

Central
School
of Ballet

T R A I N I N G

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Central School of Ballet Prospectus

Undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses
for professional dance training



Welcome from Mark Osterfield and Kate Coyne



Central School of Ballet is seeking ambitious young dancers who are aiming to make their mark in the world of dance. We offer dynamic world-leading classical ballet training alongside wider dance tuition to allow you to develop as an artist and dancer, ready to take up a career in the dance industry where you will best thrive.

Join us at the Countess of Wessex Studios, our state-of-the-art facility in London's South Bank arts community, and start your professional degree based training. We are interested in individuals with a desire to understand how to apply our ballet and wider dance training to their unique body, empowering them towards excellence.

Whatever your dance inspiration, we will enable you to develop as a thinking dancer, with the ability to be flexible and responsive to the different choreographic demands and styles of today's dance companies, large and small. We understand that the dance industry is evolving and changing and want to support this by welcoming and training students from a broad range of backgrounds and experience.

We offer a supportive, inclusive environment where you can train body and mind in an integrated way, leaving the school with the dance skills, artistry, and a university education which will underpin your future career as a dancer and beyond. So, if you are curious, passionate about dance, and want to explore the opportunities that the dance industry offers, then Central is the place for you.

We look forward to working with you!

Mark Osterfield
Executive Director

Kate Coyne
Artistic Director and
Professional Training Lead

Central School of Ballet is one of Europe's leading dance training organisations offering professional, degree level training for people aiming for a career, or to progress as a choreographer in the dance industry. Established in 1982 by Ann Stannard the late Christopher Gable, Central was founded on the values of artistic expression in dance and the importance of technique.

Central offers a two year Foundation Degree in Professional Dance and Performance and then students take a further year of training to complete a BA (Hons) Degree. In 2011, Central launched an MA Choreography degree course for professional choreographers to develop their choreographic profile and professional skills. All degree courses are validated by the University of Kent.



A graduate from Central School of Ballet is a valuable asset in any company.

Matthew Bourne, Artistic Director, New Adventures

I can normally spot a Ballet Central student after just a few minutes working in a studio. They are always professional, they understand how 'theatre' works and they engage physically and (most importantly) verbally in the creative process.

Christopher Hampson, Artistic Director, Scottish Ballet

Choosing the right school for professional dance training



Kate Coyne, Central's Artistic Director explains how a close relationship with industry leaders helps to ensure Central's training meets the needs of the dance profession:

There is a clear appetite from our young dancers for training that prepares them to understand how they will need to work in the professional sphere. We aim to train intelligent dancers who can adapt their bodies to the great classical ballets but are also primed to recognise different forms and replicate what is needed by choreographers. This is core to Central's ethos as a world-leading training organisation and the vision of founder Christopher Gable.



Central's undergraduate courses offer students the most comprehensive preparation for a career in the dance profession. New students commence with the two year Foundation Degree and, on successful completion, can progress to the one year BA (Hons) (Top Up) course to achieve the BA (Hons) Degree in Professional Dance and Performance.

Rigorous training is provided by internationally renowned teachers and tutors who have performed with some of the world's leading dance companies, supplemented by workshops delivered by prominent and influential choreographers who are also potential employers. The result is breadth and depth in skills and technique to produce creative artists of the highest calibre with knowledge of classical ballet tradition and an appreciation of new developments in the dance world. Most of the course is highly practical, either studio-based or on stage, supplemented by written work. Students graduate with the skills that are required by employers; a highly developed understanding of choreography and performance, and the ability to convey meaning through dance.



Working with so many guest teachers is such a privilege; everyone has something different to offer and to teach you, even during the Saturday classes, especially career advice and things like that.

Second Year student

We are so supported here, with the Pilates teachers, physiotherapists and psychologists - everything we need is provided by Central and we can always speak to staff. As an international student travelling so far for training, it makes a massive difference.

First Year student



The Countess of Wessex Studios

Central is based in London’s South Bank arts community.

Our bespoke premises are located just 10 minutes from the River Thames and Waterloo Station. Being amongst leading dance companies, famous theatre venues, world-renowned art galleries and concert halls benefits students’ understanding and appreciation of the arts including storytelling and performance.

Our facilities include a fully equipped studio theatre, rehearsal studios, study and resource centres and a bright spacious Green Room exclusively for student use. There is a recording studio and music practice room, a home for the wardrobe department with costume storage, and ample changing facilities and locker spaces. A Health Suite supports the optimum physical and psychological wellbeing of our students with services in strength and conditioning, nutrition, physiotherapy, Pilates, recovery from injury, and mental health.



Students have exclusive use of a bright spacious Green Room.



Foundation Degree in Professional Dance and Performance

New students commence with the Foundation Degree, a predominantly vocational course with a high number of contact hours. Year One provides students with a practical understanding of the fundamentals of Ballet and Contemporary Dance (Graham-based) technique, with supplementary studies in Spanish technique and Choreography work. Year Two provides a practical understanding of the technical skills and artistry required by the profession in Ballet, Contemporary Dance (Cunningham-based) and Jazz technique. The teaching aims for students to use this knowledge in a rehearsal and professional performance situation including solo and group pieces and work for public performance.

A programme of contextual studies underpins the practical dance training. These skills are essential in sustaining a career as a professional dancer. Through regular self-evaluation and goal-setting, students develop into successful reflective practitioners. The work of key practitioners in Ballet and Contemporary dance (from the 19th century to the present day) is woven throughout the course in both practical and theoretical modules and is used to inform stylistic and interpretative differences.

The Foundation Degree is designed to lead directly to the BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Performance. This internationally recognised qualification establishes graduates as having outstanding achievement validated by the University of Kent, a globally respected institution that carries a value above and beyond a dancer's performing career.

→ Find out more information and how to apply online visit centralschoolofballet.co.uk/training/



During class we work as a team. Sports psychologists talk about the athlete-coach relationship, and the importance of this relationship for the development of the athlete. This is imperative in dance too. At Central we nurture a relationship between student, coach and musician to produce a creative working environment that encourages the achievement of individual goals for the student and for their independence.

Chris Hinton-Lewis, Ballet Tutor



For many of the students joining Central is the first time away from their family. There is a team of staff to help them settle in and adjust to vocational training. We work hard to inspire and facilitate their learning so that they can be independent young adults who can voice their opinions and communicate.

Julia Ellis, Ballet Tutor

Throughout second year we encourage our students to trust themselves by using their knowledge and ability to embrace the challenges presented during this demanding but exciting phase of their training.

Linda Moran, Ballet Tutor

BA (Hons) top-up Professional Dance and Performance

The BA (Hons) Degree in Professional Dance and Performance is a full-time, one-year course, designed to offer a programme of study to follow on from Central's Foundation Degree course, or equivalent.

This one year course provides a practical understanding of the technical skills and artistry required by the profession in Ballet, Contemporary and Jazz techniques, with the opportunity to extend the skill base to virtuosic level and provide training in aspects of musical theatre performance.

Throughout the course, and extensively in the National Tour Module by joining Ballet Central, knowledge is used in creative situations working with teachers and external professional practitioners leading to public performance opportunities in a range of contexts, including a national tour of small and mid-scale theatres.

The development of individual talent and unique performance qualities is achieved through the breadth of the curriculum, and, most importantly, the National Tour Module. The preparation and performance of a wide range of repertoire, requiring the practical application of different techniques and styles, alongside variations in artistic and musical interpretation and characterisation, facilitates the development of individual strengths and versatility, leading to the development of the distinctive and unique performing artist. Find out more and how to apply online on Central's website.



I feel well prepared for my third year at Central. In the second year you learn a lot about yourself, your own body. From the start of second year we examine our technique, back to the beginning, to the foundations and then slowly build on that knowledge. I will always be able to look back to this experience and draw on it.

Second Year student

The pas-de-deux training students receive as part of the Classical Module is one of the most important aspects of dance, encouraging coordination, musicality and emotional connection between partners. This is much in demand by choreographers. Perfecting these skills prepares students for the varied Ballet Central repertoire and professional life beyond.

Resmi Malko, Ballet Tutor

The best part of joining Central is that the tutors individualise our training. We are all individuals and not just a group of dance students.

First Year student

Ballet Central

Joining Ballet Central is the highlight of their three year training programme for many of Central’s students.

Successful completion of the Foundation Degree course allows students to take the final year course that leads to the BA (Hons) Degree qualification. A large part of this final year is the touring experience, performing to ticket-buying audiences gained through the Ballet Central company, a unique facet of the professional training offered by Central.

Ballet Central presents a broad repertoire by working with distinguished choreographers, who often create new work especially for this young touring company. Choreographers that have recently supported Ballet Central include Matthew Bourne of New Adventures (the Fairies Prologue from his gothic-reworking of Sleeping Beauty); the multi award-winning choreographer and director Wayne McGregor (excerpt from

FAR); Kenneth MacMillan (an excerpt from his rarely-seen 1983 ballet Valley of Shadows inspired by Georgio Bassani’s haunting novel The Garden of the Finzi-Continis); and Christopher Bruce (the innovative Mya).

Working with different choreographers on a varied repertoire to a deadline and then performing in a range of venues provides Central’s third year students with extraordinary experience of the professional dance world. This experience and the skills and technique gained equip Central’s students with the versatility and maturity to help support employment.



The highlight for me in 3rd year was working with original cast members from Kenneth MacMillan’s Valley of Shadows. This piece helped me to find a more human, natural kind of movement in ballet. The experience really opened my mind and allowed me to think differently about my dancing.
Third Year student

Ballet Central creates dancers with really open minds, and I think this is really important in our careers. A lot of the auditioning companies and choreographers are looking for open-minded dancers, and Ballet Central definitely trains dancers with this perspective.
Third Year student

In the third year, students continue to master their craft in terms of technical accuracy and are guided to develop sophisticated artistic and musical qualities. The dancers are provided with regular professional rehearsal and performance experiences throughout the year to facilitate growth as individual performers in the build-up to the national Ballet Central tour.
James Butcher, Ballet Tutor

The application process

Applying to Central is managed through the website. Choose the auditions page and select either in person or video auditions and you will find a straightforward stepped process to follow.

Auditions are managed both online and in-person. You can choose the route that best suits your situation and get detailed guidance on what Central's tutors are looking for in successful applicants.

There are both in-person and online Open Days available throughout the year to help understand the benefits of training at Central and the employment opportunities on graduation. Find how to book online.

Dance Days, courses designed to provide a series of sample or taster classes to support dancers' current training and information about life in a professional dance school, are scheduled during the applications period. Aimed at young dancers aged 11-16, Dance Days also inform future applicants how to access full-time vocational training at Central School of Ballet. More details are available online.



Funding and Bursaries

On the Fees and Funding page you can find out how to apply for a student loan from the UK Government to cover tuition fees. Approved loans are paid directly to Central, and UK students can also apply for a maintenance loan to cover living costs while training. It's important to note that you start repaying once you are in employment and earn over a certain amount.

The size of your monthly repayments depend on how much you earn, not on how much you owe.

Selected bursaries are available from Central on a means-tested basis for assistance with living costs. More information is available online.

There is guidance on all requirements and everything you need to know to complete an application online. Here you can also download the course summary for each degree course and find out about student life, living in London as a student and our graduate success stories.

International applicants

Central is proud to welcome students from all over the world. Applicants who live outside of the UK and not able to attend an in person audition are encouraged to submit a video audition. More information for international students is also available in the downloadable Course Summary in the Training pages online.

Tuition fees for international applicants are detailed in the Tuition fees section online. Successful applicants who live outside the UK may be required to obtain a Student Visa to study at Central School of Ballet. Prospective students are encouraged to view the UK Government website about studying in the UK for the most up-to-date visa guidance and information. Here you can find out about how you may need to prove your knowledge of the English language when you apply.

→ Find out more Information and how to apply online visit centralschoolofballet.co.uk/training/

MA Choreography



Charlotte Edmonds, MA Graduate 2021

Established in 2011, Central’s MA Choreography course is designed for professional choreographers who wish to develop their choreographic profile and professional skills. The course has been specifically developed for its flexibility, allowing students to develop critical reflection and research linked to the making of choreography while continuing to work as either a freelance dance practitioner or a dance company member.

The focus of the MA course is choreography and research and involves the development and refinement of prepared material for studio or theatre-based performance. The course is unique in providing a specialisation in ballet, although there is scope within the course for both past and current practices to be redefined, expanded, and developed. Students are given the opportunity to investigate the process of choreography by interrogating, identifying, developing, and modifying their existing skills.

On successful completion of the MA, graduates will have had an opportunity to develop their own creative and artistic voice and will have increased their choreographic portfolio. Many of our students have gone on to further develop their careers within the dance profession, taking up leadership roles and contributing to the artistic development of UK and international dance companies. Find out more and how to apply online, visit Central’s Training pages.

Graduates will have had an opportunity to develop their own creative and artistic voice.



Dane Hurst, MA Graduate 2014

→ Find out more information and how to apply for the MA course online visit centralschoolofballet.co.uk/training/

The focus of the MA course is choreography and research and involves the development and refinement of prepared material for studio or theatre-based performance.



Graduate employment: the next steps after training

Central's graduates find employment in contracts, apprenticeships, and full-time jobs in a variety of leading international dance companies and in musical theatre productions. Some of the recent destinations include:

Matthew Bourne's New Adventures
Scottish Ballet
Birmingham Royal Ballet
Nederlands Dans Theater
English National Ballet
Northern Ballet
Rambert
Ballet Black
Phantom of the Opera,
West End and Worldwide
Milwaukee Ballet, USA
Singapore Dance Theatre
Sarasota Ballet, USA
K-Ballet, Japan
Orlando Ballet, USA
Arts Ballet Theatre of Florida, USA
New English Ballet Theatre



The training at Central exposes you to so many different possible avenues for a career and they really nurture your talent. It was at Central that I discovered my passion for choreography and look forward to developing this further following graduation.
Third Year student



Health and Wellbeing

Central provides a holistic approach to training, with a focus on physical, psychological, emotional development and overall wellbeing.

Dancers at Central will achieve a level of fitness similar to elite athletes by the end of the three year degree. To achieve optimal performance, each dancer needs to maintain a balance of healthy body and mind. Students have open access to a comprehensive range of support services and staff to achieve this goal:

- Physiotherapist
- Pilates Instructor
- Nutritionist
- Performance Psychologist
- Injury Prevention & Recovery Team



Accommodation

While Central School of Ballet does not operate any accommodation of its own, we provide students with information on suitable housing before the start of the academic year.

Central's location, close to the transport hub of Waterloo station, allows students to live in locations across the capital with easy access to the studios through tube, rail and by bus. Find out more online. Visit the website for more information about accommodation options and speak with the Administration Office for suggestions. Note that fees vary, and we recommend early booking to secure a preferred location.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

Central School of Ballet recognises that some individuals and communities in our society face obstacles and experience unfair disadvantage.

In line with our vision to be an institution which supports an increasingly diverse, innovative and internationally recognised culture of dance in the UK, we are committed to finding ways to address these barriers where we can. We encourage applications to our Higher Education courses from individuals with the talent, potential and dedication to develop the skills required for a professional career in dance regardless of their background.

We are committed to addressing issues of under-representation in ballet and Higher Education. To achieve this, we identify and target prospective, talented students from groups that are currently under-represented, particularly including students from low income backgrounds, from postcodes where participation in Higher Education is low and from those in under-represented ethnic backgrounds.

Central is an independent training organisation and registered charity.

From 9 June 2022 Central joined the registered Office for Students English higher education providers. From 1 August 2022 all undergraduate and postgraduate students studying at Central will be registered with Central School of Ballet rather than the Conservatoire of Dance and Drama. All degree courses will continue to be validated by the University of Kent and this change will have minimal impact on Central's training and the student experience.

This path towards greater autonomy and independence will allow the school to respond dynamically to the changing needs of the dance world, as well as engage in new partnerships and activities locally, nationally and internationally.

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