer, becoming more physically aware and imaginative when devising movement for new choreographic work.
- Work as an ensemble bringing creative explorations of dance and theatre practices to performance. This work will conclude with an ensemble performance of a new work where students are invited to consider themselves as composers, performers and documenters.
- Practice as an ensemble alongside BA Drama & Theatre and BA Acting students in devising a large collaborative outdoor piece of performance for the opening of the School's Create Festival at the end of the academic year.
- Engage in experiential anatomy learning how to prevent injury and increasing your knowledge of how skeletal and muscular structures can develop your practice as an articulate, expressive performer.
- Develop your skills as a workshop leader, a key skill in drama & dance whether working with communities or young people to running a rehearsal with professional dancers.

These activities support you to focus on specific specialisms in the 2nd year of your study.

These may include:

- Devising for performance
- Community and performance
- Performance technologies

Level 4 - Orientation

The first year of the programme will take your existing knowledge and skills and develop them in a variety of ways. You will develop key crafts in contemporary drama and dance including movement invention, choreography, anatomical awareness, devising and performing theatre images, the foundations of good teaching practice and learn to work creatively in groups. You will also gain an understanding of how contemporary practice sits within theoretical ideas and historical contexts. The first year of the BA (Hons) Drama and Dance programme includes modules taught with students from other degrees (e.g. BA (Hons) Acting, BA (Hons) Drama and Theatre, BA (Hons) Drama: Education & Community, BA (Hons) Dance: Education & Community). This allows you to become part of a wider performance community and form connections that will support you throughout your degree.

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Workshop Facilitation	20 – C	Big Ideas in Performance	20 – C
Making Ensemble Performance	20 – C	Ensemble Political Performance	20 – C
Acting	20 – C	Movement for Performance	20 – C

Level 5 - Application and Specialism

In your second year you apply the techniques and knowledges learned from the first year and deepen your skills through increasing specialism, developing expertise in your own areas of interest. You apply these abilities to dance and performance making in a range of contexts whilst considering its relationship to the world around you. During this year you will specialise in drama and dance via the two compulsory modules: Physical Theatre and Site-Specific Performance.

A range of option modules are offered, all which embed specific ethos of practice, reflection and criticality. These modules complement the Politically Engaged Practices modules and encourage you to engage in assessments that will further examine your enhanced knowledge enriched through its content. This includes exploring topics such as cultural memory, identity politics, ecology and how they relate to activism.

The following is an indicative route for a BA (Hons) Drama and Dance student (specific module choices may vary):

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Politically Engaged Practice 1	20 – C	Politically Engaged Practice 2	20 – C
Physical Theatre	20 – C	Site Specific Performance	20 – C

Theatre, Children and Young People	20 – O	Artist as Witness	20 – O
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Level 6 - Independence and Industry

In your final year you will work as both an independent artist and as a member of a performance company, developing work from research and development to actualisation. You will be supported in positioning yourself and your portfolio of skills as you prepare to for your chosen career.

This year offers you the opportunity to further develop your own practice as a thinker, writer maker of drama and dance. Semester 1 in your third year is focussed on developing ideas and practices that in semester 2 will become drama and dance works. These works will become key part to your future career aspirations which will be fully articulated in the portfolio of skills you will have been developing over the 3 years.

As part of the enhancement of your experience in the third year you will be encouraged to go on residential field trip to a European city, offering you the opportunity to gain first-hand experience of European drama and dance artists as well as the dance culture outside Britain. You will fulfil your own individual and small group research tasks that might comprise of interviewing a particular artist or company, going to see a performance work or accessing an archive. You will be taught through practical workshop, lectures, seminars in small groups, tutorials, ethnographic field trips, and visiting guest artists (such as Mole Wetherall, Rita Marcalo, Lea Anderson, York Theatre Royal, see Performing House).

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Dissertation		20 – C	
Independent Practice and Professional Portfolio: Drama and Dance		40 – C	
Company: Research & Development	20 – C	Company: Commission and Actualisation	40 – C

Assessment

The purpose of assessment on BA (Hons) Drama and Dance is to offer structures through which you learn (assessment as learning; rather than assessment of learning). Assessment has to be of value to you as a student and should reflect the real world. These assessments take the form of performances (large group, small group, duet and solo), workshops, reflective documents, 'zines, reports & articles, essays and performance lectures. This range of assessment intends to cover possible scenarios which prepare you to pursue your professional or academic aspirations. The assessments on the programme are carefully considered to be of value to you, the student, and reflect experiences and situations beyond the classroom.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [general regulations for](#) undergraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensatable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University mission and values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

Date written / revised:

Programme originally approved: