



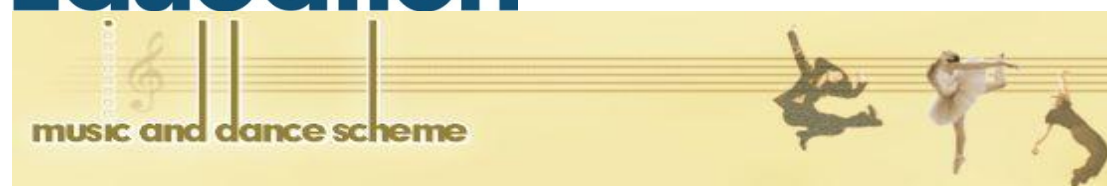
Centre for Advanced Training for South Asian and Contemporary Dance

Information Pack



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Department for
Education



Introduction

What is a Centre for Advanced Training?

Centres for Advanced Training (CATs) are organisations (or consortia of organisations) that provide children and young people with local access to the best advanced dance training and strong links with the music and dance profession. They ensure that children who are talented and committed dancers and musicians have appropriate, tailor-made, specialist provision.

The Centre for South Asian and Contemporary Dance partnership is led by DanceXchange (National Dance Agency for Birmingham and the West Midlands) and sampad South Asian Arts, supported by a Steering Group consisting of the city's leading dance organisations – Birmingham Royal Ballet, Elmhurst School for Dance, Birmingham City Council and Arts Council England, West Midlands.

The CAT has been designed for students aged between 11 and 16 who show exceptional talent and potential in Contemporary or South Asian styles. They attend the programme alongside their formal education – with means-tested financial support from the Music and Dance Scheme to help them do so. The Department for Education, Music and Dance Scheme supports the CAT and is unique to the West Midlands in its focus on South Asian Dance.

Other dance CATs have been in existence since 2004, helping to develop young dancers (many of whom have gone onto attend vocational dance school) – and more CATs will be developed across the country in years to come. If you would like to learn more about the scheme or find out where the other centres are situated you can visit the Department for Education and/or National CAT website (see page 14).

This information pack is designed to give you an insight into the training offered and the level of commitment required from students.

Who is the training aimed at?

The CAT is open to all young people aged between 11 and 16 years old, though a student can continue to train with us up to the age of 18 years old. The young dancers on the CAT programme display commitment and potential to pursue a career in dance. As places are limited on the programme we are looking for dancers who demonstrate exceptional ability or raw talent, if students have had limited experience of dance training this does not exclude them from auditioning to join.

The centre has the support of the **Music and Dance Scheme**, funded by the **Department for Education**, the scheme offers means-tested grants to cover each year's training fee according to their family's income. There is further information regarding the fees and means tested grants in the **Financial Support Information Sheet**, which can be downloaded from the website.

Course Content,

The CAT focuses on two different strands: Contemporary dance, which nurtures students from across the West Midlands; and South Asian dance (both Kathak and Bharatanatyam), which nurtures students from across the country.

Whilst each strand generally operates very differently (see below), each individual student has the same level of financial investment through the course (though the amount of means-tested grant to help pay for the course fee may differ from student to student, based on household income).

Accessibility

The CAT programme strives to provide high quality and accessible dance training opportunities for talented young dancers. Although entry onto the programme is through an auditions process we consider the potential of each applicant regardless of their previous experience:

- If you have any specific requirements this does not exclude you from applying to the programme. We aim to make both the programme as accessible as possible. Please contact to discuss any support you might need.
- Please also note this Information Pack, the Audition Application Form and Financial Information Sheet can be made available in alternative formats.

Please contact catinfo@dancexchange.org.uk or 0121 689 10996/3079 for more details.

CAT Training Strands

Contemporary Dance Training

The Contemporary Strand aims to nurture dance students who are technically proficient and articulate in their performance skills and who are knowledgeable, creative, responsive and versatile. Exceptional talent and potential will also be recognised, for example if someone does not have previous experience of learning either of these styles of dance. When graduating from the programme, students should be suitably equipped to access vocational training – and then ultimately perform either as part of a company or their own work.



*Image: CAT workshop at DanceXchange
Photographer: Tim Cross*

The Contemporary strand predominantly operates on Sundays during term time, with activities taking place at DanceXchange studios (within the Birmingham Hippodrome).

Each Sunday consists of classes and workshops other various tutors focusing on technique, followed by work with the Contemporary Subject Leader (including creative work and tutorials). In addition, students have the opportunity to work with a variety of guest tutors; past examples include Jasmin Vardimon Company, Hofesh Shechter Company, and Tamsin Fitzgerald of 2faced Dance Company. Our aim is to balance technical training with creative activities. Students focus on ballet and contemporary technique, performance enhancement, physical development and body conditioning, development of creativity and dance appreciation.

In addition to the weekly activities, students are expected to participate in summer intensive courses and special projects. These provide an opportunity for students to work with their peers in the South Asian strand and study other forms of dance and complementary techniques to develop their creative skills.

South Asian Dance Training

The South Asian strand aims to nurture students who are technically competent and articulate in their performance of Bharatanatyam or Kathak dance styles. Exceptional talent and potential will also be recognised, for example where someone does not have previous experience of learning either of these styles of dance. The training aims to extend dance vocabulary, sharpen technique and develop understanding of choreography, musicality and performance skills.

The CAT builds on existing classical training provided by tutors based within the locality of the student. Local tutors and the Subject Leaders create and develop a partnership which encourages communication throughout the student's time on the course. Each tutor is sent a *Home Tutor Induction Pack* and is contacted at least two weeks before each intensive to discuss the development of his/her student. The home tutor is again briefed after each intensive updating them on areas of technique focus, guest artists and the overall progression of the student.

The course also provides additional training that focuses on the learning of new dance items, the development of specific performance and music skills, body conditioning and performance enhancement; creating opportunities to constantly develop the dancer to reach his or her full potential.

The South Asian strand attends intensive residential courses in Birmingham during half terms and summer holidays. Students who will potentially be travelling from across the country will be supervised by CAT staff/chaperones and accommodation will be provided. Students are expected to fund their travel costs.



*Image: CAT workshop at DanceXchange
Photographer: Simon Richardson*

Please see the Financial Support Information Sheet for further information.

In addition to these intensive projects, students will be expected to engage with other dance activities. Depending where the students are recruited from in the UK, they will either:

- be given a bursary to engage with locally based tutors (who will be briefed by the subject leader)
- attend satellite centres with classes taught by tutors, in or near their hometown.

Decisions regarding the above will only be possible once students have been selected for the programme and their geographical location is known.

Accommodation

When the South Asian strand students attend the residential intensives they stay at University of Birmingham accommodation. The students are accompanied by chaperones during their stay. Travel is arranged to escort the

students from the DanceXchange studios to the accommodation, about a 20min journey. Students get a breakfast and a two course evening meal included in the accommodation. The students are allocated twin rooms which encourages support between fellow students.



Conference park accommodation, University of Birmingham



Dining hall, University of Birmingham

Individual Training Plans

As part of the CAT, an Individual Training Plan is negotiated between each student, their parents/guardians and the Subject Leader. This identifies areas that each student needs to focus on for their development and identifies their needs outside of the CAT, for example dance and fitness classes they should be attending outside of the programme for extra training. When formulating the plan, consideration is given to the student's age, level of ability, academic commitments (such as GCSE or A level exams) and travel issues.

Training with Local Dance Tutors

Each student is expected to enrol with a locally based tutor as part of his or her Individual Training Plan. For the contemporary students it should focus on student's development of technical skills, body conditioning and creative expression. For the South Asian strand students on learning classical technique in either Kathak or Bharatanatyam. The progress of the young person relies on the commitment made to attending these classes.



*Image: CAT workshop at DanceXchange
Photographer: Simon Richardson*

Recommended study per week
additional to CAT
classes/residencies:

11-12 years – 6 to 7 hours per
week

13-15 years – 7 to 8 hours per
week

16-18 years – 8 to 9 hours per
week

How to get involved

Auditions are held regionally (for the first stage South Asian strand) and at DanceXchange in May/June. The auditions process is used to select students for the new academic year starting each year September. We operate a two stage selection procedure:

The first stage of the selection process consists of:

- A high energy warm-up session with a creative task
- A technique workshop run by the Subject Leader

The second stage of the selection process consists of:

- A high energy warm-up session with a creative task
- A technique workshop run by the Subject Leader
- An interview with the student (individually)
- An interview with parents/guardians (it is important that the student has the support of their parent/guardian to attend the CAT)

To register for an audition you need to fill in an **Audition Application Form**. You must also read the **Financial Support Information Sheet**. Both forms can be downloaded from the DanceXchange website or we can post one out to you, please email catinfo@dancexchange.org.uk.

Audition Criteria

During the audition process we are looking to identify students who can show commitment and evidence of exceptional talent for their age, experience and dance style.

The audition panel assess students on the following criteria:

Physicality, facility and technical skills

- Fundamental body skills (eg, co-ordination, flexibility, mobility, elevation, balance and control, strength, placement and line)
- Ability to perceive and respond to rhythmic patterns, musical phrasing and timing
- Movement memory
- Capacity to pick up dance material
- Spatial awareness
- Response to feedback given in class

Performance qualities and skills

- Expressiveness / understanding of movement qualities / sense of style
- Presence / projection / focus
- Readiness to engage in the material and to respond to performance aspects emphasised
- Capacity to sustain concentration

Creativity

- Imaginative response to tasks and the ability to develop ideas through movement
- Able to take risks when working creatively; questioning and curious

Approach to working in dance

- Ability to stay on task /concentrate /focus
- Tenacity
- Engagement in all aspects of dance activities
- Ability to reflect on personal practice
- Openness to change
- Capacity to work in co-operation with others (where group task is set)
- Response to feedback
- Interest in dance activities / performing / watching dance

2011 Audition dates:

Contemporary Strand

Rosie Kay

Stage 1 // Sunday 29th May 2011

Stage 2 // Sunday 12th June 2011

South Asian Strand

Bharatanatyam // Anusha Subramanyam

Stage 2 // 19th June 2011

Kathak // Sujata Banerjee

Stage 2 // 26th June 2011

Proposed term dates for September 2011 to July 2012

Contemporary Strand

Autumn Term – 12 Sessions

Induction session – 18th September 2011

25th September, 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd October

Half Term 30th October

6th, 13th, 20th and 27th November

4th and 11th December

Spring Term – 12 sessions

15th, 22nd and 29th January, 5th and 12th February 2012

Half term 19th February

26th February, 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th March

1st and 22nd April,

Easter holidays, 8th – 15th April

Summer Term – 11 sessions

29th April, 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th May and 3rd June 2012

Half term 10th June

17th, 24th June

1st, 8th, 15th July

Dates highlighted in blue are holidays.

South Asian Strand

Induction session 18th September

October intensive – 3 days, 23rd, 24th, 25th October

December catch-up day – 4th or the 11th December

February intensive – 2 days, 13th and 14th February

Easter intensive – 2 days, 2nd and 3rd April

June intensive – 1 days, 4th June

Students will be expected to attend regular weekly home tutor classes alongside the intensive residential projects held in Birmingham at DanceXchange

Summer Project – all students

23rd to 27th July 2012

Please note that these dates are not confirmed, when a student is selected and offered a place on the CAT a Student Handbook will be sent out with full details of the term dates and residential projects.



*Image: CAT workshop at DanceXchange
Photographer: Simon Richardson*

Fees and Means Tested Grants

For more information regarding the fees and means tested grants for the CAT, please refer to the relevant section on the CAT website and/or read the Financial Information Sheet, downloadable on our website.

Contact Details

If you have any questions about any aspect of the CAT not covered by this information pack please contact us and we will be happy to help.

Louise O'Hanlon, Programme Manager

0121 689 1096 or louise.o'hanlon@danceexchange.org.uk

Rosie Gunn, Programme Assistant

0121 689 3079 or rosie.gunn@danceexchange.org.uk

Useful Websites

Centre for South Asian and Contemporary Dance
www.danceexchange.org.uk

sampad, Development Agency for South Asian Arts
www.sampad.org.uk

Centres for Advanced Training
www.nationaldancecats.co.uk

Department for Education, Music and Dance Scheme
www.education.gov.uk

Promotes and develops dance practice in specialist arts and sports colleges
www.specialistschools.org.uk/dancenetwork

Youth Dance England
www.yde.org.uk

Council for Dance Education and Training
www.cdet.org.uk

Information Resource for South Asian Dance
www.southasiandance.co.uk

The National Dance Teachers Association
www.ndta.org.uk



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