


Northern School of
Contemporary Dance

Recruitment Pack: **HEAD OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES**

June 2024



“An inspirational learning experience, from first contact through into the profession, enabling aspiring dance artists and professionals, regardless of background, to shape the future of dance”



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INTRODUCTION

Established in 1985, Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD) is a leading centre for contemporary dance, internationally recognised for the quality of its education and training. Based in Leeds and funded by the Office for Students (OfS), NSCD provides the only such Conservatoire-level Higher Education and training in contemporary dance in England outside London. NSCD is committed to raising the profile of Leeds as a City of Dance and played its part in making the Leeds 2023 Year of Culture a success.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO & PRINCIPAL

Welcome to NSCD, a space where creativity thrives and is celebrated, and the art of dance is passionately embraced. NSCD is a distinguished institution at the forefront of dance education in the UK. Embodying a vibrant and creative culture, our institution stands out as a beacon of artistic exploration. We foster an environment where both staff and students are encouraged to explore the realms of art and the broader world.

Knowing the pivotal role our students play in the ecology of dance, we understand that their time spent with us is an incubation space for their growth and creative evolution. Our students, characterised by their expressive individuality, engage with dance intelligently and sensitively. They possess the ability to think independently, placing immense value on original thought and diversity.

As a member of our management team your contribution will be instrumental in shaping the growth and development of our students. Your role is integral to cultivating an environment that nurtures their artistic potential. We eagerly anticipate the addition of the right individual to our team, someone who shares our passion for dance education and is ready to contribute significantly to the journey of our students.

Sharon Watson MBE DL
CEO & Principal





VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Vision

A world-leading centre for dance education and creative development

Mission

To provide an inspirational learning experience, from first contact through into the profession, enabling aspiring dance artists, and dance professionals, regardless of their background, to shape the future of dance.

- Through diverse educational programmes, we want the student experience to be transformative and person-centred, where we cultivate an environment of mutual respect and inclusion for all.
- We want to send well-prepared graduates into the industry who can embrace change and difference and enhance the vibrant cultural landscape.
- Our vision is underpinned by our core values which reflect equity and inclusion, from first contact to the excellence of our educational provision, to the support we provide our graduates and their professional development in the years ahead.
- Through work of exceptional merit and highest professional standards, we develop graduates who actively seek collaboration with others.
- We want to encourage and celebrate a student body that engages in knowledge exchange and works collaboratively to develop a challenging body of work that is empowering and provides creative solutions.
- Through the art form and with a dedication to social justice we invest in the future of our creative and cultural society, encouraging an openness and playfulness in artistic discourse that impacts purposefully on individuals, organisations, and society, globally.
- Our approach to pedagogy aspires to harness and nurture creative and academic excellence. Innovation and curiosity sit at the heart of all that we do and through all the support and care we give.

See nscd.ac.uk/strategic-plan for more information about our plans.

OUR MARKETING FOCUS

This dynamic team supports the following strands of the School's business:

- Higher Education course recruitment
- HE Student projects and performances
- Learning and Participation (community dance for children, young people and adults)
- Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) Programme
- Riley Theatre programme
- VERVE dance company and tour
- Artist development
- Children and Young People's Dance Network North
- Staff artistic projects and research
- Alumni relations
- Conferences and events
- Staff recruitment

OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

Highly regarded by the Office for Students (OfS), NSCD was awarded Silver overall in the latest Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and received a rating of Gold for Student Experience.

We provide courses at CertHE, Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels including:

- 1 Year Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) in Contemporary Dance
- 1 Year Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) in Cultural Dance Forms
- BA (Hons) Dance (Contemporary)
- MA Contemporary Dance Performance (VERVE Touring Company or Professional Placement Scheme pathways)
- MA Dance & Creative Enterprise
- MA Interdisciplinary Dance Performance
- MA Dance Teaching & Facilitating

OUR CREATIVE PROGRAMME

Home to Riley Theatre, Yorkshire's largest dedicated dance house, NSCD is a dynamic creative hub, programming performances of ground-breaking work from innovative UK and international artists. An estimated 10,000 people attend our performances each year. Recognised by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, the institution makes a significant contribution to both talent and art form development. VERVE, NSCD's postgraduate company, tours specially-commissioned works, and through its far-reaching participation programmes NSCD inspires more than 2,500 people of all ages and abilities, nurturing talented young dancers across Yorkshire.

"Residents of the city benefit highly from the excellent learning and participation activities." Ofsted: Outstanding



RESEARCH AT NSCD

We are committed to providing a supportive environment for artists and teachers to explore practice as research and education action research and provide suitable platforms or networks to share their work. We ensure that the new knowledge generated has maximum impact by reaching the widest possible audiences, delivering important reputational benefits and clearly demonstrating the quality and value of our arts practice to potential partners. We also encourage staff to engage in research and/or scholarship that supports the development of future artists and the art form. For the last three years, NSCD has curated an annual Knowledge Exchange Conference.

OUR STUDENTS

At NSCD we stimulate a lifelong thirst for knowledge and learning, encouraging a curious, pioneering, innovative and independent attitude and an aspiration to achieve success. Diversity is at the heart of NSCD, and the institution has a reputation for blazing a trail amongst the UK conservatoires. Around 279 students are enrolled at NSCD each year, of which 20% are PoGM (People of the Global Majority), 33% have a disability and 67% are from a low-income household.

OUR ALUMNI

NSCD believes that the distinctive mix of excellence, innovation, boldness and entrepreneurial spirit that defines its alumni is creating new definitions of what it means to be an artist in the 21st century. Our alumni include some of the leading dance artists in Europe.

Carlos Pons Guerra, Choreographer and Director of DeNada Dance Theatre - nominated for Best Emerging Artist (2015) and Best Independent Company (2016) at the UK Critics' Circle National Dance Awards.

Tamsin Fitzgerald, Artistic Director of 2Faced Dance Company – winner of the Jerwood Choreographic Research Prize (2013) and founder of THE BENCH, the first UK platform representing women in dance.

Gary Clarke, regarded as one of the UK's leading independent dance artists, has won multiple awards. Originally from a small mining village in Yorkshire, Gary was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by NSCD in 2017. He is also a Governor of the School.

Akram Khan MBE, Artistic Director and Choreographer – winner of two Laurence Olivier Awards, Akram has also won UK Critics' Circle National Dance Awards 8 times. One of the UK's most celebrated and respected dance artists, Akram is proud of his NSCD connections.

“NSCD is where I developed my artistic voice, importantly through my exposure to world-class professional dance artists in public performance. This opportunity to see international performers in Leeds, on my doorstep, was invaluable to me.” - Akram Khan





THE ORGANISATION - STAFFING AND STRUCTURE

NSCD employs 60 staff members. The Chief Executive and Principal is supported by a Personal Assistant and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The Vice Principal and the Chief Operating Officer & Director of Finances both report to the Principal.

Our current organisational structure can be found here nscd.ac.uk/structure

FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The School has a total income of approximately £3.5M per annum, of which almost £3.0M is generated from undergraduate and postgraduate courses, mainly from regulated tuition fees and grants for our UK students, with the remainder from international students and independent fee payers. As a registered Higher Education Provider, the regulated funding is received from the Office for Students (OfS). Our Annual Report and Accounts can be found here nscd.ac.uk/governance.

NSCD also receives £200K of funding from the Department of Education for its Centre for Advanced Training scheme and has previously received funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency. In addition, the School has since 2018 received a core grant from Arts Council England of £150K per annum as a result of gaining National Portfolio (NPO) status. Finally, the School receives around £100K from other commercial activities such as theatre box office, studio lettings, weekly classes and short courses.

One of the School's key financial objectives is to increase the overall level of tuition fee income, in expectation that key grant funding from the OfS may be removed or reduced in the near future. This includes significant expansion of the education provision via the introduction of new courses which will increase the number of undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as continuing with further internationalisation. In 2024 the School began the process of applying for full degree awarding powers. Ongoing effective and efficient management of resources and expenditure is achieved by careful cost control and embracing value for money principles, ensuring that the maximum possible level of resource is made available for the School's educational, artistic and participatory activities. Finally, the delivery of expanded facilities, in the form of new premises, will require the generation of substantial funding from public bodies, foundations and other partners as well as using earmarked reserves and raising significant levels of commercial lending.



MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRINCIPAL

This is an exciting period in NSCD's journey as we look forward to awarding our own degrees and forge collaborative partnerships with like-minded small specialist institutions. The support provided by the Head of Undergraduate Studies will enhance the positivity, focus and specific context for development within the school during this time. I am excited to be able to welcome colleagues who will support our ambition to become world-leading and help achieve common goals for the institution. I envisage the growth of this team to include complementary skills and expertise that will support ongoing change, building upon the excellence we have in terms of academic experience, providing resources, support and student engagement which is second to none. There is opportunity to build upon a real future-facing curriculum and delivery which continues to enable our students to achieve the very best outcomes and to continue to receive amazing endorsement by the sector. By supporting each other, we can leverage individual strengths to address the diverse needs of the School. This role has considerable oversight delegated by the leadership team to focus on promoting the success and well-being of the students. By supporting myself and colleagues, this role will create an environment that fosters academic excellence and artistic growth for the students.

Darren Carr
Vice Principal



JOB DESCRIPTION

Post	Head of Undergraduate Studies
Contract	Full-time or 0.8 FTE (on-site)
Reporting to	Director of Studies
Other working relationships	Vice Principal, Head of Postgraduate Studies, Curriculum Lead roles, Student Support & Wellbeing Manager, Teaching staff, Academic, Administrative and Student Support staff, CEO & Principal and Director of Finance and Resources.

Purpose of this role

Northern School of Contemporary Dance is a leading centre for contemporary dance in the UK. It's teaching and learning is focused on preparing the next generation of dancers for the ever-shifting demands of the contemporary dance profession.

As a member of the management team, the post holder will be a key support to the Director of Studies, Vice Principal and Head of Postgraduate Studies, providing advice and contributing towards the strategic direction, academic policy making and development and delivery of NSCD's academic and vocational objectives. The post holder will support and utilise NSCD strong effective performance measurement and management systems in the areas of their responsibility to support our conditions of registration which focus upon excellence of academic experience, development of and effective and efficient use of resources, positive student engagement, leading to the very best student outcomes.

The post of Head of Undergraduate Studies is a key role in the School's planning and management of the academic portfolio and as such the postholder will work closely with the Head of Postgraduate Studies, the Director of Studies and the Vice Principal who has oversight of these areas and other members of the management and leadership team as appropriate.

The role will work with colleagues to coordinate and contribute to the planning, development, and delivery of an inspiring Higher Education curriculum within a Conservatoire setting. The post holder will work with the Head of Postgraduate Faculty and curriculum leads in the administration of modules, in ensuring currency of the curriculum and in leading development in the teaching of contemporary dancers, choreographers, producers and teachers. The role will actively contribute to course promotion and student recruitment.

Expertise within the Faculty covers a wide range of techniques, styles, performance and professional experience. We are currently looking to appoint a member of staff into this role either full-time or 0.8 FTE by negotiation. NSCD provides teaching throughout all 12 months, and the working pattern may need to reflect this.

The postholder will:

- Provide effective leadership within the undergraduate studies faculty by way of implementing the leadership strategy, policy and decision making and management of academic undergraduate programmes across the school.
- Feed into the establishment, maintenance and evaluation of effective and efficient policies to support and enhance academic standards and learning and teaching across the school.
- Provide effective leadership on the initiation of new academic developments.
- Support the quality assurance mechanisms and reporting
- Manage the Undergraduate student voice and sit on various committees which feed into the academic overview of the core business of the school

This role would also feed into teaching (up to 0.1 FTE), and we are interested in staff with expertise in at least one of the following areas:

- Education Action Research or practice-based dance research
- Dance technique(s) relevant to contemporary dancers
- Dance teaching, inclusive creative practice
- Arts project management and fundraising for the arts

At NSCD we emphasise the importance of situating embodied experience within its cultural context and therefore we are looking for applicants that work with an awareness of how our practices relate to cultural, political and sociological issues; and be able to work with diversity and inclusion at the forefront of their professional practice. We are particularly interested in applicants from under-represented groups.

DUTIES

Management

- Has responsibility, on behalf of Director of Studies and leadership team, for the management and co-ordination of academic planning for taught provision within the faculty. This will include staff development and the forward-thinking strategic direction of the academic provision of the school and the student experience.
- To support the validation and quality assurance aspects of the courses, maintaining all of the definitive paperwork e.g. programme and modules specifications, ensuring these are current and up to date. Prepare and submit new courses for review and validation.
- Play a key role alongside the admissions and marketing team in relation to the administration and delivery of our activities and recruitment processes. Before the start of the recruitment cycle, ensure that all representation of UG programmes is accurate, e.g. that information within the course fact files and bursaries etc. is clear and process for application is transparent. Work with and support the marketing team to ensure that student work is shared and represented well once applicants are on the programme.
- Support academic and quality management evaluation of the student experience as a key author in the school's Annual Monitoring Process including monitoring and analysing retention, attainment and progression of undergraduate student outcomes. This will include monitoring and responding to Student voice and disseminate action taken in relation to student voice and consultation.
- Chair or co-chair one or more of the following committees: Access and Participation committee, Admissions and recruitment sub-committee, Ethics committee, Learning, Teaching and Quality Assurance committee, building an agenda to support the school to achieve its quality assurance in these areas. Contribute to the development, management and enhancement of retention and widening participation strategies.
- Work closely with the academic administrator to deliver contracts, plan and work closely with industry professionals to commission resources for curriculum delivery e.g. guest artists, teachers and choreographers. Supervise the day-to-day administration of teaching and conduct bi-annual peer observation of some teaching staff.
- In conjunction with subject teams promote and maximise the potential for shared teaching and resourcing across Faculties. This will include applying appropriate changes and modification to the timetable and ensuring other protocols are adhered to across the faculty.
- Be responsible for the effective timetabling of the Undergraduate provision of the school including teaching allocations and monitoring against the School's workload allocation model.
- To line manage Curriculum Leads and support the line management of academic staff and their appraisals.
- Be a budget holder for the undergraduate resource provision of the School.

Academic Management

- To plan, prepare and deliver where appropriate into modules in line with NSCD's current Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy, Academic Framework, and quality requirements. Be responsible for ensuring a high standard of subject discipline within the faculty and working with Curriculum Leads and Programme Teams to ensure that dance and related subjects have industry readiness and currency in their taught and learned application at the School, reflecting its status as a world-leading small specialist provider.
- Be familiar with and support the academic team's understanding and influence of key documents in our work, including The QAA Quality code/Frameworks Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)/Subject Benchmark statements.
- To support colleagues with the development of students' technical and performance skills and abilities.
- To support colleagues and have oversight of the production of teaching materials informed by current research and/or advanced scholarly practice that motivates and inspires student learning through their development of knowledge and experience, and provide academic support and guidance for students, offering professional industry-relevant mentoring and support.
- Where appropriate mark and assess assignments and practical assessments and provide timely and constructive feedback to students.
- To oversee planning of undergraduate student performances and assessment including overseeing the allocation of resources to these projects.
- Under the guidance of the Director of Studies, lead on appropriate use of technology to support learning and teaching, e.g. NSCD's Virtual Learning Environment.

Student Support

- Work with Academic registry and other programme team members in planning and organising arrangements for the recruitment, admission and induction of students. This should include what student orientation will be for overseas students entering the UG programme(s).
- In liaison with programme teams, ensures that all students within the Faculty are appropriately supported within the Academic Tutorial System and have access to academic guidance and support
- Working with Academic Registry and the well-being team, support the process of a student engagement panel as part of our 'Supporting Students through Studies' policy
- Support the process of student complaints where necessary.

Liaison

- Work with the Student Well-being Manager to contribute relevant observations and information to staff and/or put systems in place to offer pastoral care and ensure student safety and well-being.
- Liaise with external stakeholders, partners and the industry.

Quality Monitoring and Enhancement

- Oversee and monitor that all academic staff are following policy and procedure around teaching, learning, assessment and feedback to students as outlined by NSCD's academic framework.
- Review and respond to all performance data relating to the modules (including module evaluations and student experience), responding to student feedback, and take action on this.
- Contribute to NSCD's research ambitions and participate in ongoing professional development and evaluation of practice relating to learning, teaching and assessment. Changes in subject/discipline, pedagogic development, innovation in learning technologies and advancement of artistic practice, in line with qualifications and experience.
- Undertake and participate in the improvement of teaching through the School's bi-annual observation and peer review schemes.
- Support the Vice Principal in Quality Assurance preparation including periodic programme reviews and QAA Quality standards reviews.
- Review and contribute to data returns and annual monitoring processes.

Operational Management

- Follow the School's Code of Practice in matters such as Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities, Data Protection and Safeguarding.
- Act as a member of the management team and be always representative as such to support the decision making and implementation of decisions processes.
- Undertake any other relevant duties as may reasonably be required.
- Work towards the values of the School in its ambitions of inclusion and equality.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person specification describes the skills, experience, knowledge and aptitude required to perform the duties of this post effectively. The criteria order listed should not be taken to imply their relative importance. Paid and unpaid experience may both be relevant.

Education	Essential	Desirable
Professional arts training to postgraduate level and/or equivalent professional experience.	✓	
Relevant Master's degree or PhD Qualification.	✓	
Possession of an approved teaching qualification in Higher Education (PGCE or PG Cert) or equivalent/a willingness to complete one in service.	✓	
Proven track record of working as a dance artist or other relevant professional experience within the dance sector.		✓
Understanding and evidence of research profile.		✓
Experience		
Experience in an academic leadership role, with a good understanding of education and research and the ability to engage others in that vision.	✓	
An understanding of the demands of high-level Higher Education provision combined with a desire to develop vocational arts education to the highest level.	✓	
Strong communication skills with the ability to build and maintain effective and productive working relationships internally and externally.	✓	
A proven commitment to creating an environment for staff and students to thrive, that is inclusive, promotes equality and supports diversity.	✓	
Ability to prioritise and delegate appropriately, to provide and respond to constructive feedback, monitoring and addressing performance, and building trust and teamwork.	✓	
Good understanding of the importance of delivering results through effectively managing people, finances, and other resources to achieve these.		
Demonstrable experience of contributing to the development of a supportive and compassionate environment for staff; sound leadership ability and understanding of matrix relationships.	✓	
Commitment to the effective development of colleagues and provision of support and mentoring for academic staff at all career stages.	✓	
Credibility gained from knowledge and experience in a cognate academic area of the faculty, an understanding of departmental interdependencies and the ability to represent the department at Faculty level.	✓	

Shares NSCD's ways of working collaboratively, sustainably and with practical understanding of EDI and models this in their attitude and behaviour.	✓	
Ensures that the organisational values of NSCD are demonstrated by self and others every day and that any matters of concern are addressed in a timely way, either directly; or raised with the relevant Line Manager; or through the relevant processes within NSCD as appropriate.	✓	
Strong analytical capability, with the ability to understand, assess and distil complex strategic, financial, and operational data to enable informed strategic decision-making in the academic provision.	✓	
Ability to deliver curriculum in one of the named curriculum areas up to postgraduate level, through up-to-date informed knowledge and experience of teaching with safe practice.	✓	
Ability to carry out risk assessments, related to external venues/projects.	✓	
Professional performance or related experience.		✓
Rehearsal, production and touring experience.		✓
Continued involvement with professional dance.		✓
Teaching teachers within a professional development context i.e. contributing to the delivery of a teaching qualification.		✓
Knowledge and understanding of the demands of a vocational or conservatoire environment.		✓
Some knowledge and understanding of the HE policy, funding and regulatory landscape.		✓
Skills		
Demonstrate an ability to think and plan strategically, articulate priorities and imperatives, and contribute to the delivery of change	✓	
Ability to think creatively and willingness to suggest new and creative approaches to problems	✓	
Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to assimilate, summarise and convey complex information, which is accurate and concise, and tailored to meet the needs of different audiences and a multitude of purposes.	✓	
Ability to work empathetically with young people at a formative stage in their professional development to nurture their individual technical and performance talents.	✓	
Evidence of how research/practice has been used to enhance the student experience.	✓	
Excellent record of collaboration and an ability to work with others in a HE environment.	✓	

Excellent organisational and administrative skills, including use of IT.	✓	
Ability to network and connect with individuals from the sector.	✓	
Understanding of either educational action research or practice research paradigm.	✓	
Personal Attributes		
Ambition to aim for the highest standards, and to work flexibly and with dedication to assure they are achieved.	✓	
Commitment to developing students' ability to apply critical and reflective thinking to their studies.	✓	
An effective problem-solver, with a proactive, solutions- focused approach.	✓	
Willingness to work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends where required.	✓	
Willingness and enthusiasm to work inclusively and strategically as part of a small and diverse management team.	✓	
A willingness to be part of an enthusiastic teaching and creative team, respecting the skills and contributions of others.	✓	
Affinity with the education and training ethos of NSCD and its culture and values.	✓	
Enthusiasm to contribute to related areas of study.		✓
A willingness to undertake dance and/or pedagogy-related research.		✓
Safeguarding		
Have proven knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications, and any other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with students and vulnerable adults.	✓	

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Full terms and conditions of employment will be supplied to the successful candidate, but in brief these are:

Place of employment	NSCD, 98 Chapeltown Road, Leeds, LS7 4BH Occasional travel may be required
Hours	37 hours per week (full-time) or 30 hours (0.8 FTE)
Remuneration	£42,512- £47,856 (full-time) or £34,010 - £38,285 (pro rata)
Contract	Permanent
Probation	10 months
Leave entitlement	35 days plus 8 bank holidays and up to 3 discretionary days between Christmas and New Year
Notice period	4 months on either side
Pension	Teachers' Pension Scheme or West Yorkshire Pension Scheme
Other benefits	Staff training and development opportunities, free or reduced-price tickets for performances

Equal Opportunities

The school is committed to providing a non-discriminatory and harassment-free working environment for our employees. All School employees are expected to have due regard for those policies when carrying out their duties.

Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

NSCD believes that diversity and a diverse workforce is critical to its future development. As an equal opportunities employer we actively encourage interest from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, age, race, cultural background, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief.

Safeguarding

NSCD follows Safeguarding provision and all staff require a full DBS check. NSCD is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

Health and Safety

All employees will maintain a positive attitude to Health and Safety in carrying out personal responsibilities and co-operate with Health and Safety policy/local rules/codes of practice relating to Health and Safety.

Environment and Sustainability

NSCD recognizes and is aware of its Social, Economic and Environmental responsibility, the postholder is required to minimize environmental impact in the performance of the role and actively contribute to the delivery of NSCD's Environmental and Sustainability Policy.



HOW TO APPLY

[Click here](#) to download an application form.

Please send a completed application form to Geraldine McDowall, HR Manager via email at geraldine.mcdowall@nscd.ac.uk and complete an equal opportunities form online [here](#).

For any queries, please contact Geraldine McDowall, HR Manager on 0113 219 3046 or via email geraldine.mcdowall@nscd.ac.uk

Unaccompanied CVs will not be considered.

Northern School of Contemporary Dance is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and vulnerable adults and requires all staff to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work. The School is an Equal Opportunities Employer and welcomes applications from suitably qualified people from all sections of the community.

SCHEDULE

Applications must be received no later than **12 noon on Friday 16 August 2024**.

Interviews for shortlisted candidates will take place at the School during week commencing 9 September 2024.

If you foresee any difficulties attending an interview during that week, please let us know in your covering letter.