

Programme Specification

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she passes the programme. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the programme handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this specification is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Degree and Programme Title BA (Hons) in Circus Arts

1. Awarding Institution/Body	University of Kent
2. Teaching Institution	National Centre for Circus Arts
3. School responsible for management of the programme	School of Arts
4. Teaching Site	National Centre for Circus Arts Coronet Street London N1 6HD
5. Mode of Delivery	Full-time
6. Programme accredited by	n/a
7. Final Award	BA (Hons) in Circus Arts
8. Programme	Circus Arts
9. UCAS Code (or other code)	n/a
10. Credits/ECTS Value	120 credits, 60 ECTS equivalent
11. Study Level	Undergraduate
12. Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	Dance, Drama and Performance (July 2015)
13. Date of creation/revision (<i>note that dates are necessary for version control</i>)	May 2016
14. Intended Start Date of Delivery of this Programme	From September 2016

15. Educational Aims of the Programme

The programme aims to:

1. Consolidating professional competency by extending the opportunity for students to explore and develop their technical and artistic skills needed to develop as independent artists, including developing professional etiquette and safe practice in line with the current expectations of the profession.

2. Further develop a student's technical and creative vocabulary in a specific circus discipline, instilling in them the confidence to practice, experiment, perform and create autonomously, and the potential to play a role in the future evolution of the art form.
3. Advancing the students' analytical, reflective and critical skills, and developing their ability to research and draw upon a wider cultural context and provide creative solutions to challenges.
4. Provide continued opportunities for students to articulate ideas, concepts and information in the context of production and performance as well as in a variety of forms and media.
5. Provide an environment in which learning becomes a life-long activity through independent learning and exploration of their own individual potential, developing strategies which will enable students to further their professional circus practice beyond the end of the course
6. Promote a student's further knowledge and understanding of circus and its contemporary context within the performing arts, and the ability to apply that knowledge to their own practice

16 Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas.

The programme outcomes have references to the subject benchmarking statement for Dance, Drama and Performance

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

1. A comprehensive and systematic understanding of a specific circus discipline consistent with entry into the profession (SB4.2)
2. The established models of practice, protocols, routines and procedures deployed within a range of professional situations, and how to apply these appropriately within their own practice (SB4.2)
3. An artist's responsibility and their professional role in relation to the responsibilities of other roles within the context of productions and performances (SB4.3)
4. A methodical understanding of the processes of creativity and how to implement, and critique them, in their own work (SB4.2, SB4.3)
5. The management of an individual artist's physical and technical development (SB4.2)

Teaching/learning and assessment methods and strategies used to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

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Various teaching and learning approaches are used to enable students to meet programme outcomes, and none of these outcomes are achieved exclusively by one method. These include:

- Practical teacher led sessions
- Scheduled group and independent learning sessions, either self-directed or task-led
- Devising work for performance, rehearsals and both internal and public performances
- Lectures
- Tutor and student led seminars
- Prescribed reading, viewing of performance and independent research
- Intensive workshops
- Collaborations with professional companies/directors/choreographers

Formative and summative assessment tasks include:

- Continuous assessment of practical work
- Observation of group and individual processes on practical projects
- Submission of written work which may include essays, interviews, business plans, risk assessments
- Individual or small group seminar presentations
- Contributions in class, including oral, intellectual, practical and creative contributions and evidence of preparation
- The presentation of practical/creative work through public and/or in-class performances

These methods are interwoven throughout the course and are taught and assessed as above with particular emphasis on teaching and learning through practical work.

Students receive ongoing formative feedback in practical classes and summative written feedback from tutors. Achievement is measured against module assessment criteria provided to students and assessors, with reference to grading criteria and in accordance with programme and learning outcomes.

Students must meet the specific attendance requirements for each module in order to be assessed.

Meetings are held each term attended by all assessing tutors to discuss the progress of each individual student. These meetings also function as moderation meetings, where grading and assessment are scrutinised.

Continuous assessment of practical work students may also be moderated through one or more of the following methods, which will be detailed in the student handbooks and the relevant module briefs provided to students:

- Group teaching of circus disciplines, followed by discussion between assessing tutors
- Joint observation of classes followed by discussions between assessors and moderators
- Tutors present during production periods to joint assess with directors and moderate assessment of process elements

Skills and Other Attributes

B. Intellectual Skills:

1. Analytical, critical and reflective skills developed through independent investigation and practical experimentation within circus training (SB5.3)
2. The ability to demonstrate a conceptual understanding of devising and performance that enables the student to critique and sustain arguments (SB4.2, SB5.2)
3. Critical reasoning skills developed in the interrogation and evaluation of information which enable both practical problem solving and analysis of abstract concepts (SB5.3)
4. The ability to independently evaluate their own knowledge and understanding and draw on the experience of others to form reasoned judgements (SB5.7)

Teaching/learning and assessment methods and strategies used to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

See section A.

C. Subject-specific Skills:

1. A high level of competency in the creative and technical execution of a chosen circus discipline consistent with entry into the profession (SB5.2)
2. An ability to apply knowledge of the processes and protocols associated with a specific circus discipline (SB5.2)
3. Application of an understanding of the broader processes associated with performance production in a variety of professional performance contexts (SB5.2)
4. The capacity to identify problems and to propose creative and/or original solutions in potentially complex and unpredictable production or performance contexts (SB5.2, SB5.3)
5. The ability to manage and promote themselves as professional artists, and to initiate and carry out projects to further their professional development (SB 5.2, SB5.6)
6. An ability to identify Health and Safety issues and to undertake risk assessments consistent with industry requirements (SB5.6)

Teaching/learning and assessment methods and strategies used to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

See section A.

D. Transferable Skills: *(Non-subject specific key skills)*

1. The ability to evaluate their own professional and personal development, as well as the ability to recognise the limits of their current knowledge, through a developed process of reflection and self-appraisal (SB5.7)

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2. The ability to work autonomously and demonstrate effective time management and organisational skills consistent with professional expectations (SB5.6)
3. A life-long approach to learning and the ability to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature (SB5.6)
4. The ability to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts, with the ability to communicate information to both specialist and non-specialist audiences (SB5.2)
5. The ability to undertake independent investigation, retrieval and management of information, including the appropriate use of original specialist materials specific to their chosen discipline (SB5.3)
6. Knowledge of the use of information technology such as the Internet, social media and word processing, as well as tools adapted to their specialist needs (SB5.2)
7. The ability to collaborate with others through the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility (SB5.2)

Teaching/learning and assessment methods and strategies used to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

See section A.

For more information on the skills developed by individual modules and on the specific learning outcomes associated with any Certificate, Diploma or BA/BSc non-honours awards relating to this programme of study, see the module mapping.

17 Programme Structures and Requirements, Levels, Modules, Credits and Awards

This programme is studied over one year full-time.

The programme is comprised of one stage only principally designed to offer a programme of study that is continuous with that provided by the school's FdA course, or equivalent (see section 20.1)

The programme comprises of modules of study totalling 120 credits. Students must successfully complete each module in order to be awarded the specified number of credits for that module. One credit corresponds to approximately ten hours of 'learning time' (including all classes and all private study and research). Thus obtaining 120 credits in an academic year requires 1,200 hours of overall learning time. For further information on modules and credits refer to the Credit Framework at <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html>

Each module is designed to be at a specific level. For the descriptors of each of these levels, refer to Annex 2 of the Credit Framework at <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex2.html>. To be eligible for the award of a BA (Hons) students must obtain 120 credits, at least 90 of which must be at Level 6 or above, in addition to having previously completed a level 5 Foundation Degree in Circus Arts or equivalent (see section 2.1).

For further information refer to the Credit Framework at <https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#fallbackawards>.

Compulsory modules are core to the programme and must be taken by all students studying the programme. There are no optional modules.

Where a student fails a module(s) due to illness or other mitigating circumstances, such failure may be condoned, subject to the requirements of the Credit Framework and provided that the student has achieved the programme learning outcomes. For further information refer to the Credit Framework at <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html>.

Where a student fails a module(s), but has marks for such modules within 10 percentage points of the pass mark, the Board of Examiners may nevertheless award the credits for the module(s), subject to the requirements of the Credit Framework and provided that the student has achieved the programme learning outcomes. For further information refer to the Credit Framework.

Code	Title	Level	Credits	Term(s)
Stage 1				
Compulsory Modules				
CA310	Circus Discipline Level 2	6	30	1, 2, 3
CA312	Directing	6	15	1, 2
CA313	Movement and Composition 2	6	15	1, 2
CA306	The Business Plan	6	10	1, 2 or 2, 3
CA308	The Negotiated Performance Task	6	25	1, 2
CA311	Contemporary Circus in the 21 st Century	6	10	1
CA307	The Ensemble	6	15	3

18 Work-Based Learning

Disability Statement: Where disabled students are due to undertake a work placement as part of this programme of study, a representative of the University will meet with the work placement provider in

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advance to ensure the provision of anticipatory and reasonable adjustments in line with legal requirements.

Where relevant to the programme of study, provide details of any work-based learning element, inclusive of employer details, delivery, assessment and support for students:

N/A

19 Support for Students and their Learning

- Induction programme introducing students to all of the elements listed below
- Student Handbook and Appendices
- Module Briefs
- Academic Writing Guide
- One-on-one and small group intensive teaching
- English Language Support
- Careers and Employability Advice from the Circus Development department
- Counselling Services provided by external organisations
- Information Services (computing and library services, including e-resources / Athens)
- Student representation at relevant committees (Student Staff Liaison, Learning & Teaching, Academic Board)
- One to one feedback
- Personal progress interviews and performance profiling
- Individual and group tutorials
- Termly Student Progress Meeting, overseeing the progression of each individual student and identifying specific individual support needs
- Full time Student Support Manager a range of learning, emotional, physical and financial support systems and available for individual support on welfare and well-being issues
- Support for students with a disability / specific learning difficulty including a specialist academic support tutor
- Injury treatment and rehabilitation including individual injury management support and physical therapy
- Year Managers who oversee the pastoral progression of all students on the programme
- Academic Support from the Performance and Academic Leader

For further information please visit the National Centre website:

<http://www.nationalcircus.org.uk/education-and-learning/further-higher-education>

20 Entry Profile

The minimum age to study a degree programme at the university is normally at least 18 years old by 1 September in the year the programme begins. There is no upper age limit.

20.1 Entry Route

For fuller information, please refer to the University prospectus

- Internal candidates / continuers from the Foundation Degree in Circus Arts must apply internally for the BA programme. Internal applicants will be expected to have met the standards

outlined in the Student Handbook during their time studying on the Foundation Degree in order to be offered a place on the BA. For further information please visit:

<http://www.nationalcircus.org.uk/education-and-learning/further-higher-education/finance-and-student-services/higher-education-course-documents>

- External direct entry candidates must apply to the school directly and attend audition and interview. Their grades and a reference from the institution where they completed their previous qualification will also be considered. They may also be required to provide a sample of written work from their previous degree.
- Indicative requirements for direct entry would be an appropriate Foundation Degree in Circus Arts or equivalent from the National Centre for Circus Arts or another school which is a recognised Full Type 1 Member of FEDEC (European Federation of Professional Circus Schools): <http://www.fedec.eu/en/membres/membres-effectifs-2/>. Previous qualifications must be mapped against the National Centre for Circus Arts Foundation Degree to ensure that the learning outcomes of that qualification have already been achieved (in line with the requirements of the University of Kent's policy on Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning).
- Candidates who are able to demonstrate their potential successfully to complete a degree programme at level 6 will also be considered on the basis of previous experience.
- Applicants will also have to show clearly their vocational intent and potential for professional employment in the field of contemporary circus performance.
- Applicants whose first language is not English must hold an equivalent qualification to a GSCE in English language or pass the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) at 6.5 pass level or higher.

Due to the nature of its module structure, APEL candidates are not accepted on to the BA (Hons) in Circus Arts

20.2 What does this programme have to offer?

- A conservatoire level training for those who have the desire and potential to become the next generation of professional circus artists
- To be taught and supported by a dedicated specialist staff, knowledgeable of the circus arts and the business of circus, and with a dedication to the art of circus as a means of expression and not simply a demonstration of physical ability
- A small specialist school with an intimate working environment, close tutor support and contact
- Regular contact with industry professionals, including the opportunity to train alongside working practitioners
- Opportunities to collaborate with leading practitioners, directors and choreographers
- Purpose built facilities specifically suited for full-time circus arts training:
 - 2 main training spaces (one 20m x 14m x 7.5m and another 25m x 17m x 9m) which are fully riggable for aerial activities and equipped for acrobatics and other floor activities.
 - Four additional studios, one of which is also riggable for some aerial work, one of which is fully spring for acrobatic work
 - Production equipment (lighting, sound equipment, blacks etc) for performance use
- Central London location with access to a wide variety of circus and performance related events
- Affiliation with the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama, providing opportunities to collaborate with students training in other performing arts courses in London and the UK
- Global contacts with other circus training institutions through affiliation to the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (FEDEC)
- The potential to progress onto the BA (Hons) in Circus Arts or, for students with a previous BA level qualification, the Postgraduate Certificate in Circus Arts at the National Centre for Circus Arts

20.3 Personal Profile

- The potential to acquire a high level of technical skill and to develop their artistic awareness
- A demonstrable commitment to the practices of creating circus
- An intellectual interest in the processes involved in creating interesting circus performance
- An enthusiasm for group work
- The ability to self-motivate and gain maximum benefit from the programme through engagement with all aspects of the curriculum
- The desire to engage in the creation of circus both in theory and in practice

21 Methods for Evaluating and Enhancing the Quality and Standards of Teaching and Learning

21.1 Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards

- Student module evaluations
- Annual programme and module monitoring reports, see <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexe.html>
- External Examiners system, see <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexk.html>
- Periodic programme review, <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html>
- Annual staff appraisal
- Peer observation
- Quality Assurance Framework, <http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/index.html>
- QAA Higher Education Review, see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/higher-education-review/Pages/default.aspx>
- Affiliate annual report to the Academic Board of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama
- The National Centre for Circus Arts Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy
- Review and analysis of statistical information
- Policy reviews
- Moderation of marking
- The committee structures of both the National Centre for Circus Arts and Conservatoire for Dance and Drama, as outlined in 21.2
- Student Feedback mechanisms as outlined in 21.3

21.2 Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

- Department meetings
- Staff-Student Liaison Committees
- National Centre Learning and Teaching Committee
- National Centre Academic Board
- Conservatoire for Dance and Drama Committee Structure
- Board of Examiners
- School Learning and Teaching Committee (Kent)
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee (Kent)

21.3 Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience

- Student module evaluations
- Staff-Student Liaison Committee
- Student rep system
- Annual NSS
- Annual quality survey by the University of Kent
- Student termly group feedback sessions led by student representatives
- Exit feedback sessions
- The continuous day-to-day conversations between staff and students that is possible in a very small school
- Student representation on other School and Conservatoire committees
- The Conservatoire for Dance and Drama Student Advisory Group

21.4 Staff Development priorities include:

- Training and staff development opportunities with FEDEC (Federation of European Circus Schools)
- PGCHE requirements
- HEA (associate) fellowship membership
- Annual appraisals
- Support for administrative and teaching staff to undertake relevant training/skills development
- In-house staff training and teacher workshops
- Peer observation of teaching and best practice exchange through school committees and the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama
- Programme team meetings
- Research seminars
- Conferences

22 Indicators of Quality and Standards

- Results of periodic programme review (March 2011)
- QAA Institutional Audit for the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (2010)
- Annual External Examiner reports
- Annual programme and module monitoring reports
- NSS and DLHE data
- University of Kent QAA Higher Education Review (2015)

22.1 The following reference points were used in creating these specifications:

- QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- QAA Benchmarking statement/s for Dance, Drama and Performance July 2015
- School and Faculty plan
- University Plan/Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Staff research activities

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- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (August 2008, QAA)
- National Centre for Circus Arts Learning & Teaching Strategy 2015-18
- National Centre for Circus Arts Annual Monitoring Reports 2013, 2014 and 2015

Template last updated October 2014