

**national centre  
for circus arts**



**Foundation Degree in Circus Arts  
BA (Hons) Degree in Circus Arts  
Student Handbook  
2017/18**

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# Higher Education Student Handbook

## National Centre for Circus Arts

### INTRODUCTION TO THE HANDBOOK

This handbook and its appendices contain all the information you need to know about being a student on the Higher Education Programme at the National Centre for Circus Arts. The sections of this handbook have been designed as ‘bite-sized’ summaries of the key information that you need to be aware of at the start of the programme, but will also include references to appendices to the handbook containing more detailed relevant information, guides and policies, all of which are available on Moodle. Of course, if you can’t find what you’re looking for in this handbook you should come and speak to a member of staff in the Higher Education office, who will either know the answer, know where to find it, or know who to ask.

As a Higher Education student at the National Centre you are also a registered student of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama and your degree is validated by the University of Kent. The National Centre for Circus Arts is a founder member of The European Federation of Circus Schools (Fédération Européenne des Écoles de Cirque Professionnelles - FEDEC), which was established in 1998 to build relationships between vocational circus schools with similar educational objectives. Most of the professional European schools, at foundation and higher education level, are represented.

Further information about all of these institutions can be found at the following websites:

Conservatoire for Dance and Drama: [www.cdd.ac.uk](http://www.cdd.ac.uk)

University of Kent: [www.kent.ac.uk](http://www.kent.ac.uk)

FEDEC: [www.fedec.eu/en/](http://www.fedec.eu/en/)



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## CONTENTS

Introduction to the Handbook .....	2
About the National Centre for Circus Arts .....	4
About the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama .....	6
About the University of Kent .....	7
The Higher Education Programme at the National Centre for Circus Arts .....	7
Foundation Degree in Circus Arts .....	8
BA (Hons) In Circus Arts .....	13
Course Information and Documentation .....	15
Learning, Teaching and Assessment .....	16
The Academic Year .....	17
Term Dates .....	17
Student Timetables .....	18
Attendance .....	18
Space Use .....	19
Higher Education Office Staff .....	21
Key Contact Information .....	21
Higher Education Office Staff – Who’s who and what we do .....	22
Communication and Student Resources .....	23
Methods of Communication .....	23
Lockers .....	24
Student Access Cards .....	24
Accommodation Advice .....	24
The Library, IT and Moodle .....	24
Student Support .....	25
Student Feedback .....	25
Your Rights and Responsibilities .....	25
Health & Safety .....	26
Fire and Emergencies .....	27
List of related Appendices and Guides .....	28

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CIRCUS ARTS

The National Centre for Circus Arts was established as a pilot project in 1989 as Circus Space, by a group of over 30 circus artists with an ambition to develop a space for training and creation of new work. From those early volunteer driven days the organisation has grown into maturity becoming the National Centre in 2014, and now offers some of the finest circus training facilities in the world and is populated by a dynamic and creative artistic community. The National Centre for Circus Arts is based in a former electricity generating station in Hoxton that had lain derelict for many years. The Latin motto above the entrance “E Pulvere Lux et Vis” means “from dust comes light and life” – which is what we do to this day by nurturing even the smallest fragment of an idea

### Our vision

A culture of circus in the UK.

### Our mission

**To share the expertise held within our extraordinary team at the National Centre for Circus Arts to create a network of support for artists, organisations and audiences enabling healthy growth and development of the circus art form in the UK.**

### **We will:**

- Grow a culture of circus in the UK
- Raise the profile of circus arts
- Raise standards in circus arts
- Encourage greater participation both as audience members and as practitioners of circus arts
- Ensure UK circus is represented internationally
- Train circus Artists to such a level that they are highly employable

### Our Values

As an organisation we stand by a very simple tenet: ***‘work hard and be nice’***.

We would use the following words to describe our organisation and our approach to work

- Creative and playful
- Inclusive, accessible and collaborative
- Hard working yet fun
- Ambitious and willing to take risks
- Ethical and sustainable
- Safe and secure
- Ground breaking but true to our roots

The National Centre for Circus Arts has been enabling the creation of excellent and innovative circus for over two decades. Every year we involve thousands of people in the physical challenges and artistic pleasures of the Circus Arts.

Our diverse range of work includes one of the UK's only Higher Education programmes in Circus Arts which is supported at either side by a structured training programme for under-18's and professional development opportunities for aspiring and established performers. Adults and young people can enjoy recreational classes or a varied and growing series of performances both at our base in Hoxton as well as in other venues, at festivals and events across the country and in Europe. We also run highly regarded workshops, away days and team building events for the corporate community. Our production and creation capabilities continue to grow and we have been making work, often in partnerships, which we can tour regionally and nationally.

This work is supported by a range of administrative, technical and financial teams who are responsible, for example, for the maintenance of the building and equipment, generating income to support the programmes work, developing the profile and public perception of both circus and the National Centre and creating an environment for study, training and working that is safe, inspiring and the very best it can be.

The Higher Education Programmes must cohabit with all these other activities within the same facilities. Students on the Higher Education Programmes are considered users of the National Centre and as such, are subject to the National Centre Code of Conduct (please refer to Appendix J) regarding any actions on the premises, in addition to the regulations specific to the Higher Education Programmes.

With so much going on, and in order to make it all work coherently, special times of each day, and days of the week, are allocated to each programme. Additionally, occasionally during the year we take commercial opportunities that present themselves to us allowing us to use our building to generate income that supports our educational and charitable activity. We minimise the disruption as far as is possible but this use of the space is a crucial part of the financial mix that allows the National Centre to flourish. For this to work, every programme and the people involved in those programmes, must respect the time allocated for others. The Higher Education Programme occupies a majority of the allocated times.

Students are required to leave the training spaces at the end of the allocated times so that other programmes may use them. Spaces must also be cleared, and all equipment returned to proper storage places in preparation for the next users.

## ABOUT THE CONSERVATOIRE FOR DANCE AND DRAMA

Students of the National Centre for Circus Arts are also jointly registered with the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama.

The Conservatoire comprises eight specialist schools delivering world-leading education and vocational training in the performing arts. We train the performing artists and production professionals of the future: actors, circus artists, dancers, stage managers, technical theatre practitioners, choreographers and directors.

As well as the National Centre for Circus Arts, there are seven other Conservatoire schools:

**Bristol Old Vic Theatre School** - [www.oldvic.ac.uk](http://www.oldvic.ac.uk)

**Central School of Ballet** - [www.centralschoolofballet.co.uk](http://www.centralschoolofballet.co.uk)

**LAMDA (London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art)** - [www.lamda.org.uk](http://www.lamda.org.uk)

**London Contemporary Dance School** – [www.lcds.ac.uk](http://www.lcds.ac.uk)

**Northern School of Contemporary Dance** - [www.nscd.ac.uk](http://www.nscd.ac.uk)

**Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance** - [www.rambertschool.org.uk](http://www.rambertschool.org.uk)

**RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art)** - [www.rada.ac.uk](http://www.rada.ac.uk)

Together we provide a strong collegiate structure which celebrates the diverse identities and histories of the schools. Being part of a wider higher education institution brings enhanced opportunities for collaboration, and offers students the chance to build networks with other artists and technicians before graduation, for example through our annual Student Conference.

The Conservatoire is a publicly-funded institution. This means that our UK and EU students are eligible for government loans and grants through Student Finance, as well as financial support provided by the Conservatoire and the individual schools. We recruit on the basis of talent and potential, irrespective of background, and we audition or interview every eligible applicant.

Further information about the Conservatoire is available at [www.cdd.ac.uk](http://www.cdd.ac.uk)

To connect with students from other Conservatoire Schools, you might like to join our Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cddstudents/>

For news from across the Conservatoire, visit:

[www.twitter.com/conservatoiredd](http://www.twitter.com/conservatoiredd)

[www.facebook.com/conservatoiredd](http://www.facebook.com/conservatoiredd)

[www.youtube.com/theconservatoire](http://www.youtube.com/theconservatoire)

## ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT

Your degree is validated by the University of Kent. This is because at the moment the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama does not have the ability to confer degrees upon students itself. There are many small and specialist Higher Education institutions like ours in a similar position, supported by a larger validating university to run a high quality degree programme. Kent work with us to assure that the quality of the programmes meets the expectations of Higher Education courses in England. On completing your course you will receive your award from the University of Kent and will be invited to attend graduation at Canterbury Cathedral the following November.

As a Higher Education student at the National Centre you are subject to the regulations of the University of Kent, and the National Centre ensures that its assessment procedures are in line with Kent's regulations. This handbook and its appendices contain a number of links to Kent's policies and other information available to students on their website. We recommend that you familiarise yourselves with these regulations, as well as the appeals and complaints procedures you have access to through the University. This information will be referred to later in this handbook, and is also available via the University of Kent website:

Information for students of validated partners of the University of Kent:

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/studentinfo.html>

University of Kent regulations: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/regulations/index.html>

## THE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME AT THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CIRCUS ARTS

Below you will find an introduction to each stage of the Higher Education Programme at the National Centre. A stage is equivalent to one academic year of study. You will also find summaries of the modules you will complete during each stage and the credit weighting for each individual module, totalling 120 credits per stage. The number of credits in a module reflects the number of learning hours (both taught and independent) that the module requires.

For further information regarding individual module content, please refer to the module briefs available on Moodle, and for the full programme specifications please visit the Kent website here:

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/profiles/ncca.html>.

For details of how you will be assessed on the programme, please see Appendix A: the Guide to Assessment. Please note that the BA is a separate programme from the Foundation Degree, and Foundation Degree students must apply to be considered for entry onto the BA. For details of what is required for entry onto the BA, please see Appendix B: Entry onto the BA (Hons) in Circus Arts.

## FOUNDATION DEGREE IN CIRCUS ARTS

The Foundation Degree in Circus Arts aims to develop a broad range of the skills required as a professional circus artist, with a strong focus on artistic creativity and collaboration, as well as the development of reflective and analytical skills. A specialisation process enables each student to find one circus discipline which will be suited to them and to develop a technical and creative vocabulary in that discipline.

The training is intensive, weeks are 35 hours long with a mix of taught sessions and scheduled independent learning. Each year is 35 weeks in length in order to sustain physical progression. Class sizes vary depending on the subject being taught. As well as physical skill development there is a strong focus on artistic exploration and creativity, contextual studies and business planning.

The course is divided into modules for assessment purposes, details of which can be found by clicking on the programme content links below. The course will focus on continuous assessment of each student's individual progress, as well as performance related assessment both as an individual and as part of an ensemble. Students analytical and critical skills are also assessed through research presentations, essays and other assignment projects. There are no formal written examinations.

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### YEAR 1

During the first year of the Foundation Degree in Circus Arts students can expect to spend an important amount of their autumn term being inducted into the workings of the National Centre for Circus Arts, preparing for your time as a student here and getting to know their year group. Students will gradually be inducted into the use of spaces and equipment, and students will access these resources when we are sure that they are safe and secure in their use.

Throughout the year they will undertake intensive physical classes in a range of circus-related activities, as well as sessions in performance, movement, and contextual studies which allow you to gain an understanding of circus in a wider performance context.

All students (other than those on the juggling strand or who hold a conditional offer which restricts their discipline choice) undergo a process to determine their circus discipline specialisation. This is a collaborative process between the student and staff, leading to a decision about which circus discipline is suited both physically and psychologically to that person. Our goal is to help the young circus performer to establish the foundation for a long and fruitful career. We aim for all students in this first year to have completed this process by the end of the spring term. In the final term we create a timetable that prepares students for continued development in the 2nd Year of the Foundation Degree in Circus Arts.

The year is comprised of 6 core modules:

### **Module CA102 – Preparing for Circus**

This module focuses on essential aspects of your training. It will be the core physical activity of your first year, moving from general circus skills through to the development of the basic and fundamental technical skills appropriate for your future development in your chosen specialist discipline. Students are assessed on their technical progress and understanding, as well as the early stages of developing their professional practice. The module also introduces students to movement and performance work in the first term.

### **Module CA105 – Introduction to Ensemble**

This module introduces students to the specific creative and technical demands of creating an ensemble performance. Students are assessed on their engagement with the devising and rehearsal process.

### **Module CA107 – Movement**

This module aims to develop foundational elements of physical performance. Sessions will encompass a range of techniques and explore approaches to improvisation, and students will be assessed on the quality of their movement work, as well as a reflective essay.

### **Module CA108 – Play and Performance**

This module allows students to engage with the essential conventions and techniques involved in different forms of performance. Sessions will involve continuous exercises and presentations, and students will be assessed on the quality of their work in these sessions.

### **Module CA109 – Performance in Theory and Practice**

This module explores the theoretical and practical application of historically significant performance practices to contemporary circus. Students are assessed through performance work and an essay submission.

### **Module CA110 – Specialisation Assessments**

This module provides students with the opportunity to research and experience a various range of appropriate circus disciplines. At the end of the module, students will have gained insight and knowledge that will allow them to make a more informed and positive choice of their area of circus specialisation. Students will work in strict collaboration with the teaching staff to choose the most appropriate specialist discipline and will be assessed on this process. Juggling Strand students or those whose discipline choice is restricted due to a conditional offer will complete this module by submitting a reflective written assignment.

Foundation Degree Year 1 Module and Credit Structure			
Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term	Module Credits
<b>Module CA102 – Preparing for Circus</b>			<b>60</b>
Circus skills, movement and performance skills assessment (juggling for juggling strand students)	Warm-up assessment	Circus discipline assessment	
		<b>Module CA105 – Introduction to Ensemble</b>	<b>15</b>
		Assessment of process	
<b>Module CA107 – Movement</b>			<b>10</b>
Assessment of movement work in the spring term	Assessment of movement work in the summer term and a written assignment		
<b>Module CA108 – Play and Performance</b>			<b>10</b>
Assessment of performance skills work in the spring term	Assessment of performance skills work in the summer term		
<b>Module CA109 – Performance in Theory and Practice</b>			<b>15</b>
Assessment of group performance and written assignment in the summer term			
<b>Module CA110 – Specialisation Assessments</b>			<b>10</b>
Assessment of process (written assignment for juggling strand students)			

The second year of the course is devoted to the development of a student's technical abilities in their circus discipline and other technical skills as well as increasing their understanding of creating, devising and performance contexts. Students will have a tailor made timetable that is specifically designed to support them in the development of their circus discipline, as well as scheduled independent learning sessions to allow students to work towards becoming an autonomous learner.

A typical week during year two will include classes in your specific discipline, other physical complementary classes, acrobatics, performance, movement and contextual studies, as well as time for research and independent practice.

The year is comprised of 7 core modules:

**Module CA201 – The Ensemble**

This is an ensemble production project emulating the experience of working as a member of a professional company. Students will work intensively over a number of weeks with a creative director or choreographer. As a member of this ensemble cast the objective will be to understand the needs of the creator and propose solutions and content that respond to those needs. Students will be assessed on both their engagement in the process and on their final performance.

**Module CA204 – The Business of Being a Performer**

This module includes a series of lectures on the variety of employment contexts open to a contemporary circus performer, as well as lectures in a range of topics such as employability skills, funding opportunities, health & safety regulations and international circus companies. The assessment of the module involves the production of a website, and the module includes practical workshops to prepare students for this assignment..

**Module CA207 – Performance Review and Analysis**

This module will help you to understand epistemologies of performance criticism and forge deeper connections between your ideas and artistic practice. Students will be assessed on a presentation to their peers, as well as an assignment submission and their engagement with research and discussion.

**Module CA209 – Production /Performance Assignment - The Student Devised Piece**

In this module students will be able to demonstrate the development of their own artistic approach and create a performance piece, applying the technical and devising skills they have acquired during the programme. The presentations in this module are performed individually or in small groups to National Centre staff, students and some invited guests. Students will be assessed on both the process they undertake to create the piece and on their final performance.

**Module CA210 – Action, Reaction and Creation**

This module investigates methods of creating work for performance. Students will be assessed on the process of developing and performing work created during the module.

### Module CA211 – Circus Discipline Level 1

In this module students will begin to work on sequencing and the creation of their own material in their circus discipline, developing their own artistic ideas, and the implementation of their own training regime. The module will be delivered as a combination of tutor led sessions/workshops and task driven independent learning. Some tutor led sessions will be specifically focused on the circus discipline itself, whilst other scheduled sessions will cover practices designed to complement discipline training – (e.g. acrobatics, handstands, ballet, Pilates). Scheduled independent and peer led learning sessions are a central element of this module, allowing students the space to bring learning from across the programme into their practice, and to self-select areas of their training they wish to develop. Alongside progression with technical skills in their discipline, students will be expected to develop the habits required for professional practice as circus artists, and will be assessed on both of these aspects.

### Module CA212 – Movement and Composition 1

This module addresses both movement technique and composition of material. Students are assessed on their work in both areas.

Foundation Degree Year 2 Module and Credit Structure – from 2017-18			
Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term	Module Credits
		<b>Module CA201 – The Ensemble</b> Assessment of process and performance	15
	<b>Module CA204 – The Business of Being a Performer</b> Lectures and workshops	Assessment of website	
<b>Module CA207 – Performance Review and Analysis</b> Assessment of participation, presentation and written assignment			10

	<b>Module CA209 – The Student Devised Piece</b>	
	Assessment of process, performance and written assignment	<b>20</b>
<b>Module CA210 – Action, Reaction &amp; Creation</b>		
Assessment of process of creation and presentation of work in the autumn and spring terms		<b>15</b>
<b>Module CA211 – Circus Discipline Level 1</b>		
Assessment of Circus Discipline work in each term		<b>35</b>
<b>Module CA212 – Movement and Composition 1</b>		
Assessment of process of creation and presentation of work in the autumn and spring terms		<b>15</b>

## BA (HONS) IN CIRCUS ARTS

The emphasis of this year long ‘top-up’ course is to consolidate the technical level of each student’s specific circus discipline, continue to develop their personal artistic approach, advance their analytical and reflective skills and build upon their experience of performance contexts. A typical week includes classes in and to support their specific circus discipline, sessions in direction and movement, contextual studies, time for research and academic study, and a higher expected level of autonomy and independent practice than the Foundation Degree.

The BA (Hons) Degree programme is comprised of 7 core modules:

### **Module CA306 – The Business Plan**

Students work individually or in a group to prepare a business plan for the development of a professional project to be implemented after graduation. All business plans are assessed and those plans which have received the highest marks are then shortlisted for the National Centre for Circus Arts Entrepreneurial Award.

### **Module CA307 – Ensemble Performance Task**

This module comprises an ensemble production devised in collaboration with an external director or choreographer. This work takes place over an intensive period of a number of weeks and culminates in the creation of a professional standard production for public viewing. This module usually takes place externally, and occasionally may take place outside of London or the UK.

### **Module CA308 – Negotiated Performance Task**

This module gives students the opportunity to use all of the skills and techniques they have learnt so far to create a devised performance. The piece will allow them to show their personal approach to circus creation and to highlight the technical level that they have achieved. The piece can be created as an individual performer or as part of a group with other students and students will be assessed on both the process of creation and the final performance. The performance is open to the general public.

### **Module CA310 – Circus Discipline Level 2**

In this module students will build on their skill acquisition in their circus discipline with the aim to progress their physical, technical and artistic development as a circus artist in line with industry expectations. The module will be delivered as a combination of tutor led discipline focused sessions/workshops and task driven independent learning. Scheduled independent and peer led learning sessions are a central element of this module. Alongside progression with technical skills in their discipline, students will be expected to demonstrate a level of professionalism in their practice in line with industry expectations of circus artists. Students will be assessed on both of these elements, and will also complete a risk assessment to demonstrate a professional level of understanding regarding health and safety protocols related to their discipline

### **Module CA311 – Circus in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

This module allows students to analyse and contextualise developments in contemporary circus. Students will be assessed on student-led theoretical presentations on specific practitioners and will also produce an original piece of research in the form of a practitioner interview and reflective essay.

### **Module CA312 – Directing**

This module draws together learning from academic and performance classes to introduce students to the practice of directing. Students will each have the opportunity to direct a short piece, and to perform in one another's work and will be assessed on presentations at different stages of development.

### **Module CA313 – Movement and Composition 2**

This module advances students' ability to apply principles of choreography and composition to the creation of new work. Students will devise and perform original movement pieces, and will be assessed on both their process of creation and their performance.

<b>BA (Hons) Module and Credit Structure</b>			
<b>Autumn Term</b>	<b>Spring Term</b>	<b>Summer Term</b>	<b>Module Credits</b>
<b>Module CA306 – The Business Plan</b>			<b>10</b>
Lectures and workshops	Assessment of Business Plan		
		<b>Module CA307 – The Ensemble</b>	<b>15</b>
		Assessment of process, performance and risk assessment	
		<b>Module CA308 – Negotiated Performance Task</b>	<b>25</b>
		Assessment of process, performance and written assignment	
<b>Module CA310 – Circus Discipline Level 2</b>			<b>30</b>
Assessment of Circus Discipline work in each term			
<b>CA311 – Circus in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</b>			<b>10</b>
Assessment of participation, presentation and written assignment			
<b>CA312 – Movement and Composition 2</b>			<b>15</b>
Assessment of process of creation and presentation of work in the autumn and spring terms			
<b>CA313 – Directing</b>			<b>15</b>
Assessment of presentations of work			

## COURSE INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION

Following enrolment on the programme, all new students will complete an induction during the first term of their first year. This will introduce them to all the key elements of being a student at the National Centre. Thereafter, at the start of each term, each year group will be briefed on the modules and other activities which they will undertake over the coming months.

A module brief is produced for each of the modules listed above, which outlines the aims of the module, how the module will be delivered and how you will be assessed. All module briefs will be available online via Moodle, along with any other information relevant to the module. You will be provided with a Moodle log in at the start of the programme.

Also available on Moodle are the full programme and module specifications as validated by the University of Kent.

## LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

It is our aim to provide you with a range of learning experiences, all of which will contribute to your development as a circus artist. It is also our aim to support you in becoming a self-motivated independent learner capable of directing your own study and training. Knowledge and skills will be introduced and developed across the two years of the Foundation Degree and additional BA year in increasing depth and greater detail.

A variety of teaching and learning strategies are employed on the course, which vary in response to the subject matter and the learning outcomes of each module. These will be detailed in each of your module briefs. As well as group teaching, lectures, and some one-to-one teaching, students will engage in peer led learning and independent learning time. You play just as important a role in your own learning and development as your teachers do, and the level of autonomy expected of you increases as you progress through the stages of the Higher Education Programme.

Students on the Higher Education programme receive a great amount of verbal feedback – make the most of all feedback from your tutors and make sure that you understand what they are asking you to do in order to develop and improve. You are also able to make appointments with the performance and academic leader or your year manager if you require a more in depth discussion about specific areas for development on the programme.

Reflective practice – the ability to reflect on your actions and on your learning, and to use this to consider how you might make changes in the future to enhance your development – is a key skill for any professional artist and a crucial part of your development on the Higher Education programme. We encourage all students to keep journals and document their progress throughout the programme.

Assessment is also an integral part of the learning process. You will be assessed in various ways during the course. For details of this please refer to Appendix A: The Guide to Assessment.

## INDEPENDENT RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Independent Research presentations are an integral part of the Degree Program. Despite not being an assessed element of the course, the presentations give students the opportunity to demonstrate their work in front of their peers and teachers. The presentations are intended to encourage students to interrogate ideas or concepts during their independent training time and then present the findings to the group. This should be both spoken and physically demonstrated. Encouraging students to be articulate and confident when speaking is as vital as the integrity of the work they are showing.

## THE ACADEMIC YEAR

### TERM DATES

#### Autumn Term

**1<sup>st</sup> years:** Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September – Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017

**All other students:** Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September – Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017

**Autumn Half Term:** 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017

**Christmas Break:** Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2017 – Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2018

#### Spring Term

**2<sup>nd</sup> years:** Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018

**1<sup>st</sup> years & BA:** Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018 (due to Saturday performance)

**Spring Half Term:** 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018

#### Easter Break:

**1<sup>st</sup> years and BAs:** Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018

**2<sup>nd</sup> years:** Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018

#### Summer Term

**All students:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2018

#### Summer Half Term:

**1<sup>st</sup> and BAs:** 26<sup>th</sup> May – 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2018

**2<sup>nd</sup> Years:** 27<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2018

#### Bank Holidays (public holidays when the National Centre will be closed):

- Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2018 (Good Friday) [*falls during Easter Holiday*]
- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2018 (Easter Monday) [*falls during Easter Holiday*]
- Monday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2018 (Early May Bank Holiday)
- Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2018 (Spring Bank Holiday) [*falls during 1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> years half term*]

## STUDENT TIMETABLES

Each student receives an individual timetable which allows you to see where group and individual classes are being held. The larger spaces, such as the GC (Generating Chamber) and CC (Combustion Chamber) are split into several zones (called bays), to accommodate different equipment/ teaching needs.

Timetables are planned prior to the start of term, but as changes are frequently made students receive their timetable only one week in advance. Timetables for the coming week are emailed to students on Friday afternoons.

Please note that timetables are subject to change. Students are informed of any changes to their timetable by their Year Manager or another member of Higher Education office staff.

Occasionally teachers may not be able to attend at short notice due to illness – sometimes it is possible for another teacher to cover the class, but not always. This does not mean you will have a free period – at these times, students will be expected to utilise the class time and the space allocated to them to develop independent learning practices, or peer led learning in group classes. There are also times in your timetable scheduled for Independent Learning or peer-led learning which are scheduled without teachers. Attendance to these is mandatory as it would be to any other class.

Whilst loss of teaching time due to short term teacher absence cannot be made up, if a student or group of students are affected by long term teacher illness the Higher Education staff will ensure that those students are not at a disadvantage and some of their teaching will be re-scheduled. Teacher absences are monitored weekly by the Higher Education team, and any student who feels they are being inadvertently affected by teacher absence should speak to their year manager.

## ATTENDANCE

The National Centre provides world class training and we expect the highest standards from our students. Therefore we expect students to attend 100% of timetabled sessions and be on time for registration every day. As you are training to be professionals this expectation replicates the professional world, and it is mandatory that you are present and on time for every session unless in exceptional circumstances such as illness.

In order to ensure that students are able to meet the intended learning outcomes of their course, the National Centre Higher Education Programme operates a strict attendance policy (further details of which can be found in Appendix C: Attendance Policy).

If a student needs to be absent for exceptional circumstances, e.g. for a hospital appointment or funeral, they should inform the HE programme administrator as far in advance as possible.

Any classes missed due to student absence will not be rescheduled.

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## MORNING REGISTRATION AND CLASS REGISTERS

Registration takes place in the CC from 09:00 to 09:05 each morning. Students who are not present at this time receive an absence mark. If a student arrives late they must report to the Higher Education office as soon as they arrive.

If a student is going to be absent due to illness or is running late, they should phone the HE Programme Administrator on 020 7613 8244 and/or e-mail them to let them know the reasons.

Registers are also taken at the beginning of each lesson. Students are expected to attend all scheduled lessons.

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## THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY

If students reach a point in the day where they have no more scheduled classes and do not wish to continue training, they can leave. However:

1. They must let the Programme Administrator know they are leaving so that we know who is or isn't here. If for any reason the Programme Administrator is not in the office, leave a note or send her an email. The programme administrator is always the initial contact for anything attendance related.
2. They must sign in and out using their access cards at reception. This means the buildings department will know who is here if there is an emergency and is extremely important.
3. They must attend all scheduled classes and any meetings scheduled on their timetable between 9am and 5pm
4. They must still be here at 9am for registration each morning, regardless of what time their first class is

## SPACE USE

The National Centre has training and teaching facilities for several different user groups, in addition to the Higher Education Programmes. The space use across the whole of the National Centre is therefore scheduled in order to allow an adequate amount of time for all of these activities. This sharing of time and space must be respected and students are reminded that their presence in spaces outside the time scheduled for their use could lead to disciplinary action.

Understand that your time in the space is precious and that you must make the maximum use of it!

The following four timetables are available on Moodle (Student Information → Timetables)

1. **Practice time schedule** – List of all the spaces with the timings of when they're allocated to HE or HE & ACDC.

When a space is allocated to HE, that means it's free for you to use *if* there are no classes taking place (see space usage chart).

2. **Space usage charts** (one for each day of the week) - These charts indicate when a space is booked (i.e. when the space has been reserved for a scheduled event, namely a class) and when a space is available (i.e. when the space has not been reserved and is therefore free for students to use on a shared basis).

NOTE: Independent Learning and Practice Time are scheduled events and therefore appear as booked on the charts. Also, the charts run up to 10pm, but please remember you can only train outside of HE hours (9am – 4pm) during shared practice time (see practice time schedule).

3. **List of complimentary classes** - A list of all complimentary classes (e.g. Ballet, Handstands, Trampoline...) scheduled for the week.

This will allow you to know when/where classes which you're not scheduled for are taking place. If you would like to attend a class that's not in your timetable, you must ask the teacher at the beginning of the class and they will decide if it is appropriate for you and whether there is enough space. You can also speak with your year manager(s) if you'd like to be scheduled for a certain type of class in the future.

4. **Library timetable** – Indicates when the Library has been booked for a scheduled event (e.g. a class or a meeting).

**Weekends:** Weekend access to students of the Higher Education Programmes is limited to the use of the library only. Students must confirm National Centre opening times with the Reception. The National Centre is not necessarily open every weekend.

## HIGHER EDUCATION OFFICE STAFF

### KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

National Centre for Circus Arts  
Coronet Street  
London  
N1 6HD  
Main Reception Tel: +44 (0) 20 7613 4141  
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7729 9422  
Website: [www.nationalcircus.org.uk](http://www.nationalcircus.org.uk)

All members of staff at the National Centre have direct dial telephones and email addresses:

**Ailsa Ilott**  
**HE Programme Administrator**  
[ailsa@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:ailsa@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 8244

**Mara Morgantti Minchillo**  
**HE Admissions & Student Support  
Manager**  
[lydia@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:lydia@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 8264

**Nikita Shergill**  
**HE Records Officer**  
[nikita@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:nikita@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 8280

**Stevie Taylor**  
**Head of Academic Administration**  
[stevie@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:stevie@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 8228

**Adrian Porter**  
**Director of Higher Education**  
[adrian@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:adrian@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 8219

**Rod Laver**  
**Juggling Strand Manager**  
[rod@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:rod@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 8243

**Clare Anderson**  
**Course Manager: Foundation Degree**  
[clare@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:clare@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 8245

**Michaela O'Connor**  
**Course Manager: Foundation Degree**  
[michaela@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:michaela@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 8245

**Martha Harrison**  
**Course Manager: Foundation Degree**  
[Martha@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:Martha@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 8

**Amy Welbourn**  
**Course Manager: BA Year**  
[amy@nationalcircus.org.uk](mailto:amy@nationalcircus.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7613 7279

## HIGHER EDUCATION OFFICE STAFF – WHO’S WHO AND WHAT WE DO

The Higher Education office at the National Centre should be your first port of call for any queries you may have or advice/support you might need. Below is a list of the members of the Higher Education team you will find in the office and what it is we all do.

All members of the HE department are in Monday to Friday unless otherwise stated below.

Name	Areas of Responsibility	Contact this person for....
<b>Ailsa Ilott</b> Programme Administrator	Oversees the day to day administration of the programme and supports the rest of the HE team.	Any enquiry if you're not sure who to speak to Ailsa. Ailsa can also book appointments with other members of staff, and is the first point of contact for any student who is going to be late or absent.
<b>Mara Morgantti Minchillo</b>  Admissions & Student Support Manager	Oversees admissions, student support, student finance, scholarships and bursaries.	Student Support: Counselling; Hardship Fund; Housing Issues; Nutrition; Disabled Students Allowance (DSA); Learning Support; Learning Support Agreements; Mental Health Issues & Wellbeing; Equipment Loans; Private Medical Insurance; English Language Lessons  Student Finance: All aspects of students finance including applying for tuition fee and maintenance loans; Issues with Student Finance England (late payment, evidence etc.); Self Payers and Payment Plans; Scholarships & Bursaries
<b>Course Managers</b>  <b>Clare Anderson</b>  <b>Martha Harrison</b>  <b>Michaela O'Connor</b>   <b>Amy Welbourn</b>	Oversee the delivery and moderation of physical skill elements of the programme, This includes: curriculum design; scheduling and content of student timetables; pastoral care; termly meetings; specialisation assessments; supporting new innovation and development in training	You can come and see your year manager about any issues which are affecting you and your time at the National Centre. This could be personal issues which are affecting your work on the course; any issues with class content you cannot resolve by talking to your teacher directly; any problems with your timetable; technical needs; or issues regarding progress on the course.
Academic Lecturer TBC	Oversees the delivery of the theatre and movement elements of the programme. Module leader for contextual studies modules, and assessor	Rishi gives guidance and support with writing essays, and the construction and performance of devised pieces. Rishi operates open office hours for drop-in tutorials one afternoon a week. Tutorials

	of all written submissions other than the Business Plan, Website and Risk Assessments.	can also be booked outside of these hours through Mara.
<b>Rod Laver</b> Juggling Strand Manager	Oversees the delivery of the juggling and manipulation side of the Higher Education programme. This includes organizing and programming suitable teachers for all juggling students and ensuring that each juggler's timetable is appropriate	Juggling students may need to speak to Rod about any issues related to their timetable or juggling teaching rather than their year manager.  You can come and speak to Rod about any juggling or manipulation related aspect of the course and how best to use these skills in performance and throughout your careers.  Rod is only in on Wednesdays and Fridays.
<b>Nikita Shergill</b> HE Records Officer	Oversees administration of assessment, student feedback data and course documentation (Office hours Weds-Fri)	You can contact the HE Records officer if you have a query about anything related to assessment, student feedback, student feedback or the handbook/module guides.
<b>Stevie Taylor</b> Head of Academic Administration	Oversees quality assurance management, assessment processes and academic governance, appeals and complaints, the management of the Higher Education administration team. Works closely with the University of Kent and CDD.	You can come and see Stevie if you have any queries about regulations, Higher Education policy, appeals and complaints or any issues related to administration or student support which has been referred by another member of staff.

## COMMUNICATION AND STUDENT RESOURCES

### METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

#### EMAIL

Other than speaking with Higher Education department staff members face to face, email will be the main method of communication with students. It is incredibly important that you regularly check your emails, read everything that has been sent, and save any emails that contain important information you might need to reference later – and bear in mind that there might be times when you receive a large number of emails. You should also inform the HE office team if you change your e-mail address.

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## NOTICEBOARDS

The main student academic noticeboard is the blackboard located outside the HE Admin Office. There is a section on this noticeboard for relevant notices, updated by the HE Programme Administrator (see section on 'Space Use.')

There are other noticeboards in the foyer areas and other corridors giving information about performances and other services that may be of interest to students and staff.

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## TELEPHONE MESSAGES

Only in emergencies can messages for students be taken on the main telephone number. There is a payphone in the reception area, behind the glass entry door area. Students wishing to make an emergency call can use a telephone in the Higher Education office at the agreement of a member of the Higher Education team.

## LOCKERS

Individual lockers are available in the basement changing room. During the induction process, you will be assigned a locker by the HE Admin Team in exchange for a £5 deposit. We recommend that you use these at all times and avoid bringing items of value or large amounts of money to the National Centre. The National Centre cannot accept responsibility for lost property. You are asked to keep the tops of the lockers clear at all times – items found outside/ on top of lockers will be removed.

## STUDENT ACCESS CARDS

Once you register as a student at the National Centre you will receive a photo ID card which gives you access to the building during Higher Education hours. You must keep this card safe – if you forget your card you will need to borrow a visitor card from the Higher Education Office, and if you lose it altogether you will need to order a replacement card at reception, which costs £5.

## ACCOMMODATION ADVICE

The National Centre does not have its own student housing. Most students on the Higher Education Programme live with other students in rented accommodation, and students are given the opportunity to contact each other prior to starting the degree in order to look for others to potentially house share with. The Admissions & Student Support Manager can advise you about suitable housing whilst you are on the course. Any student who is experiencing problems with a landlord should contact the Citizens Advice Bureau: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>.

## THE LIBRARY, IT AND MOODLE

Please refer to Appendix E: The Library and Digital Resources for detailed information about these learning resources available to students at the National Centre.

## STUDENT SUPPORT

The National Centre for Circus Arts is a large and lively community of staff, students, circus professionals and users from many different cultural and educational backgrounds. The National Centre for Circus Arts has a strong tradition of providing student care and support services and commits considerable resources to this purpose. Many students who are embarking on a course will be living away from home or abroad for the first time and may face a number of challenges during their training. We aim to provide the necessary services to help all students overcome these and ensure that the highest level of individual care is offered. There are many student support resources available, including:

- Support for students with disabilities
- Injury support
- Counselling and guidance for mental health & wellbeing
- Nutritionist appointments
- Financial assistance
- Academic support
- English language classes

For detailed information about student support please refer to Appendix F: Guide to Student Support

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

As students in advanced vocational training you will learn to take professional direction – but you are also active participants in your own learning and are expected to make comments and suggestions at various times throughout the year. Often this happens informally, in discussion with your teachers, Year Managers or other Higher Education staff, but there are also various ways of giving your views formally. For a detailed explanation of the various methods of feedback and evaluation of your programme, as well as the committee structure in place at the National Centre, please see Appendix G: Student Feedback and Committee Structures

## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

By enrolling on the Higher Education programme at the National Centre for Circus Arts, all students agree to adhere to the codes of conduct and the requirements for satisfactory progress as laid out by the National Centre, throughout their time on the programme. In return, the National Centre promises to provide a high quality learning experience underpinned by a fair and transparent set of policies and regulations, and provision of equal opportunities for all students. For a list of our policies and regulations, including codes of conduct, disciplinary procedures, appeals, complaints and grievance procedures, and our equality and diversity statement, please refer to appendices H to Q. Students should familiarise themselves with these documents.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

In addition to the advice presented here, you will find further information in Appendix Q: Health and Safety Statement

### **Registering with a Doctor**

It is extremely important that you register with a doctor in London as soon as possible after enrolling on your course. Students should see the Student Support Manager for information regarding this and other health services. It is also advisable, because of the closeness and intensity of the studies here and to prevent epidemics, that you ensure all your inoculations (measles, mumps, rubella, etc....) are up-to-date.

### **First Aid**

In the event of injury or illness you should inform a member of staff who will take the appropriate action, including contacting the duty First Aider to attend. All injuries/accidents must be attended to by a National Centre First Aider.

An accident report will be completed for every First Aid incident.

#### Location of First Aid Boxes

- At Reception
- Physical Therapy Room
- Generating Chamber
- Acro Studio
- Combustion Chamber
- Link Studio
- Top Studio
- Middle Studio
- Creation Studio

Only National Centre First Aiders are allowed to provide supplies from the First Aid kits

In addition to this there are Blood Borne Virus boxes in the CC, GC and the Top Studio, which contain equipment for decontamination (including wipes, spray, gloves and scissors). They also contain quarantine tape should it not be possible to decontaminate.

### **Treatment of Injuries**

Please see the Student Support section of this Handbook for information about the support provided by the School for the treatment of injuries

### **Preventing Injury and Maintaining Fitness**

For information on preventing injury and maintaining fitness, please see the physical therapy section of Appendix F: Guide to Student Support

## FIRE AND EMERGENCIES

### **If You Discover a Fire:**

1. OPERATE FIRE ALARM IMMEDIATELY BY PRESSING A MANUAL CALL POINT
2. ATTACK THE FIRE with equipment provided if possible and you have been trained to do so, but DO NOT take personal risk.
3. Leave the building via the nearest emergency exit
4. If you have access requirements you should make your way to the nearest refuge call point where you can contact a member of staff by pressing the buzzer.
5. Gather at the Assembly Point – The JUGGLER STATUE at the front of the building in Hoxton Market.
6. Do not stop to collect belongings.
7. Make yourself known to The Deputy Fire Warden.
8. Do not re-enter the building until informed that it is safe to do so by a National Centre Fire Warden

### **On Hearing the Fire Alarm:**

1. Leave the building immediately using the nearest Emergency exit.
2. If you have access requirements you should make your way to the nearest refuge call point where you can contact a member of staff by pressing the buzzer (a trained member of staff will undertake an Evac+Chair evacuation of anybody at the refuge call point).
3. Close any doors behind you.
4. Proceed to the assembly point:  
THE JUGGLER SCULPTURE, Opposite the National Centre for Circus Arts main entrance.
5. Do not stop to collect belongings.
6. Make yourself known to The Deputy Fire Warden.
7. Do not re-enter the building until informed that it is safe to do so.

## LIST OF RELATED APPENDICES AND GUIDES

All of the following documents are available to students on our website and linked onto Moodle:

- Appendix A: Guide to Assessment
- Appendix B: Entry onto the BA (Hons) in Circus Arts
- Appendix C: Attendance Policy
- Appendix D: Intermission
- Appendix E: The Library and Digital Resources
- Appendix F: Guide to Student Support
- Appendix G: Student Feedback and Committee Structures
- Appendix H: Equipment Loan Scheme
- Appendix I: The Specialisation Process
- Appendix J: National Centre & Higher Education Codes of Conduct
- Appendix K: Performance and Production Code of Conduct
- Appendix L: Appeals, Complaints and Grievance Procedures
- Appendix M: Fitness to Train Policy
- Appendix N: Disciplinary Procedures
- Appendix O: Equality & Diversity Statement
- Appendix P: Anti-Harassment Statement
- Appendix Q: Health & Safety Statement