

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

Course Specification

MA Choreography

2018-19 (MCHOR)

www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk



Record of Enhancement

No.	Detail of modification (Provide a brief description of the modification and where the Course Specification has been updated)	Date Effective (Indicate the academic year of entry and course level(s) to which the modification will apply)
	Example Assessment changed from examination to presentation in Module X, see section entitled Module Assessment Methods.	Level 5 from September 2018-19 entry

Version Control

Version Control	
Version number and date effective	V1 – 07 th February 2017
For completion by Quality Assurance Services only:	
Next Re-validation date	

Target award, course title and programme code:

MA Choreography (MCHOR)

Level of qualification:

Level 7

Course Rationale and Philosophy:

The creation of an MA in Choreography would fill an existing gap in our provision and offering one of the only Master's Degree in Choreography in the region. Currently, our undergraduate provision for Dance is growing year by year, with on average 60 new students starting per year. Presently, very few of these students are remaining with us for Postgraduate study. As such, the creation of an MA in Choreography would not only be attractive to undergraduates who may wish to extend their studies, but as one of the only Cities for Dance in the Country (Leeds City of Dance is an Arts Council England Initiative) we see the MA in Choreography attracting existing artists located in the region and international students. This could help to improve not only our National profile but also our International profile as an exceptional provider for contemporary dance studies.

Overview and Aims:

MA Choreography is a new masters programme within Performing Arts. It sits alongside MA Performance and together these postgraduate programmes provide distinct progression routes for graduates of BA Hons Dance, Performance and Performing Arts degree programmes.

Choreographic practice is studied on the MA as an artistic, academic and embodied discipline with which students can develop complexity and sophistication in practice and research at level 7 within a flexible and unique pathway. MA Choreography builds on the skills and motivation achieved by graduates at level 6 and offers transition routes that can be tailored to student's specific areas of academic, artistic and professional interest. MA Choreography has been specifically designed to provide opportunities for graduates and practitioners, professional and 'emerging' artists and those working within diverse artistic, education or community contexts to develop disciplinary specificity and specialisms, to re-train or refocus performance careers or, to intensify and deepen particular aspects of their existing practice. It also prepares students for further academic study and careers where this is a goal. The programme provides an intensive year for students to develop their professional interests and their knowledge and understanding in bespoke areas of critically aware choreographic practice in a supportive and distinctive learning environment.

The programme recognises students differing aspirations, motivations and learning needs, and is therefore characterised by a range of modules that facilitate students to choose a route which best suits their circumstances. Students study in a pattern of alternating intensive blocks and periods of reflection and independent practice thus allowing for practitioners to continue to engage with professional practice and project based work through the course of study. Commitment to three cycles (6 for Part time students over two years) of intensive focus in a hothouse choreographic research community of practice and critical enquiry is key to student's challenging and developing their skill and independent practice.

MA Choreography is characterised by its emphasis on embedding critical dialogue between professional and academic contexts into the student's programme of study. There are opportunities for the student to 'credit' and develop professional practice and pedagogic research through most modules as appropriate. The programme is designed to dovetail the student's own practice and the student's industry engagement with sophisticated academic learning through practice as research, reflective practice and critical debate. In this way the course of study aims to create sustainable routes through to employment and to maintain an emphasis on culturally and critically engaged contemporary practice in the learning environment. The programme aims to develop public exposure for student's work in the region and internationally by working in collaboration with local arts, cultural organisations and international festivals.

The course aims to expand and liberate the creative potential of students by encouraging the production of innovative practical work. Students should all complete the course with a portfolio of rigorously tested choreographic work. Each module is designed to start the questioning process in students and to challenge and examine critically the existing context of contemporary international choreographic practice.

The ethos of the course can be seen in the module titles: Research and Development (R&D), Commission Project, Writing Talking Festival, Dramaturgy, Artist as Teacher, Choreographer's Mentor Project, Choreography in the Expanded Field, Socially Engaged Practice, Improvisation, Choreographer's Major Project.

The MA is situated in the School of Film, Music and Performing Arts and shares the philosophical ethos of all postgraduate provision within the school: to produce learning environments which support and stimulate innovation, collaboration and high quality creative practices for all students, at all times.

The MA Choreography has studio space in professional buildings; Northern Ballet and Yorkshire Dance alongside three new dedicated and fully equipped performance spaces located on Headingley Campus; Beckett Studios 1,2 and 3. We also have two further black box performance spaces; House 14 located in Queens Square and Perform One located on the lower Concourse of the Calverley Building on the City Campus.

Collectively, the undergraduate and postgraduate Performing Arts programmes represent a spread of distinctive, sustainable and relevant Performing Arts provision and aim to produce and promote innovative, contemporary, self-reflexive and critically engaged practice. Contact and knowledge exchange between students across the performance programmes stimulates creative collaboration and the course team believe that this emphasis on an artistic community will attract a strong cohort of

postgraduate students committed to making innovative and high quality choreographic work that will make a critical impact on the contemporary scene.

Aims of the Programme

1. To provide students with an MA education in Choreographic Practice which will enhance potential employability.
2. To develop and stimulate a community of critical enquiry into contemporary choreographic practice in current cultural and global contexts.
3. To expand and liberate the creative potential of students by encouraging and supporting the production of innovative practical work.
4. To provide an intensive hothouse environment for students to improve and develop their knowledge and understanding of choreographic practice through professionally modelled, constructive self reflection, peer and professional critical feedback thus facilitating more advanced and complex strategies for making, producing, reflecting and disseminating.
5. To embed critical and creative dialogues between students in the academic context and the industry.
6. To develop public exposure for student's work in the region and internationally by working in collaboration with local arts, cultural organisations and international festivals.
7. To provide an experimental environment for graduates, practitioners, professional and 'emerging' artists and those working within diverse contexts to come together in supportive, collaborative enquiry to intensify and deepen their practice.

Course Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes have been developed with reference to:

1. Leeds Beckett University Education Strategy 2016-21
2. Relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and FHEQ statements.
3. The Leeds Beckett University taxonomy of assessment domains for taught level 7 courses
4. The “Key Concepts” in the Postgraduate Course Development Principles document

On successful completion of the 180-credit programme students should:

1	Demonstrate sophisticated practice that reflects originality and innovation and is informed by professional practice, scholarship and theory at the forefront of the discipline.
2	Demonstrate the ability to synthesise and apply knowledge, techniques and choreographic strategies systematically to articulate new insights and/or critical awareness in their own research and practice.
3	To autonomously negotiate, plan projects, taking initiative, applying critical reflection and collaborative communication to creative and practical decision-making and problem solving in a range of professional contexts.
4	Demonstrate a critical understanding of the current cultural debates pertaining to contemporary choreographic practices.
5	Demonstrate the ability to be able to work ethically, sensitively and with appropriate professionalism in diverse contexts with the aim of creating sophisticated artistic practice that communicates with critical and cultural awareness to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
6	Demonstrate a complex level of conceptual understanding in artistic research and practice including the ability to evaluate and interpret embodied experience and relevant data.

Level Learning Outcomes (adapt as appropriate)

Level	No.	Learning Outcome
7	1	Demonstrate sophisticated practice that reflects originality and innovation and is informed by professional practice, scholarship and theory at the forefront of the discipline.
7	2	Demonstrate the ability to synthesise and apply knowledge, techniques and choreographic strategies systematically to articulate new insights and/or critical awareness in their own research and practice.
7	3	To autonomously negotiate, plan projects, taking initiative, applying critical reflection and collaborative communication to creative and practical decision-making and problem solving in a range of professional contexts.
7	4	Demonstrate a critical understanding of the current cultural debates pertaining to contemporary choreographic practices.
7	5	Demonstrate the ability to be able to work ethically, sensitively and with appropriate professionalism in diverse contexts with the aim of creating sophisticated artistic practice that communicates with critical and cultural awareness to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
7	6	Demonstrate a complex level of conceptual understanding in artistic research and practice including the ability to evaluate and interpret embodied experience and relevant data.

Course Structure (Please indicate the **full** course structure and adapt the table as appropriate. Please note which are option modules as these will be designated as 'indicative' for publication purposes. See validation handbook for further information.)

Level 7

At level 7

The programme has a modular framework for study and assessment. A module is defined as 200 student learning hours, per 20 credits, the time being made up of class contact, tutorials, self and group learning plus assessment. Each module is worth either 20 (single), or 60 (triple) credits.

Students will study 180 credits across the entire year.

To complete the programme students need to take are four Core modules and three Electives (there are six elective modules to choose from over the programme).

The elective modules include both taught modules, and modules that require extensive independent practice or practice in a professional work related context. Elective modules take place in all three semesters depending on student's choice.

It is intended that students have the autonomy to make elective selections and then plan independent elective projects to support the sequential or parallel development of their studies. They may do this with tutor guidance and support.

Students may want to make projects flow from one module to the next (to develop a line of enquiry or body of work) and may want to bring projects from their professional practice into their studies in order to maximise the effectiveness of the programme in relation to deepening their continuing professional development.

Elective module choices allow students to shape their year (2 years for Part time students) flexibly according to when and where they want to place intensive and less intensive activity, practical, studio based or externally based activity and periods of independent study and reflection.

Tutors assist students in the mapping of this bespoke design to best support each student's aims.

Core modules create an intensive hothouse group environment for everyone in September and January and through the Summer final Choreographer's Major Project module (although the Choreographers Major Project 60 credit final module is a supervised independent project).

Project based electives that take time to plan, set up and then carry out may happen here at Leeds Beckett or students may want to do them in alternative contexts. The autumn and spring offer periods of time to instigate these projects with supervision but also with the possibility for reflection and self-direction.

Full-Time Pathway

CORE Modules

Two core modules will take place in the first semester, one will take place across semester one and two, and the fourth will take place in the third semester.

ELECTIVE modules

Elective modules will take place in all three semesters depending on the student's choice of activity.

Intensive teaching will take place in Sept and Jan to front load and set up modules that then develop into an independent projects (with supervision/mentoring) conducted through Autumn or Spring ie Socially Engaged Practice, Artist as Teacher.

Choreographing in the Expanded Field is exclusively taught in January.

Improvisation is taught exclusively in semester three.

Choreographer's mentor is a project whose timeline is designed by the student in conjunction with the mentor.

Part-Time Pathway

CORE Modules

One core modules (R&D) will take place in the first semester, one will take place across semester one and two (Dramaturgy), the third will take place in the fourth semester ie Sept of second academic year (Commission) semester. The fourth will take place in semester six ie Summer second year (Choreographer's Major Project).

ELECTIVE modules

Students on the Part time pathway may design (with tutor guidance and subject to timetabled availability) where their Elective modules should take place in order to best support the flow and progression of their studies and to fit with other possible professional or personal commitments they have.

Module Format

- **Writing Talking Festival** – this is taught in conjunction student’s independent writing/talking making project. This includes an intensive festival visit (up to a week) - each year the course team will decide which festivals students will visit. There is preparatory teaching before the festival visit. It is intended that this will keep the project up to date with current trends providing students with genuinely cutting edge practice to engage with and that this is then relevant to employability and associated learning. These decisions will in part determine when the module takes place.
- **Choreographer’s Mentor project** – is an independent making project with professional mentoring - each year the course team will assign the mentors and/or an artist in residence to the students project. Each student will autonomously negotiate and tailor their project to meet their personal and professional interests and this includes navigating the projects timeline in relation to mentor’s availability and the student’s wider time management. These considerations will determine when this project is completed.
- **Choreography in the Expanded Field** – is an intensive taught module
- **Socially Engaged Practice** – is taught with an independent making project
- **Improvisation** – is taught with an independent making project.
- **Artist as Teacher** is taught with teaching practice.

Students should expect to manage their programme of study effectively and efficiently. They should expect two formative assessed components for each module.

At level 7 students will be expected to demonstrate maturity and independence in project and time management, in a range of modes of presentation.

NB - All option modules are indicative.

	Semester 1 /4	Core Y/N	Semester 2/5	Core Y/N
	Research & Development (R&D) (PT Semester 1 only)	Y	Dramaturgy (Jan) (PT Semester 2 only)	Y
	Commission (PT Semester 4 only)	Y	Choreography in the Expanded Field (Jan)	N

	Writing Talking Festival	N	Writing Talking Festival	N
	Choreographer's Mentor Project	N	Choreographer's mentor project	N
	Artist as Teacher	N	Artist as Teacher	N
	Socially Engaged Practice	N	Socially Engaged Practice	N
	Semester 3/6			
	Choreographer's Major Project (PT Semester 6 only)	Y		
	Improvisation	N		

NB - All option modules are indicative.

Contained awards available:

PG Cert	Choreography	7
PG Dip	Choreography	7

Length of programme, FT/PT and mode of study:

Programme	Length (years)	FT/PT (please specify)	Mode (campus based/DL or other)
MA Choreography	1	FT	Campus based
MA Choreography	2	PT	Campus based

Learning and Teaching (to include, as a minimum, the following topics)

Learning and Teaching Approaches

The programme seeks to provide:

1. A commitment to fostering a dynamic, active learning environment for students cultivating a creative community of practice, research and collaborative enquiry.

2. A learning climate that, in the spirit of diversity and widening participation, supports and credits different learning styles and students who may be entering postgraduate study through 'non-traditional' routes.

The programme approach to assessment, learning and teaching is informed by the following:

1. A commitment to helping students to develop their own creative practice through negotiated learning, which takes place in the form of 'Learning Agreements'. Learning Agreements are used in some modules on MA Choreography to allow the student to identify how they would like to be assessed in relation to the module learning outcomes. The Learning Agreement is a contract between staff and student that agrees on the mode of assessment, component weightings and assessment criteria.
2. A commitment to the promotion of well-rounded personal and professional development within which individual creative, critical and contextual understanding, technical and professional skills are integrated.
3. A commitment to making research informed teaching and professional practice undertaken by all staff explicit to students.
4. A commitment to enhancing students employability through placement opportunities, guest teaching from industry specialists, the direct collaboration and partnerships with local organisations and students embodied personal professional development.
5. A commitment to exploring new opportunities for innovative subject material and high quality original content embedded in student learning experiences.
6. A quest to direct students to appropriate national and international festivals, venues and platforms for the dissemination and testing out of their emergent performance work and critical dialogue.

A diverse range of modes of assessment in the learning process to provide opportunities for differing learning approaches to achieve and to acknowledge the range of modes of communication in the professional context.

Learning and Teaching Activities

Students who enrol on MA Choreography can expect a variety of engaging learning experiences. Most sessions are studio based with an emphasis on 'learning through doing', and practice led research enquiry. Taught workshops and tutor supported making processes form the main body of studio practice with technical training where appropriate to the module content.

Studio teaching activity takes place in our own studio spaces on Headingley and City Campuses but also in professional organisations Northern Ballet and Yorkshire Dance and Festival contexts, venues and site-specific environments.

Critical discussion and peer and staff formative feedback is embedded in all studio work, seminar-based sessions also provide an opportunity for staff presentations and intensive discussion focussing on module specific content, trends in dance performance, choreography and wider cultural and interdisciplinary practices in a critical depth with staff and external speakers.

The ethos of MA Choreography is one that values Professional Practice, and as such, students should expect teaching and learning activities to occur with professional artists, curators, as well as the programme team in professionally appropriate settings.

Making choreography is a significant part of MA Choreography, and this occurs in a variety of contexts. Students will be expected to make solo, self-authored, group directed and collaborative practice. Students may direct each other, they may work alone, make collaborative choreography, work with a student dramaturg or work with external artists. Receiving and working with critical feedback is built into to all module learning.

The understanding and critical articulation of practice and research is also demonstrated in the processing of ideas in creative practice, making compositions and presentations of performance, but also through portfolios of critical and reflective documentation, presentations, vivas, essays, blogs, digital practices, report and essay writing.

Graduate Attributes

N/A

Use of the Virtual Learning Environment

The Virtual Learning Environment is primarily used by MA Choreography as a repository for information, the submission of assessments, and the distribution of feedback. All modules on MA Choreography will have module handbooks, assessment briefs, reading materials published on MyBeckett as a minimum. Written Feedback will be released to students via Turnitin.

Formal training on VLE is offered to all students on the course in induction.

Although MyBeckett is not actively used as tool for Blended Learning, students are encouraged to engage with other digital platforms as a way of demonstrating their academic development. Blogger and Google Sites may be used for the development of portfolio learning and for more collaborative learning experiences Google Docs and Slides are recommended to students.

In addition to this, MA Choreography works closely with the Academic Librarians in

order to provide training and support for digital research tools such as Dawson Era, Discover, and the E-Journal Catalogue.

Use of Blended Learning

N/A

Student Support Network

If you have a question or a problem relating to your course, your Course Administrator is there to help you. Course Administrators work closely with academic staff and can make referrals to teaching staff or to specialist professional services as appropriate. They can give you a confirmation of attendance letter, and a transcript. You may also like to contact your Course Rep or the Students' Union Advice team for additional support with course-related questions.

If you have any questions about life at our University in general, call into or contact the Student Hub on either campus to speak to our Student Experience Team. This team, consisting of recent graduates and permanent staff, are available to support you throughout your time here. They will make sure you have access to and are aware of the support, specialist services, and opportunities our University provides. There is a Student Hub on the ground floor of the Rose Bowl at City Campus and one in Campus Central at Headingley. You can also find the team in the Gateway in the Leslie Silver Building at City Campus. The telephone number is 0113 812 3000, and the e-mail address is StudentHub@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

Within MyBeckett you will see two tabs (Support and Opportunities) where you can find online information and resources for yourselves. The **Support** tab gives you access to details of services available to give you academic and personal support. These include Library Services, the Students' Union, Money advice, Disability advice and support, Wellbeing, International Student Services and Accommodation. There is also an A-Z of Support Services, and access to online appointments/registration.

The **Opportunities** tab is the place to explore the options you have for jobs, work placements, volunteering, and a wide range of other opportunities. For example, you can find out here how to get help with your CV, prepare for an interview, get a part-time job or voluntary role, take part in an international project, or join societies closer to home.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment on MA Choreography is designed to enable learning to be evaluated for the benefit of the student. The programme provides students with a range of assessment tasks including;

Choreographic making and performance

Portfolios

Viva

Presentations

Continuous Assessment of process or engagement

Report writing

Critical and Creative Documentation

Essays

Research proposal writing/project design

Digital Portfolio of video documentation

An application for a choreographic commission

In some modules students will be required to be autonomous in constructing the shape and content of their submission in order to meet assessment criteria and module learning outcomes. This nurtures student's creative independence and is relevant to professional models of practice.

Learning Agreements are employed following their success in the sister programme MA Performance the precedent here indicates these are a fruitful way of supporting student autonomy and development of really bespoke learning that develops specialism and rigour in focussing assessment that is tailored to the students professional and academic areas of interest. This also supporting Performing Arts ethos of accommodating and facilitating innovative, creative and experimental endeavour in our students. Learning Agreements here allow students to design a project plan and/or their own assessment criteria for a research project (with tutor support and guidance) in e.g., Choreographer's Mentor Project and Choreographer's Major Project.

Feedback on Assessed Coursework

Summative feedback, will often be distributed via Turnitin. Students may also or alternatively receive verbal feedback in one to one Summative feedback tutorials intended to create a bespoke and ongoing conversation between student and tutors about the students professional, academic and artistic development through the programme addressing short and longer term interests and aspirations.

Formative feedback is provided to students on MA Choreography in the form of in class feedback, and also tutorials (module and pastoral) this is highlighted to students in their module and course handbooks.

There might be times when an assessment requires the student to submit work that

is not suitable for digital upload (for example a portfolio, or artist journal). If this is the case then the student will be required to submit their hard copy into the Reception area at Broadcasting Place by the submission date and time.

When work is submitted via Turnitin the student can receive digital online feedback with annotations which they can download.

Module Assessment Methods (core modules only, please tick all which apply)

Module Titles	Essay	Teaching Practice	presentation	portfolio	viva	Continuous Assessment	Choreographic making and performance	Documentation	research proposal/professional application
Research & Development			30%						70%
Commission								70%	30%
Dramaturgy	50%					50%			
Choreographers Major Project				40%			60%		

Employability and Professional Context

This programme is devised in conversation with our colleagues and collaborators at Yorkshire Dance, Leeds Dance Partnership, with directors of international festivals and with smaller local independent organisations. This on-going dialogue ensures the programme is directly in touch with developments in industry and professional contexts. They also provide us with a network of contacts and potential employers who we aim to connect students with in the course of their studies.

These beneficial partnerships allow the Performing Arts department to provide the opportunity for MA students either to work with or to have input from a range of choreographers, curators, programmers and producers on their projects. This

professional contextualisation forms part of the identity of all three cycles on the programme. Firstly in Commission and R&D modules followed by Dramaturgy in the second cycle and. Students elective choices will mostly fall in Autumn or Spring and continue to introduce a range of interactions in Writing Talking Festival, Artist as Teacher, Choreographer's Mentor Project, Choreography in the Expanded Field and Socially Engaged Practice. In the third/final cycle students work with summer in-house mentoring, professional feedback and external performance opportunities on their final Choreographer's Major Project, and in Improvisation module if elected. See Box 30 above for details of some of our regional, national, and international contacts, networks and relationships. Choreographer's Mentor Project provides students with the opportunity to undertake a making process with a professional artist mentor modelled on current industry practice and allowing students access to artists with professional choreographic expertise as well as advice on developing their profile and managing the business aspect e.g.; the fiscal, administrative, and producing aspects of making work professionally to build a sustainable choreographic career. Artist as Teacher feeds directly into building a viable and common income stream for creative practitioners and teaching methods studied here (if selected) aligns students choreographic practice with additional professional output possibilities.

Additional professional workshops, talks and symposia will be made available to students including Performing Arts research seminar series and Thinking Dance Research project activities.

If Students want to make connections between creative practice and pedagogic practice and apply this to education contexts or specific community contexts they can focus their electives and their independent making and research practice in all modules including the Choreographers Major Project towards this end. Similarly students with a special interest in screen-based/digital outputs or in creative producing may tailor the work undertaken to meet continuing professional development goals.

Opportunities exist for students to shadow and collaborate with the existing staff team on selected undergraduate choreography modules. Sometimes MA Choreography students may work with staff in Undergraduate students to develop ideas or research for their Choreographer's Mentor Project, Choreography in the Expanded Field, Socially Engaged Practice, Improvisation, Artist as Teacher, Choreographer's Major Project, Commission Project and Writing Talking Festival. Where possible the staff team will aim to support this continuing professional development.

Work Related Activities

- **Placement or Work Related Activity Level:**
N/A

- **Placement or Work Related Activity Length in Weeks:**
N/A
- **Type of Placement or work related activity:**
N/A

Reference Points used in course design and delivery (standard text provided below)

All our courses leading to Leeds Beckett University awards have been designed and approved in accordance with UK and European quality standards. Our courses utilise the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and where relevant subject benchmarks (where these are available) and professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements (for professionally accredited courses).

We review our courses annually and periodically, responding to student feedback and a range of information to enhance our courses. Our University is also subject to external review by the Quality Assurance Agency. Our latest report can be found on the QAA web site.

We appoint External Examiners to verify that our University sets and maintains standards for awards which adhere to relevant national subject benchmark statements and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (UK), ensure standards and student achievements are comparable with other Higher Education Institutions in the UK, with which they are familiar, and ensure that assessments measure achievement of course and module learning outcomes and reach the required standard. External Examiners may also provide feedback on areas of good practice or potential enhancement.

Staff Teaching on the Course

You can find details of our highly qualified permanent teaching staff on our website, who are involved in teaching, research and administration associated with the course.

Regulatory Exemption details:

With regard to conferment of awards, as set out in Regulation 2.3.14 (specifically 2.3.14.2 and 2.3.14.3) the MA Choreography may confer the award classifications of Distinction (the attainment of an average of 70% or more in assessments contributing to the final award) and Merit (the attainment of an average of 60% or more in assessments contributing to the final award). For details please refer to:

<http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/public-information/academic-regulations/section-2/>