Name of Provider: Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
UKPRN: 10008017

TRINITY LABAN CONSERVATOIRE OF MUSIC AND DANCE

THE CASE FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance is acknowledged as one of the world's leading conservatoires in the education of elite professional dance and music artists. Our highly specialist, focused and intensive programmes utilise the extensive experience and industry knowledge of our staff, and our exceptional facilities, to prepare students for sustainable careers in dance and music. We nurture the individual artistic voice of each student to develop innovative and creative artists who can influence the future of our art forms and enrich the cultural, social and economic life of our local, national and international communities. The success of our approach in producing technically excellent, creative and versatile artists able to take advantage of a range of career opportunities is evidenced in our consistently impressive employment statistics.

Trinity Laban was formed in 2005, bringing together Laban and Trinity College of Music, two leading specialist higher education institutions with considerable histories, to create the UK's first conservatoire of music and dance. Our world-class status is underlined by ongoing HEFCE Institution-Specific funding (ISTA), available to institutions by application to recognise the higher cost and distinctive nature of specialist higher education provision, and explicitly to 'support and enhance specialist institutions where they are providing world-leading teaching'. Trinity Laban was judged by an international panel of experts to have 'a genuine and consistent reputation within its peer group for providing world-leading teaching and requires support at least to maintain this position, but ideally to improve it further'. In 2016, we were granted Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP) following rigorous scrutiny by the QAA, consolidating our long history of delivering degree and other HE programmes at Levels 4 to 8 of the FHEQ.

Full-time undergraduate degree programmes form the core of what we do: our undergraduate student body comprises 395 music, 266 dance and 99 musical theatre students, representing 65% of our total headcount of 1,175. Undergraduate programmes sit within and are informed by a spectrum of activity including first access for children and young people to music and dance; talent progression for young people with potential in our art forms; masters programmes, doctoral and postdoctoral research; and creative development opportunities for professional artists. Our undergraduate degree programmes comprise BMus (Hons) in Performance, Composition and Jazz (BMus), BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance (BACD) and BA (Hons) Musical Theatre Performance (BAMTP).

Our distinctive interpretation of the traditional conservatoire model produces inclusive undergraduate programmes; our intensive, high level discipline-specific technical training and education involves the integration of:

- creative practice, within which students develop outstanding performance skills, create new artistic work, collaborate across art forms and take creative risks
- personalised support to facilitate self-reflection, individual goal setting and challenging of assumptions
- embedded learning opportunities for undergraduate students to engage with those studying at postgraduate level, strongly supporting progression to further study
- engagement with professional practice in dance and music to support successful progression into our highly competitive specialist fields

EMPLOYMENT AND FURTHER STUDY (SO1)

"They are very aware of the changing musical industry. They educate us in a way that we will be highly employable when we leave." (NSS comments, BMus, 2017)

Our success in propelling our graduates into lifelong careers as professional artists is clearly demonstrated in the consistently outstanding employment outcomes of our students. Our latest TEF metrics show that:

- At 97.7% our outcomes for Employment and Further Study are in the top 10% of providers.
- At 85% our outcomes for Sustained Employment and Further Study are in the top 10% of providers.
- At 77.8% our outcomes for Highly Skilled Employment and Further Study very significantly exceed the sector benchmark.

Our graduates, like many artists and practitioners in the cultural industries, frequently sustain portfolio careers that include salaried employment (e.g. as a member of a company or an orchestra, teaching in HE or schools) alongside a broad range of self-employed artistic and other work. In such cases, the average salary figures shown in our supplementary TEF metrics are unrepresentative due to the omission of freelance earnings, as this income data is derived from the longitudinal educational outcomes (LEO) data set which omits self-employed earnings.

Our graduates excel in both traditional careers and in innovative new avenues of creative expression, and many are well established as leaders and innovators in their fields. They work as performers, composers and choreographers across a range of genres; form their own ensembles and companies; support the production of new art in a range of contexts; pursue careers in community arts, and in formal and informal arts education; and go on to further study and research. Alumni research shows that 93% of responding graduates attribute their career in dance or music to the training they received at Trinity Laban.

Prominent alumni include Sir Matthew Bourne, choreographer and Artistic Director of New Adventures, whose reinterpretations of classic works have gained him the title of 'the world's most popular living dance-maker' (*Time Magazine*, 2008) and Oscar-nominated composer John Powell, whose film scores include the music for the *Bourne Trilogy* and *How to Train Your Dragon* series.

Recent undergraduate alumni include a wide range of young pioneers:

- Jazz alumna **Laura Jurd**, a BBC New Generation Artist, has received multiple awards including Instrumentalist of the Year at the 2017 Parliamentary Jazz Awards, with nominations for her ensemble Dinosaur for the 2017 Jazz FM and Mercury Prizes.
- Baritone **James Newby** became the youngest winner of the Kathleen Ferrier Award and performed at the BBC's Last Night of the Proms in 2016. In the same year, he won the Gerald Moore and John Christie Awards and joined the OAE Rising Stars scheme, and in 2017 became a Jerwood Young Artist at Glyndebourne Festival Opera.
- 2017 BAMTP graduate **Zoe Rogers** joined the West-end cast of *42nd Street* immediately on graduation.
- Composer **Soumik Datta** curated a festival of Indian culture for London's Horniman Museum and gained a 5-star review in *The Guardian* for his 2017 work with the City of London Sinfonia.
- BMus piano alumnus **Will Dutta**, Creative Director of Chimera Productions, Curator of Blank Canvas at Village Underground and current PhD composition student at Trinity Laban, in 2017 launched his critically acclaimed second studio album at the Institute of Contemporary Arts.
- **Dylan Crossman**, joined the Merce Cunningham Company within two years of graduation from the BACD; subsequent to which he is a freelance choreographer in New York and member of Faculty at Purchase College, State University of New York, and has received the Cunningham (2017) and Bessie Schönberg Fellowship (2015) awards.

The destinations of recent graduates from our programmes include: in dance – Akram Khan Dance Company, BalletBoyz, Candoco Dance Company, DV8, Hofesh Shechter Company, Jasmin Vardimon Company, Michael Clark Company, New Adventures, Company Wayne McGregor, Richard Alston Dance Company, Sidra Bell Dance (New York), STOMP (London), Sydney Dance Company, Tavaziva Dance Company; in music – Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Metropolitan Opera (New York), Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Opera House Orchestra and Chorus, Southbank Sinfonia, Welsh National Opera; and West-end and major touring musical theatre productions: *Bat out of Hell*, *Babe The Sheep Pig*, *Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat*, *Wicked*, *42nd Street*.

Many undergraduates progress to postgraduate study at Trinity Laban or elsewhere (21% of 2015/16 graduates), including to internationally distinguished institutions such as the Manhattan School of Music, Oxford University, Lille and Paris Conservatoires, and NYU Tisch School of the Arts.

EMPLOYABILITY AND TRANSFERABLE SKILLS (SO2)

Our success is founded on an immersive, enquiry-led creative education that prepares students for successful, sustainable and fulfilling careers in music, dance and musical theatre. Close industry links and strong input from employers enable us to create and adapt programmes to reflect innovative developments in the creative industries and ensure their continuing relevancy.

Programmes support development of industry knowledge and confident understanding of professional contexts alongside students' acquisition of professional-level technical, interpretive, collaborative, performing and compositional/choreographic skills. Students gain performance experience in both in-house and external professional venues, and undertake professional placements, including concerts and participation-based activities, organised through our Professional Placements Coordinator, community, outreach and inclusion teams, and teaching staff. Engagement with the work of professional artists is intrinsic to our programmes, through creative and collaborative curriculum projects; side-by-side professional mentoring initiatives and performances; visiting artist masterclasses; workshops; and performances in our venues.

Each of our undergraduate degrees includes modules that provide students with direct access to the expertise of industry professionals, with a focus on preparation for future employment. Feedback indicates that our students value these modules as sources of guidance and as opportunities to reflect on their own career goals in advance of their transition out of HE.

"*I felt [the Engaging Audiences module] was very relevant to the world beyond the conservatoire and would help me after I graduate."* BMus Module Evaluation, 2017

Through their development as creative artists, students acquire transferrable skills that are highly valued by employers and which are applicable across a range of careers, including leadership, project management, problem-solving, team-working, communication and entrepreneurial skills.

We employ a range of measures to support students' transition to employment and further study. Our specialist careers service provides individual career consultations and advice in addition to an online careers resource, an e-bulletin listing job opportunities and regular careers events. All undergraduate programmes include mock auditions and workshops with established professionals. Students' regular engagement with industry leaders and potential employers during their studies often leads to direct invitations to take up professional opportunities, attend auditions and apply for teaching positions. In dance and musical theatre, directors, agents and choreographers are invited to final year showcases, while in music audiences regularly include agents, promoters and leaders of arts organisations. The appointment of a dedicated member of staff to support the Musical Theatre Showcase in 2016/17 was highly effective in improving industry engagement and resulted in all 2017 musical theatre students gaining agency representation before graduating.

We maintain a reciprocal relationship with our international community of graduates through an Alumni Network of just under 7,500 former students. Former students can access careers support for up to three years after graduation, and we promote the success of our alumni through our website, social media and marketing materials. Initiatives such as our individual and ensemble Junior Fellowships (music) and the Artistic Practice Forum (dance) offer further artist development (incubation) platforms for exceptional young artists.

The move into further study is supported through regular interaction and informal peer-mentoring between postgraduate and undergraduate students. Our participation in the HEFCE-funded Mentoring for Postgraduate Progression project led to the conclusion that these exchanges are effective in enabling undergraduate students from more disadvantaged backgrounds to develop the confidence to progress to further study. In addition, significant institutional scholarship and bursary provision is available on application to those applying for postgraduate programmes from within the Institution, thereby ensuring that financial circumstances are not a barrier to progression.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR ALL (SO3)

"Teachers are in tune with and approach each student as an individual." (NSS comments, BACD, 2017)

Institutional initiatives to address inequality begin prior to admission as under-representation of particular groups in music and dance at undergraduate level are widely recognised to arise from barriers to access, opportunity and progression at earlier stages. Our outreach and progression programmes – many of which include volunteer placement and/or paid work opportunities for undergraduate students – aim to raise aspiration and achievement among children and young people from under-represented groups, and, in the long term, enrich the diversity of artists working in the dance and music industries. In 2016/17, our HEFCE-funded outreach and widening participation programmes and Department for Education-funded Centres for Advanced Training (CATs) in music and dance (for talented young people aged 13-19) reached 11,400 participants, 51% of whom had a BAME background. On average, 97% of CAT students progress to HE, and our work is recognised as a model of good practice (e.g. our Animate Orchestra for young people has been cited as a case study by the Paul Hamlyn funded Inspire-Music project, and our research into Dance CATs has been funded by the Department for Education and the Leverhulme Trust). We also enable more equitable access to undergraduate study through foundation level programmes in music, musical theatre and (from September 2018) contemporary dance. These are open to young people who have talent and potential in their art forms but who have not yet reached the required standard in their practice and/or may lack the formal qualifications needed for HE entry.

We are proud of the diversity of our student body and offer a highly personalised learning experience that is adaptive to student circumstance and facilitates significant learning gain for all. The most recent data from HESA shows that we exceed benchmark performance among our conservatoire peer group for the proportion of UK students from BAME backgrounds within our HE population (10.7%) and we lead on the enrolment of students with a declared disability (15.8%). We consistently and substantially outperform the conservatoire average for recruitment of students from state schools (84.3%) and low participation neighbourhoods (6.2%); in 2015/16 our undergraduate entrants from the state sector were, at 140 students, greater in number than the combined total of the other three London-based conservatoires offering music (Royal Academy of Music (30), Royal College of Music (30), Guildhall School of Music and Drama (75)).

Our work with students with disabilities was highlighted as an example of good practice in the Institute of Employment Studies' 2017 report to HEFCE on models of support for students with disabilities. Provision includes: accessible buildings; reasonable adjustments at audition and assessment; one-to-one support; screening/support with specific learning difficulties; help claiming benefits; disability awareness training for staff and students; specialist resources, e.g. Braille technology and dyslexia software; art form specific applications, adjustments and resources.

We work hard to eliminate barriers to access and attainment on our programmes and our TEF metrics show strong and uniform outcomes for students from different groups, including: gender, age, ethnic background and disability. A single negative flag for 'continuation' for BAME students arises from the performance of one group within the BAME population, students of 'other' ethnicity, while black students out-perform the benchmark for continuation. This may be influenced by the size of our Institution, as the results of such very small numbers of students can lead to disproportionate percentage changes. The outcomes for all students are very good, with few failures and strong, consistent performance in degree outcomes scrutinised in detail and endorsed by our external examiners on an annual basis.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (TQ1)

"Trinity Laban is a fantastically individual Institution, which supports unique skills sets and variety of interest in its students. It requires you to be self-motivated within a supportive environment with exciting opportunities. The ability to collaborate across courses is an unbeatable opportunity for students to discover their own creative expression and explore how to create their own work."
(NSS comments, BAMTP, 2017)

Undergraduate learning and teaching is primarily experiential with students' skills, knowledge and understanding developed cumulatively through sustained participation in a wide range of learning activities. Programmes place demands on students that are consistent with industry standards, and we encourage students' development as co-creators of their learning and curricular opportunities. Delivered by leading teacher-practitioners, programmes are enhanced by multiple opportunities to engage with industry professionals. Participation in 'real-life' professional scenarios enables students to develop their craft through the safe environment of the Institution while establishing core employability skills that are then put into practice in public performance settings.

All our undergraduate programmes specify high levels of contact, with varying patterns of learning according to discipline. This represents an exceptional level of investment by Trinity Laban in our students' education: TRAC(T) data (adjusted for our ISTA) shows that the cost per student of our training in 2016/17 was just over £20,000. In contemporary dance and musical theatre, students study in year group classes of around 25 students for an average of 5 hours per day over 36 weeks in the academic year. Within music, students learn though 32 hours of one-to-one principal study discipline lessons or tutorials across the academic year, supported by a mix of weekly discipline- or subject-specific, year-based classes and multi-year/programme groupings (which commonly include both undergraduate and postgraduate students) across 36 weeks. Group learning typically comprises an average of 14 hours of contact per week, and includes chamber coaching (in groups of 3-8), academic classes (in groups of 12-17) and/or large ensembles (in groups of 25-90).

Curriculum content provides: technical training which progressively extends students' practical and artistic abilities to professional standards; opportunities to explore multiple approaches to the generation of new creative material (including composition, choreographic and improvisation-based approaches in a range of genres and styles); and the development of academic and transferable skills including communication, entrepreneurship, critical self-reflection and research skills.

Collaborative opportunities are integral and distinctive features of our undergraduate programmes:

- **Shows and performances**: students regularly collaborate with fellow students in the creation, rehearsal and performance of existing repertoire and new commissions.
- **CoLab**, a two-week festival of collaboration, now in its seventh year, stimulates students on all programmes to create new work or reimagine existing repertory. Many projects are student-led and assessment focuses on process and participation. Students direct their own learning and are mentored by research students, staff and leading professionals. The success of CoLab has been endorsed by external examiners and industry professionals; faculty members have been invited to talk about it at conferences in the UK, Italy and South Korea; and its model has been replicated at a range of HEIs within the UK, Europe and Asia. CoLab projects have been developed and presented publicly, e.g. at Southbank Centre and Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, and have acted as the starting points for alumni ensembles.
- **Parallax**, now in its tenth year, brings together musicians and dancers from undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to develop and perform contemporary music/dance works created by staff, and taught postgraduate and research students.

"*CoLab is an amazing two weeks where we get the chance to work in collaboration with all the departments, doing all sorts of interesting projects. In these weeks, we have the chance to push ourselves and play styles and types of music that we otherwise never would have had the chance.*" (NSS comments, BMus, 2016)

"*Everybody in the world should do CoLab. People need to learn how to work and interact with each other better and to have the opportunity to be creative*." (Freya Hellier, Producer, BBC Radio 3, 2016)

Partnerships

Our partnerships enrich the student experience by providing opportunities for students to:

- bridge the gap between HE and professional practice: BMus students perform with ensembles/ companies (e.g. Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra) or have their music performed by leading ensembles (e.g. the Fidelio Trio); BACD and BAMTP students collaborate with leading choreographers and other creatives to make work.
- perform in external venues and contexts, including for musical theatre the Ambassadors Theatre (London West End) and Stratford Circus; for music, the Cheltenham Festival, Kings Place, Ronnie Scotts, the Southbank Centre; and for contemporary dance through the touring of commissioned works by final year students to external venues and international festivals in, for example, Greece, Norway and Israel.
- deliver classes, workshops and performances for children and young people through involvement with our outreach and widening participation departments, partner schools and music hubs across the UK, and specialist schools such as The Brit, Purcell, Menuhin and Knightswood Schools.
- undertake international exchanges and performance visits with educational partners, recently including: Rutgers State University (USA), Tokyo Gedai University, Korean National University of the Arts, Hong Kong Academy of the Performing Arts, Gnesins Russian Academy of Music, National Centre for the Performing Arts (India), and through the Erasmus scheme.

Curriculum enhancement activities

"The Students' Union have always made a great effort to provide varied and frequent events for students to come together." (NSS comments, BMus, 2017)

Activities that enhance and expand the opportunities available to students include masterclasses, workshops, and subsidised tickets to professional performances and events at our own and partner venues. Other activities support students' developing employability skills, such as: volunteering on outreach, community and widening participation projects; our Student Ambassador Scheme; extra-curricular classes and skills exchange provided through the Students' Union; acting as student accompanists/rehearsal coaches; and internal employment (e.g. as outreach and pre-HE class teaching assistants, ushers, stewards, and library or production assistants). Self-initiated projects enable students to put into practice the creative and entrepreneurial skills they have developed, often leading to the formation of ensembles, companies and solo ventures which may provide income or lead to graduate employment.

Academic support

"The support from teaching staff is brilliant. If you're struggling with anything to do with the course, you just have to let them know and they will do everything they can to help." (NSS comments, BMus, 2017)

Individualised academic support enables students to optimise their learning and strive for high achievement. Students access a broad range of support including individual tutorials, specialist disability and learning support, and our Student Services provision, including Trinity Laban Health and the counselling service. The latest report to the Student Experience Committee confirms that students are routinely able to attain immediate access to academic and pastoral guidance when required; this is consistent with QAA's TDAP Scrutiny Report (2016) which noted that students 'expressed strong satisfaction with the personal, academic and professional attention they receive'.

Students' assessment of our academic support through the NSS has, however, been more mixed (as shown in our TEF core metrics). We have worked with students to pinpoint underlying causes of dissatisfaction and have identified that these include navigating the individual viewpoints of highly specialist staff and frustrations in accessing support from hourly-paid members of teaching staff. We have addressed students' concerns in a range of ways, e.g. by consolidating the role of the personal tutor as each student's key academic support link across the Institution, and ensuring clearer communication between personal tutors and students on the schedule of their 'surgery hours'. These changes are recent and we will evaluate their effectiveness over the coming academic year.

Partnership with students

We are proud that, in the 2017 NSS, we outperform the HEI sector in the new 'learning community category', where our score of 87% evidences the close, collaborative engagement between staff and students that is central to our teaching ethos and practice. We are committed to improving the quality of students' experience and consistently work closely with them to build on our successes and strengthen provision across all areas and programmes.

- **Student representatives** sit on all academic committees, focus groups for curriculum development and programme validation panels; the Student Experience Committee is currently seeking to further embed student representation through the development of a Student Engagement Strategy using a 'students-as-partners' methodology.
- **Student feedback and evaluation** mechanisms form a key element of the annual monitoring cycle overseen by Academic Board. Over the past two years, a revised approach to module evaluation has led to response rates of up to 90%, with responses systematically fed back to students and staff. A new method of programme evaluation focused on student engagement was piloted in 2016/17 and is being rolled out across the Institution this year. Weekly year group and department meetings and classes also provide students with an opportunity for dialogue with Programme Leaders, Heads of Department and other senior staff.
- **Students co-create their own learning**: modules within programmes allow students to define projects, project aims and learning outcomes (within set parameters); students sit on student-staff steering groups, propose projects and repertoire, identify placements and curate performance events.
- **Recent additional programme-specific initiatives** have been created to gather nuanced discipline-specific feedback. The BACD 'Finding Solutions' campaign enables substantial consultation with students to address issues (identified by them) at an early stage and develop short-, medium- and longer-term action plans. Termly BAMTP student 'Review & Reflect' meetings generate an evolving 'action plan' in collaboration with staff, which is displayed on Faculty notice boards and posted on Moodle. Termly BMus student-staff meetings at discipline-specific (departmental) level feed into Programme Committees, and weekly cohort-forums and drop-in clinics allow students to discuss presenting issues with senior faculty staff.
- **Student-staff dialogue and face-to-face contact with staff** enables discussion on a wide range of matters including academic, practical and pastoral issues, through one-to-one personal tutorials and the intensive and personalised nature of our programmes.

Our dedicated institutional Learning Enhancement Unit is responsible for supporting engagement with students as co-creators of learning through curriculum development support, quality enhancement activities, educational research, and evaluation of learning and teaching. It facilitates a range of internal reviews (e.g. module and programme evaluation, student academic support), routinely engaging student as well as staff input to develop best practice.

"The Institution does really value student feedback on the course. This is shown by the changes that have been made to the course during my time studying here based on student feedback."
NSS comments, BMus, 2017

VALUING TEACHING (TQ2)

We recruit academic staff through processes that foreground the need to attract individuals with significant standing and expertise in their art form/academic discipline, to ensure that we provide students with access to a comprehensive range of skills, knowledge and practice appropriate to our 'world-class' status.

- Many of our 253 (84.3 FTE) academic staff teach part-time while pursuing careers as leading artists and practitioners, bringing their knowledge of the current dance, music and musical theatre industries to their work.

- Academic staff are well qualified for their roles in our practice-led learning environment (noting that degrees were not available in music conservatoires until the 1990s): 69% hold a professional qualification; 36% a masters or equivalent qualification; 10.3% a research degree; and 42% an HE and/or discipline-specific teaching qualification.
- The Head of Learning Enhancement is a National Teaching Fellow, and 21% of our teaching staff have achieved HEA recognition, including 8 Senior Fellows. This is significantly higher than the average HEA membership in the UK conservatoire sector, and we continue to support applications for HEA Fellowship and Senior Fellowship.
- Many staff are members of relevant professional bodies and learned societies, including: British Education Research Association, Dance HE, Directors' Guild of Great Britain, Equity, Incorporated Society of Musicians, International Association for Dance Medicine and Science, Royal Academy of Dance, Royal Musical Association, Royal Society of Musicians, Society for Dance Research, Staff and Educational Development Association, Theatre and Performance Research Association, and the UNESCO World Dance Council.
- Academic staff act as external examiners, and validation and assessment panel members at other HEIs in the UK and internationally. They contribute to the work of discipline-specific quality networks, subject associations, and other HE and professional arts sectoral bodies, including: the National Association of Music in Higher Education, One Dance UK, QAA, Association of European Conservatoires, and European League of Institutes of Arts.

Over the past five years our approach to staff development has been significantly enhanced, with clear and transparent policies in place to give all full-time, part-time and hourly-paid staff equitable access to development funding and opportunities. The pedagogical development of staff is embedded in institutional life, and personal development objectives are set within the annual appraisal process. Termly activities for staff in each Faculty ensure currency of knowledge in relation to key institutional initiatives and discipline-specific developments. The sharing of best practice in learning and teaching is included as a standing agenda item in many academic staff team meetings.

Formalising our long-standing culture of continuing professional development, TL: Augment – our HE teacher development programme matched to Descriptors One, Two and Three of the UK Professional Standards Framework – received accreditation from the HEA in 2017. It focuses on promoting links between staff members' established artistic practices and creativity in teaching, underpinned by pedagogic research and scholarly activity. The HEA noted that the 'provision has been designed to suit the context of this specialist institution' and that its focus on 'equality and diversity … promotes an inclusive approach to suit the needs of a diverse student population'. Highlights of the programme include: a peer observation scheme; support for the induction and mentoring of new teachers and academic leaders; and skills development support in areas such as embedding technology in teaching, facilitating peer mentoring among students, and supporting students with specific learning challenges.

Our suite of recognition schemes has been designed to reward and promote excellence in teaching and learning, complementing external awards and fellowships, and using input from our students and professionals from outside the Institution.

- From 2014, the titles of Professor and Reader have been conferred to acknowledge significant contributions by individuals to their specialist fields, which include both learning and teaching and research.
- We have developed a peer-led system to confer the titles of Teaching Fellow and Senior Teaching Fellow to recognise academic and support staff who make significant contributions to the student learning experience.
- A Learning and Teaching Awards Scheme has been created to celebrate individuals and teams who transform and enhance our institutional learning and teaching.

RIGOUR AND STRETCH (TQ3)

"Not only do we have fantastic skills training, but we are also pushed to be critical thinkers and turn our theory into practice – which is fundamental as we develop into individual performers and creatives." (NSS comments, BAMTP, 2017)

Undergraduate programme design ensures that teaching and learning content – as summarised earlier in this submission – supports achievement of the demanding professional standards students are required to attain on graduation. Input from our professions is intrinsic to programme design and delivery. We ensure that programmes meet the recognised UK standards outlined in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and, additionally, the international standards set out in the Association of European Conservatoires' Learning Outcomes. The success of our approach is evidenced in the consistently impressive employment outcomes of our students and in praise from external examiners and industry professionals for curricula that have a strong focus on preparing students for employment as artists and in other professional roles.

Interaction with the performing arts industries raises students' aspirations, and increases their understanding of professional expectations and standards. Student engagement with professional artists and other experts grows over the duration of each programme, and experiences are increasingly in-depth. Students are exposed to the rigorous scrutiny of professional critics through participation in public performance, and inherent consideration of audience and community engagement develops understanding of the role of artists in contemporary society.

Assessment on all undergraduate programmes is deliberately demanding, and designed to enable students to attain professional standards through a considered balance between practical, oral and written assessment tasks. Practical assessments allow students substantial access to, and use of, professional resources. Distinctively, students are supported by our dedicated production team to independently curate, deploy and achieve professional-level production values in their work, and are able to explore the role of technology and media in the creative arts using specialist resources.

Assessment tasks and criteria are designed to facilitate students' progress through their programme of study, building in complexity and scope to enable students to demonstrate the full range of programme learning outcomes and their increasing independence. Institutionally-aligned assessment criteria, developed by the Learning Enhancement Unit, are adapted to each programme and linked to the graduate attributes identified in the Learning and Teaching Plan. This ensures equivalency across all programmes and disciplines within the Institution. Where possible tasks replicate professional activities and scenarios, and assignments for formal assessment offer a high degree of personalisation (through, for example, performance of student-generated work or independent student selection of repertoire/dissertation/project topic). Assessment is designed to encourage development of the independent critical self-reflection skills needed by practising artists in our professions.

"*A full range of assessment methods is used, ranging from studio based practical assessments, to performances, to essays, in depth projects and dissertations. The assessment methods are well suited to the nature of dance as an art form and area of academic enquiry, and the programme offers an excellent opportunity for students to develop as performers, choreographers and researchers by situating them in assessed situations that model these roles*."
(External Examiner report, BACD, 2017)

FEEDBACK (TQ4)

"*The feedback is clear, setting achievable targets with professional critique which encourages student development. The quality of feedback is excellent*."
(External Examiner report, BAMTP, 2017)

"*The teachers have been really helpful to develop myself towards my goals; they have always given me detailed feedback*." (NSS comments, BACD, 2017)

We are acutely aware that our NSS scores for 'assessment and feedback' remain lower than the benchmark. While we are encouraged that our overall score for this area has risen by 5 points between 2015/16 and 2016/17, and by external examiners' reports that consistently express satisfaction with our supportive and developmental approach to assessment and feedback, we know that we must do more to ensure that students feel confident about the feedback on assessment they receive. Improving and enhancing students' feedback and assessment experiences is therefore an institutional priority. We are confident that our sustained focus on this area, and detailed programme-specific action plans – monitored by Academic Board and our Board of Governors, and overseen by a 'Task and Finish' Group chaired by the Principal – will enable us to build on the recent improvement in our NSS scores.

Within the education of creative artists, it is widely recognised that constructive criticism given as part of feedback and assessment of artistic work can be challenging for students, given their personal investment in the work being evaluated and sensitivities around subjectivity. We use a comprehensive range of 'wraparound' measures to provide individualised support for students to enable them to understand the feedback they receive, be confident in its fairness and equitability, and use it to support their development. For example, holistic debate around students' creative work is facilitated through a combination of studio-based tutorials and assessment preparation, peer-feedback, post-assessment discussions, individualised analysis of student work in relation to assessment criteria, and follow-up tutorials to support the next phase of development. We evaluate the effectiveness of this approach on a continuing basis and, as a result of student feedback, are currently working to refine and nuance the language used by staff in feedback on assessed work.

Within each undergraduate programme, specific initiatives to enhance feedback are being developed in partnership with students, for example:

- Within the BACD, in consultation with students, staff have explored more effective ways of clarifying the focus of assessment tasks and criteria. Students report increased clarity about the purpose/expectations associated with each assessment task.
- All BMus assessment panel members receive training before practical assessments, with ongoing training focused on developing enhanced consistency in language, detail and content across all musical disciplines. Since 2016/17, one-to-one teacher reports have included more specific areas for comment, ensuring greater consistency and comparability of feedback. Students have acknowledged that this provides them with a more realistic picture of their learning journey prior to formal end-of-year assessment.
- In BAMTP, a 2016/17 audit of feedback mechanisms, staff training and mock assessments developed with students led to changes such as the introduction of verbal feedback tutorials, additional staff training activities, and a detailed discussion of assessment with students, resulting in a dramatic improvement in NSS outcomes relating to assessment and feedback.

Improving and enhancing student feedback and assessment is fundamental to our Learning and Teaching Plan, and central to the activities of the Learning Enhancement Unit. Following a comprehensive review, a project group focusing on Assessment and Feedback was established to provide a dedicated forum for the ongoing evaluation and refinement of assessment processes, and the sharing of good practice across the Institution. Revised assessment report templates – trialled successfully with the BMus and BAMTP programmes – have been rolled out across the Institution to ensure fairness and consistency of feedback response length, tone and quality. The Learning Enhancement Unit is developing a suite of resources to support assessment and feedback, including a student guide, a good practice guide for staff, and regular development sessions for staff, building on material developed over the past five years.

Feedback practices take account of specific discipline/topic needs, and are highly personalised with students receiving individual verbal feedback on a daily basis within their various learning contexts. This is in addition to more formal feedback received as a result of regular practical, oral and written assessments. There are also structured opportunities for peer-to-peer feedback. Timeliness of assessment feedback is important to students and there is a requirement on academic staff to return assessment reports within 21 days, which is closely monitored.

In dialogue with our student body, we constantly review and develop our approaches to the provision of feedback and assessment to meet their various and complex individual needs. We ensure that students with disabilities or other vulnerabilities are not disadvantaged in assessment by, for example, facilitating any special arrangements needed to participate in assessments, and routinely utilising our clearly defined and robust mitigating circumstances process to support students dealing with acute unforeseen issues impacting on assessment.

RESOURCES (LE1)

"Facilities such as the Laban Theatre, library, studios and electronic equipment are brilliant to make use of." (NSS comments, BACD, 2017)

Trinity Laban's four sites in SE London offer industry-standard, specialist facilities. The Stirling Prize-wining Laban Building, in Deptford, purpose-built for contemporary dance, includes: the 300-seat Laban Theatre, incorporating a digital theatre production facility; 13 dance studios (including a studio theatre); health and body conditioning suite; Laban Library; and video editing suite. Based within the Old Royal Naval College World Heritage Site in Greenwich, King Charles Court's music-specific spaces comprise: 102 music studios for teaching/independent practice; recital room; Jerwood Library; composition suite; recording studio; and keyboard laboratory. The Laurie Grove site in New Cross offers five further dance/musical theatre studios and a Performance Laboratory suite for developing new work. Blackheath Halls is a professional venue with a 600-seat concert hall and 160-seat recital room. All buildings are enabled for disabled access, and their specialist facilities are supported by dedicated staff.

Students' performance, choreographic and composition work is regularly programmed in our performance venues throughout their studies, and promoted in the Institution's *What's On* performance brochure and on our website and social media channels. Students also use these venues to develop and rehearse their work, supported by our in-house production team: 60% of Blackheath Halls' usage and 50% of the Laban Theatre/Laurie Grove Performance Laboratory is by students. As noted earlier, students also perform at other high profile professional venues.

Enhancing our physical estate is a strategic priority. In addition to regular renovations and small-scale upgrades, a continuing programme of investment includes the £0.5m refurbishment of Laurie Grove to upgrade studios/create the Performance Laboratory in 2013, and the current £3m restoration of Blackheath Halls to improve both performance and public spaces. Potential developments include a new arts facility close to the Laban Building and an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to enhance facilities at King Charles Court. These are significant investments against our turnover of c. £25m pa.

We offer a range of specialist resources to support students' learning.

- **Libraries:** Our exceptional specialist library provision enables students to access scholarly resources, enhance their specialist subject knowledge and carry out independent research. Library provision achieved 94% satisfaction in the 2017 NSS (up 3% on 2016) and staff are frequently commended in external reviews, e.g. by the QAA. The Jerwood Library has twice received the International Association of Music Libraries (UK & Ireland) Excellence Award.
- **Instrument and equipment loan:** Our extensive stock of musical instruments and related equipment (with an estimated value of £6.6 million) can be used or borrowed by students free of charge on a short- or long-term basis. Video camera, recording equipment and computer loan schemes support students to create work incorporating film and digital technologies.
- **Trinity Laban Health & Body Conditioning Studio** provides a free, comprehensive programme supporting the health and wellbeing of all music, musical theatre and dance students, and access to a range of therapies. Provision includes functional screening, injury prevention/management and supplementary training, e.g. Pilates, yoga and strength training.

Technology-enhanced learning

Our strategic approach to technology-enhanced learning is driven by the specific needs of our students. Recent improvements to our virtual learning environment, Moodle, have led to substantially increased usage and online submission of assessed work. Online resources and specialist software integrated with Moodle enable students to access and manipulate audio, video and print materials, store recordings of work and assessments, and manage usage of copyrighted material. Students use a specifically adapted version of the timetable application (CELCAT) on their mobile phones to book practice rooms and rehearsal spaces. Students with disabilities and other learning support needs can access a wide range of specialist digital tools such as Read, Write Gold and Inspiration. The effectiveness of our approach was recognised as a case study in the Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA) 'Best Practice Guide: 2016 Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning'.

Students contribute to the development of institutional learning and teaching resources through Student-Staff Liaison Groups and other regular forums in each Faculty, with feedback routinely considered by Faculty and institutional management groups, and resourcing decisions prioritised in association with module, programme and other feedback received.

SCHOLARSHIP, RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE (LE2)

"The teaching staff are highly qualified and professionals in the industry which is outstanding."
(NSS comments, BACD, 2017)

Trinity Laban's vibrant vocationally-driven research-, scholarship- and practice-led culture informs our teaching activity, underpins our support for the music and dance professions, and develops innovative creative approaches that extend the boundaries of our art forms. We co-host industry events with professional bodies; commission and create new artistic work; contribute to high level academic debate; and carry out large-scale research supported by research grants.

Our Research Plan 2015-2020 describes three institutional strategic priority areas: creative practice and performance; performance pedagogy, and performance science. A 2015 audit of research-informed teaching identified that a large proportion of research within Trinity Laban is embedded in the professional artistic practice of those who teach (rather than in traditional text-based outputs), and provides a significant stimulus within teaching contexts. Some 82% of our academic staff generate publications/creative outputs associated with their research or scholarly activity; 15% are formally designated as research active. Undergraduate students routinely engage with staff research and scholarly activity, e.g. as research subjects or in the performance or realisation of creative outputs.

Active participation in professional practice is at the core of our undergraduate offer. Our academic teaching staff routinely refer to their own work in our professions – e.g. as performers, composers or choreographers – to directly inform and enhance their teaching, for example by providing opportunities for students to observe them working in professional contexts. We attract eminent artists to our academic staff, among the highest profile of which are Wayne McGregor, Professor of Choreography (Artistic Director of Company Wayne McGregor/Resident Choreographer of The Royal Ballet) and Pascal Rogé, Distinguished Artist in Residence, one of the world's most celebrated pianists. Many staff members have received industry recognition, including: visiting double bass teacher, Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE (Black British Business Person 2016, Black British Business Awards); Professor Emma Redding (Dance Educator Award 2017, International Association for Dance Medicine & Science); Veronica Jobbins (One Dance UK Lifetime Achievement Award 2017); and vocal and conducting teachers Teresa Cahill and Alexander Walker (Elgar Medal 2017).

Visiting artists, representing the best of current dance and music practice, are an additional regular feature of our curricular offer at undergraduate level. Recent examples include: in dance, Thea Barnes, Shobana Jeyasingh, Mark Murphy, Michael Clark Company, Candoco Dance Company, Company Wayne McGregor, New Adventures (Matthew Bourne); in musical theatre, Mariano Detry, Duncan Walsh Atkins; and in music, Nik Baertsch, Emily Benyon, Jessica Cottis, Colin Currie, Olivia Fuchs, Ed Gardner, James Gilchrist, John Paul Jones, Ralph Kirschbaum, Nicholas Kraemer, Kronos Quartet, Tasmin Little, Lionel Loueke, Malcolm Martineau, Diego Masson, Felicity Palmer,

Boris Petrushansky, John Powell, Raphael Wallfisch, Szabolcs Zempléni, and members of the Berlin Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, London Symphony, and Philadelphia Orchestras.

Research- and scholarship-informed teaching practices are well established, including: the introduction of fitness classes derived from our nationally funded research into the physiological demands of dance; the incorporation of mental imagery in class learning and teaching strategies based on the findings of a major, funded research project in partnership with a university; innovative mentor schemes for music students reflecting research into models of mentoring in the business sector; structured peer-to-peer commissioning partnerships between composition and instrumental students, developed from professional experience of commissioning new compositions, and leading to performances at professional venues (e.g. Wigmore Hall, Kings Place); discipline-specific pedagogy classes informed by research – soon to be published by Edition Peters – based on 30 years' experience of pedagogic practice in piano teaching; and new choreographic commissions for leading international dance companies workshopped with students to enhance understanding of dancer involvement in the choreographic process.

Curriculum design encourages and utilises teaching staff engagement with research activity, and supports students to investigate their own technical, creative and performance material, often within small groups. This promotes independence and self-reliance, supported by peer feedback and critical dialogue, enabling students to pursue their own lines of inquiry in the studio and the classroom and supporting aspiration to postgraduate-level study. Student-tutor problem-solving collaborations, for example during the realisation and/or performance of teaching staff's creative work, cascade staff members' professional and research interests to student learning.

Undergraduate students thus routinely engage with professional practice and research, and collaborate with those studying at postgraduate levels. These interactions replicate the performing arts profession in that they operate across disciplines and genres. Examples include:

- collaborative projects co-created by staff and students, e.g. CoLab, Parallax, keyboard and contemporary music festivals.
- undergraduate participation in projects led by postgraduates, e.g. performing in work developed by choreography or composition students.
- ensembles where postgraduate students, alumni and/or leading industry professionals rehearse, perform or create work alongside undergraduate students, such as:
    - Side-by-Side concerts: in each year of study, BMus orchestral instrument students undertake regular projects in which intensive rehearsal leads to performance of a single major work, mentored by musicians from leading ensembles (e.g. Philharmonia, Welsh National Opera Orchestra, BBC orchestras) who also join them in performance.
    - Commissioned Work: final year BACD students collaborate with leading choreographers (e.g. Lea Anderson, Rosemary Butcher, Marie-Gabrielle Roti), operating as discrete 'dance companies', to create new dance works which are then toured.
    - Professional Performer: Year 3 BAMTP students collaborate with leading industry professionals (e.g. Fabian Aloise (*Matilda: The Musical*), Simon Grief (*The Band: The Take That Musical*), Jason Pennycook (*Hamilton*)) to create musical theatre productions delivered to industry-standards in our own or other professional performance spaces.
    - Placements with professionals working in outreach and community settings leading to high level performance opportunities (e.g. BBC Proms, Southbank Centre, Tate Exchange).

PERSONALISED LEARNING (LE3)

"There is a huge difference between who I was in BA1 and who I am now. I am very grateful to Trinity Laban for allowing me to discover myself and giving me strength and confidence for my future career." (NSS comments, BACD, 2017)

As an institution that seeks to nurture the individual artistic voice of each student, we are highly responsive to individual needs and aptitudes, from pre-admission through to graduation and beyond.

The close attention and peer-to-peer support possible within our intensive learning and teaching model enables both strengths and weaknesses to be shared and addressed in an open, collaborative and supportive manner. Teaching and learning is individually tailored to mitigate any inequity in students' pre-HE experiences and opportunities, to effectively orientate their focus, effort and progression, and to maximise exit velocity.

Admission to both our Faculties is through a highly selective audition and interview process that thoroughly engages with each candidate's individual capabilities, potential and ambitions. We are committed to ensuring that our provision is open to gifted performers and creators, whatever their background or circumstances, and applicants are encouraged to disclose physical and learning disabilities. With 20% of successful candidates disclosing a disability on admission, and screening leading to further diagnoses after enrolment, we are able to be responsive to individual needs and characteristics throughout the learning experience.

Induction is core to our engagement strategy, as students' initial encounters with their programme can impact on future success. Over the past four years, our Induction and Transition Group has evaluated, designed and coordinated induction activities across the Institution – informed by transition pedagogy and First Year Experience research – leading to a year-on-year improvement in students' feedback about how prepared they are to begin their programmes.

Induction activities demonstrate the artistic and inclusive culture of the Institution. They include: pre-enrolment activities; introductory sessions covering a range of subject, health and wellbeing, and HE-readiness topics; social programmes (organised by the Students' Union and the Institution); programme-specific talks and events; and student-staff partnership activities such as the annual 'A Day in the Life' performances, which raises aspiration by introducing artistic work by staff and other students. As well as helping to welcome and induct members of new cohorts into their community, continuing students participate in tailored reorientation sessions covering, for example, health, wellbeing, and diversity in addition to those which signpost the options and new challenges they will encounter as they progress from one study level to the next.

Each of our undergraduate programmes offers flexible opportunities for students to pursue their interests as they progress. Building on regular opportunities for project-based work throughout their studies, contemporary dance and musical theatre students undertake independent projects in their final year, the outcomes of which may include live performances, multimedia presentations and written research. Third and fourth year music students choose from over 20 specialist elective options, enabling them to focus on particular areas of interest that are aligned with employability outcomes such as teaching, conducting, improvisation; they may also opt to undertake a personal project in their final year in addition to independently selecting repertoire, and determining the presentation format, for their end-of-year principal discipline recital.

Tracking and monitoring progress and development

Aggregated outcomes and trends on retention, progression and attainment are routinely analysed and reported to the Academic Board and senior management to ensure that any systemic issues can be quickly identified and addressed; performance in these measures has been consistently good. Given the high level of staff-student contact and the close working relationships between staff and students, we use tracking systems and learner analytics less than larger institutions. Student attendance is, however, rigorously monitored, with any unexplained absence acting as a trigger for investigation/intervention. Welfare issues, including mental health, are picked up quickly and support measures put in place.

Students who struggle to engage with normal patterns of study due to injury, illness or other factors – identified through tutorials, Mitigating Circumstances Panels, Interim Assessment Boards or contact with the Student Services team – receive additional individualised tutorial support to ensure that they have suitable opportunities to progress. If needed, personal study plans are agreed which enable variation from the normal pattern of study and support continued engagement with the programme. Monitoring, tracking and support is co-ordinated by each student's personal tutor and personalised goal setting ensures developmental targets are appropriate to each individual.

Retention and completion

In *Staying the Course* published by the Social Market Foundation in 2017, Trinity Laban is included on the list of institutions that are 'making the strongest progress on widening participation while also improving continuation rates'; this is also demonstrated in our TEF metrics. Our rigorous admissions and induction processes, and personalised and responsive learning offer, mean that comparatively few students drop out of our programmes. Those who leave generally do so for complex personal, financial or health reasons beyond the influence of the Institution. Robust mitigating circumstances arrangements, availability of student bursaries and a comprehensive student support service ensures that progression to completion occurs wherever possible.

Provision coordinated by our dedicated Student Services team includes: a free, confidential counselling service (already accessed by 16% of our undergraduate population this academic year); financial support via bursaries, grants and a short-fall loan scheme (in the last year 168 undergraduate students received £194K in income related bursaries); health and wellbeing support within the Trinity Laban Health and Body Conditioning Studio facility; student accommodation within the McMillan Student Village and other nearby student residences, and support in finding privately rented housing.

CONCLUSION

Trinity Laban's central aim remains the successful development of its students for lifelong careers at the leading edge of their art forms. Daily contact with leading professionals, interaction with the latest professional practice, performing arts pedagogies and practice-based research creates an environment for success, a success evidenced by positive employment outcomes and the demonstrable impact that our graduates have in shaping developments within the cultural industries, both in the UK and abroad.

We are listening to our students and strengthening our relationship with our student body to underpin a culture of continuous improvement to enhance the in-depth vocational experience we provide and strengthen the already outstanding contribution our graduates make to the music, dance and musical theatre professions.

"At Trinity Laban Students' Union we see every day the positive changes the Institution makes to improve the student experience, and support given to us to do the same. Every member of the Students' Union team is on at least one committee in which we see frank and open discussions between staff and students. The inclusion and respect given to us and the student body by Trinity Laban helps us all to achieve our goals of improving student life and makes sure that every student is heard. Aside from the excellent training students receive, they know that their voice will be listened to and acted upon with the utmost attentiveness and commitment."

Luke Faber, President, Trinity Laban Students' Union (January 2018)