

Where Will Your Degree in Dance or Drama Lead?

'Common destinations include the professional arts, the entertainment industries, applied arts, community work, education, scholarship and the media industries. The transferable skills of graduates in this domain are those much sought after in other environments such as business and commerce. These skills include those of communication (written, oral, and performance), of research and analysis, the ability to work independently, interpersonally, and in groups, to deadlines and under pressure, with flexibility, imagination, self-motivation and organisation.'



Subject Benchmark Statement for Dance, Drama
and Performance

Work in the creative industries can be unpredictable and insecure, and there is unlikely to be a linear career structure. After graduation, it is very common to be self-employed with multiple primary and secondary occupations involving project work and short-term contracts,

and success is often dependent on actively maintaining networks and favouring opportunities for learning and reputation building.

'Determination, wide-ranging experience, proven skills and good contacts may open up careers for dance and drama graduates that include: acting; arts administration and management; choreography; community arts; dance performance; dance and drama therapy; lecturing, teaching, and training; media, film and television production; technical production, and stage management.'

'A graduate's transferable skills, notably in performance, presentation, and interpersonal communication, can have high value in other activities, and numbers of graduates have careers in retail, finance, social work, travel and tourism, marketing and the voluntary sector.'

Student Employability Profile: Dance, Drama, and Performance

Employability skills developed through your study of Dance or Drama

- Apply performance and production skills to communicate with an audience
- Apply group processes in the creation of original work
- Communicate in writing, orally and through performance
- Exercise critical, analytical and physical skills, and conduct research
- Apply creative and imaginative skills through the realisation of practical projects
- Think reflectively and independently, and concentrate and focus for extended periods
- Develop ideas and construct arguments and present them in appropriate ways
- Handle creative, personal and interpersonal issues and negotiate and pursue goals with others
- Manage personal workloads and meet deadlines under pressure with flexibility, imagination, self-motivation and organisation
- Produce written work with appropriate scholarly conventions
- Apply information retrieval skills involving gathering, sifting, and organising material
- Use IT skills such as word-processing, electronic mail, and accessing electronic data

Student Employability Profiles: A Guide for HE
Practitioners, HEA

Making the links - applying your skills to workplace contexts

The challenge is how to translate the skills you have developed through curriculum activities and assignments (identified in your programme or module specifications) into the skills which are highly valued in workplace situations. In particular employers look for graduates with qualities of self-reliance, who can demonstrate examples of using initiative and showing real commitment to a range of tasks, seeing them through to completion.

Applying for jobs, placements and further study opportunities therefore involves proving to what extent you have acquired such skills and qualities, and providing real evidence of experiences which have developed them. In your CV, on application forms and at interview you will need to clearly articulate concrete examples and explain to selectors how they are relevant to a particular job role and the responsibilities involved in it.

Making plans for your future - how this pack can help you

The materials in this pack are designed to help you:

- Be aware of skills gained through specific study activities, and how they are relevant elsewhere
- Think actively about your personal and academic development, particularly in relation to future career options and employability
- Record concrete examples you can use in applications for jobs, placements or further study
- Gain experience in applying these skills in different situations, through paid or voluntary work opportunities
- Broaden your career options by providing information, case studies, contacts and resources
- Prepare for your future success by relevant information gathering, making the most of networking, and planning ahead.

Research shows that many graduates in arts subjects take a year or more to move into their chosen career, and even then often start at the bottom of the ladder.

We hope that using this pack will help you reduce that gap between graduation and accessing the career you want!



CV! Look out for activities to help you compile a winning CV!

Developing and Articulating Skills from a Degree in Dance or Drama

Task 1: Which activities, which skills?

Your course programme, together with other experiences, is developing a **range of skills relevant to a wide variety of work options**, whether you use your subject knowledge directly or not. Recent surveys of the skills employers seek

show the **importance of graduates' ability to identify specific tasks and experiences that demonstrate such skills**, how they have been practised, and how they can be applied in other contexts.

- ➔ Choose two or three **assignments or projects** from your course so far, and think about the skills you needed to use or develop. Describe the tasks involved from the initial brief to completion; use the list below to identify and analyse the skills required.

Task	Skills used and how the task developed them further

- ➔ In job applications and at interviews, including those for temporary and placement opportunities, you will be asked to **identify evidence** from different aspects of your life – your studies, voluntary/paid work, home responsibilities, life experiences which demonstrate some of the following skill areas.
- ➔ Identify activities or experiences you could use to illustrate the skills overleaf:

Skill Areas	Example from your course	Example from part-time work	Example from other activities/life experiences
Managing your own learning Set targets, plan strategies, meet deadlines, self-reliance			
Oral communication or presentation			
Written communication or presentation			
Group-work Interpersonal skills, work co-operatively			
Information skills Access/evaluate sources, organise information			
Problem-solving Analyse tasks, adapt solutions, assess progress			
Use of ICT Use of electronic media to search, select and present information			
Organisation and planning Manage workload, review progress			
Flexibility Respond and adapt to change, handle uncertainty			
Creativity and innovation Visual ideas and expression, performance/technical skills			

- ➔ Compose a Personal Skills Profile – for use in a CV or Personal Statement
- Look back and underline those skill areas where you found it easy to think of examples. Below write your personal skills profile - about four or five sentences - summarising and promoting your strengths based on your experiences so far. (This could be adapted for a covering letter)

Personal Skills Profile

CV!

- ➔ If you have not done so already, you might like to put a draft CV together. The careers team are happy to look over these during drop-in clinics at the Student Centre.
- ➔ Are there any skill areas where you found it hard to find examples? You could use materials on the NUPAD (PDP) pages <http://pdp.northampton.ac.uk> to address these, especially if you think they are important skills for your longer-term goals.

Resource materials on the NUPAD (PDP) web pages to help you

Skills development and career planning exercises online:

<http://pdp.northampton.ac.uk>

Go to the website and try some of:

- *Key skills checklist*
- *Skill Development Plan*
- *Review your Achievements section*
- *Making a Regular Record of Work-based Learning*
- *CV Skeleton*
- *The Art of Translation (to encourage CV content with real impact)*
- *Career Action Plan*

There are more materials on career options later in this pack, and also an on-line Career Management Skills course which will help you improve your chances and make decisions on future plans:

<http://oldweb.northampton.ac.uk/stu/CMS/index.htm>

Task 2: 'Experience essential' - building relevant experience

A wide range of career options are open to performance graduates. Popular areas related to your subject include: performing, teaching/lecturing, arts management, theatre/stage management, drama/dance therapy, most of which require further academic or vocational study, following a first

degree.

Other options such as: youth & community work, community arts/education, broadcast media production, journalism, public relations, event management, training & consultancy also require relevant experience in order to get started.

- ➔ Imagine it is term 2 in your second year. You have a number of assignment deadlines and exams are on the horizon so you need to plan time for revision. You are also aware that the next six months is important for gaining crucial experience for applications starting in the autumn – perhaps for a vocational postgraduate course or to gain more performance or other experience.

Opportunities for relevant experience may themselves be competitive!

- ➔ Choose an opportunity from the list below; think about the skills and qualities selectors are likely to be looking for and existing evidence you could use. Then work in pairs or threes to share ideas about activities which would help you to make a more effective application – jot down possible examples.

Opportunities	Skills, qualities and aptitudes demanded	Examples (current and potential) likely to impress selectors
Vacation camp performance activity leader		
Dance/Drama community education project		
Arts festival vacation administrator		
Secondary Drama/Dance PGCE		
Unpaid backstage worker for touring show		
Student Union part-time events officer		
Voluntary schools worker - special needs		

Volunteering experience: ensuring your efforts pay off

Opportunities for Dance or Drama students to gain work-related experience

- Facilitate weekend drama sessions with young people
- Get involved in light and sound for a top music venue
- Work in our local theatres: performing or backstage
- Participate in theatre in education workshops
- Contribute to local radio production
- Help organise a charity production or revue
- Support the elderly in care with creative activities
- Work with disadvantaged or disabled young people to express themselves through dance & drama
- Help in after-school clubs with performing arts activities
- Work in a Film Archive Centre
- Carry out research for a local media group
- Set up or take part in community and university arts events and projects

How to make your volunteering 'pay'

Volunteering is work experience with the extra advantage that it demonstrates initiative and commitment, and in addition can give focus and direction to career planning. It can provide the experiences and demonstrate the skills that employers seek - in one survey almost 100% of student volunteers felt that such activities had added value to their personal and professional development.

To reinforce the benefits of volunteering try using this pack alongside NUPAD materials on the web <http://pdp.northampton.ac.uk> (Personal Development Planning at The University of Northampton) designed to encourage reflection on developing skills and planning towards future goals.

Reflection is an essential skill for professional practice in most workplace environments, and elsewhere in this pack examples are provided. So, to make your volunteering 'pay' and extract all benefits for your future, you should keep detailed notes on the situations and challenges you experience.

Volunteering has given me a realistic insight into an organisation I hope to work with.

Take a moment to think back to a month ago:

Can you remember all the different activities you have been involved in since then?

Can you remember how you felt about those experiences, and perhaps what you might do differently another time?

Writing down your reflections helps clarify your thoughts and focus ideas for constructive action. It will help you extract your key learning and action

points, and enable you to apply these in other situations in the future.

Keeping track of your progress on paper will also provide an invaluable resource for self-presentation in job applications. As you practice articulating what and how you have learnt during your voluntary activities you will build examples to use on forms, in your CV and at interviews. It's also a habit you will need for continuing professional development in your career!



Materials on the web and other resources:

Core materials can be found at <http://pdp.northampton.ac.uk>

See the *Index* and *Review and Reflection* section for templates for work-based records, reflective exercises and CV-building.

The University of Northampton Careers Service offers resources and advice clinics on CV-building at

<http://www.northampton.ac.uk/departments/studentservices/ecg/>

The next section looks in more depth at how to develop habits of reflective practice. Additional materials on writing reflective accounts are listed below.

Reflective Writing (Jenny Moon)

<http://www.services.ex.ac.uk/cas/employability/students/reflective.htm>

Keeping a Reflective Diary

http://www.practicebasedlearning.org/students/docs/reflection/page_08.htm

Skills for Success: the Personal Development Planning Handbook, and Study Skills Handbook, both Sheila Cottrell, Palgrave Macmillan 2003

Some activities to help you analyse and understand your learning style and approach have been developed in the CL.aSS project:

<http://www.learning-styles.co.uk/index.php>

(Websites accessed July 2008)

Developing Reflective Practice: Reflection, Appraisal, Planning

What is reflection?

Reflection is a key tool for learning in Higher Education, both to increase your ability to learn independently and to improve your grades while studying. It also increases self-awareness, and supports successful progression in the workplace through professional practice and development opportunities.

Reflection is the ability to look back at experiences and to make sense of them in order to repeat what worked well and to learn from mistakes. Your study modules in Drama, Dance or Performance will frequently require elements of evaluation, review, reflection and self-assessment, but developing a habit of reflection in all situations will prove an invaluable life skill for work-based roles, and for managing your future.

Reflection helps you to:

- Understand how you are learning and using that learning
- Identify, while in a situation, the best action to take
- Recognise your strengths and weaknesses, and how you can improve
- See how far you are achieving your goals, and what the barriers might be
- Consider how you could fill any skills or knowledge gaps
- Increase self-awareness and personal effectiveness

Reflecting is the process of thinking about and sorting out ideas, feelings, attitudes, and behaviours, in order to gain new insights.

How does this fit in with Personal Development Planning?

Reflective Practice is a core part of Personal Development Planning which links to improving your employability skills and managing your career progression. It is key to successful professional practice and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in the future. PDP is essentially about -

Looking back: reviewing, evaluating, reflecting – to become more aware of self/skills/ achievements

Looking forward: action planning, defining goals and objectives, focusing/targeting plans

These two elements are also crucial for 'self-representation' –explaining who you are to others, e.g. in a CV, personal statement, interview, business plan – conveying clearly where you have come from and where you want to go.



What do employers of graduates think?

You may well be employed for some of your career in a larger organisation and recent research shows that for many employers of graduates individual ownership for self-development is a key factor for career success. This is reflected in:

- selection questions in graduate recruitment
- criteria for postgraduate professional study, e.g. PGCE
- the strong emphasis placed in all organisations on professional review and development through CPD.

For example, The General Teaching Council for England emphasises:

'Guided, planned and structured participation in professional learning will support teachers in reflecting on and enhancing practice.'

'Teachers understand that maintaining and developing skills, knowledge and expertise is vital for success.'

http://www.gtce.org.uk/cpd_home/

'Teachernet' also supports professional development with an online mapping and planning tool for teachers to track progress.

'Taking responsibility for your own CPD is an important part of every teacher's professionalism. Thinking clearly about what you need, and being proactive in securing it:

- *Helps you to steer your own route through the profession*
- *Increases the satisfaction you get from your chosen career*
- *Opens up a range of career possibilities*
- *Helps you to take part in wider professional communities*
- *Increases your confidence to engage critically with evidence from sources such as research and inspection, and to discuss wider issues in education as well as your own practice*
- *Helps you make accurate and realistic self-assessments of how well you are doing*
- *Gives you a clear understanding of your strengths and how you can make best use of them*
- *Shows you how you can pursue your special interests through research and further study*
- *Gives you the experience and the skill to help your colleagues to develop professionally.*

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/development/>

Similar training and development standards have been developed for roles across business, commerce and the public sector, so you are likely to come across this practice early on in your career. You may already do something similar in your part-time job.

Reflective practice for the performance professional

If you are planning to work in the performing arts or creative industries, you may be working freelance, or even running your own business. The creative industries are dominated by part-time, self-employed and multi-activity working. These require high levels of self-evaluation, self-reliance, and self-

management for survival, which reflective practice will help you develop. You will also need:

- Enterprising skills and attitudes
- Persistence and determination
- Networking skills
- Business, IT, finance and fund-raising skills.

Reflection is a crucial habit for lifelong learning, worth nurturing now!

Task 3: Performance Practice Profile: Building your Evidence Bank

➔ You should review and keep track of your developing skills, making sure you record specific examples of evidence you can then use to present yourself to others. Keep track of generic skill development using a NUPAD skills checklist; this version is to map your progress in performance skills:

Skills/Techniques	Activity/Assignment	Personal progress in this area
Devising, composition, choreography		
Performance: acting/vocal/dance, improvisation		
Presentation, interpretation, documentation		
Performance production, publicity and management		
Performance business skills: administration, contracts, negotiation funding/finance		

➔ Review your development by documenting skills and experiences gained both through curriculum activity and performance or support roles in the community or commercial sector. This is essential for creating a performance CV that highlights your strengths.

➔ Write a Performance Profile for your stage CV or covering letter – this should outline your particular strengths, styles, and relevant experience.

Performance Practice/Training and Experience Record

This record can be used for performance experience or can include any experience of practice in the sector.


Dates	Productions/Tours (include any short assessed pieces)	Role (performing or support characterisation, interpretation, techniques and skills acquired)	Reviews, comment/ feedback (formal and informal)

Task 4: In-depth Reflection: Developing Reflective Writing Skills

Reflection is about...

...making sense, standing back, repetition, deeper honesty, weighing up, clarity, understanding, making judgements.

...moving from the *What? When? and Who?* to the *Why? and How?*

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- ➔ Write down six positive words to describe yourself (you could use these in a personal statement, e.g at the top of a CV)

- ➔ Select an incident from your part-time/vacation job, or alternatively consider your experience since starting your course...perhaps something which made you feel uncomfortable or dissatisfied in some way. Brainstorm words describing your fears, hopes, impressions, reactions, attitudes...

- ➔ With a partner reflect on the event, asking each other in turn the questions below. Make brief notes on your thoughts and ideas. Highlight anything you have learnt about *yourself*.

Some questions to prompt reflection...

What happened?

How did you feel?

Did you express your feelings? How?

Did you do anything else at the time as a result of this incident?

What were the consequences?

Did your responses enable you to gain

anything positive from the situation?

Did you learn anything...

- about yourself?
- about handling other people?
- about that situation - would you react differently another time? How? Why?

Task 5: Reflective Summary - a resource for presenting yourself to others

➔ Think about your progress through each Drama, Dance or Performance study module this year and how you have developed knowledge, skills, or understanding about yourself as well as your subject. Use it for a CV, in a personal statement, or for an application.

CV!

Progress and achievement
 Look back over notes, reflective exercises, and assignment marker sheets/ comments from tutors/workplace mentors. Identify qualities or insights you have developed through tackling the tasks involved.

Has this study experience improved any specific academic or key skills, or provided examples of evidence to add to your CV/professional portfolio?

Insights and inspiration
 Perhaps this study unit prompted some interests or insights into a new area of knowledge or expertise for further investigation. Note down any thoughts or ideas before you forget them!
 For example:
 Suggested an idea for a dissertation or research topic?
 Broadened, focused, or changed your career ideas in some way?
 Inspired an idea for further voluntary work/work shadowing?

Action planned as a result:

Thinking Ahead: Making a Degree in Dance or Drama Work

What do graduates of Dance or Drama actually do? Alumni case studies

Wendy, TV Production, and now Innovation Centre Manager

I work as manager of a university Innovation Centre which involves raising money for activities, selecting and supporting tenant companies, troubleshooting, and running networking events for creative businesses. It's very rewarding to help a company succeed, and I enjoy working with a range of different people. The most challenging area for me is managing a large budget, plus balancing what is needed by a company with our funding agencies' requirements. Future challenges include the expansion of the Innovation Centre over the next year, finding enough quality companies to fill the space, and having the funds to support them as we want.

My original career goal was to work in television and after university I worked as an Assistant Stage Manager in a theatre to get the necessary Equity card, followed by work as a freelance Stage Manager in independent TV for four years. I then moved to the BBC, where I worked on many different kinds of programmes including Top of the Pops. On returning to the UK after a break living abroad and having a family, it was difficult to return to theatre or TV as by then I had no recent experience or contacts, but through working in a theatre bar and then the Box Office, eventually I was made the Development Officer. This meant that I was involved in fundraising for the theatre which enabled me to develop completely new skills. After 6 years I was offered a job running a network for media/creative businesses based in an Innovation Centre in

Oxfordshire, where I used my experience in TV but also learned about business support, which eventually led to my current role.

In what ways did your studies help your career or personal development?

Communication, quick thinking, teamwork, long hours, hard work and being able to bluff, plus the ability to apply myself and be self disciplined. Initially my university study helped me to show people that I was serious about working in theatre and TV, and when I joined the BBC a degree was essential. But most useful were the skills from my degree that have held me in good stead throughout my career: I am a 'people' person and I learned to work in a team and to communicate well, which are the skills most employers look for and which REALLY help in interviews. An interview is a kind of performance, so I think myself into the perfect person for the job and have only ever failed once to get a job offer. Once I get the job, I am able to adapt and learn quickly - thinking on your feet is also something you learn on a Drama course. Networking is a key tool to any career and particularly theatre, TV, and media - being able to meet and converse with people, and seem interested in what they have to say is really important. Most of the jobs I have had are as a result of the contacts I have made.

What advice would you give to undergraduates?

Unpaid work experience is invaluable in the media - finding ways to get on a tv/film shoot and spending days watching

and learning. I also did any job going in the theatre, from usherette, bar work, box office – it helps build contacts and gets you known. If people know you and trust you they are more likely to give you a chance at something you really want to do. A tip I was given when I first left University was to take applications myself rather than post them, which makes you more memorable. I also applied for jobs that were too senior for me but I was successful because they promoted someone internal and as I had applied they

interviewed me and saved themselves the hassle of advertising the new position.

I have been told I have good 'business radar' - in other words I am good at spotting future opportunities. Keep your wits about you: the job may not be there now but it might in the future. Think about what an organisation's plans for expansion may be and if they will need more staff - then bluff your way into a meeting with the manager or HR person...before they advertise.

Katherine, BA Performance Studies, Northampton, Project Marketing Coordinator, 'Off the Hook'

I work as Project Marketing Co-ordinator for a voluntary sector organisation, marketing services for people who suffer with drug and/or alcohol misuse, particularly promoting these to hard to reach communities. Rewarding aspects include helping people to help themselves, and designing publicity, while something I find very challenging is working with people who are still using. I gained the experience & qualifications through a combination of my degree and part time work whilst at university, starting off as a volunteer for a charity was a great start, as I then got promoted to various paid positions. In terms of my longer term career goals, I am currently studying for a Masters degree in the Arts, which will, I hope allow me to lecture at undergraduate level, and further my personal journey in becoming a Video Artist.

In what ways did your studies help your career or personal development?

It helped me hugely in both areas. From a career point of view, it gave me the space

to find my creative specialism, whilst also giving me an enormous range of theoretical and practical knowledge and skills. Personally, it has helped my confidence and self-esteem no end, and strengthened my communication skills, all of which are vital for everyday life. Other skills from my degree useful in my current role include collaborative work, visual understanding and appreciation, time management, and audience targeting. My volunteering experience alongside study allowed me to move into a slightly different area to my degree, after a short time I was promoted to Deputy Coordinator, which gave me a huge amount of experience, relevant to the job I currently have.

What advice would you give to undergraduates?

Apply for everything – the worst they can say is "no thanks", volunteer to get experience, make as many contacts as you can – people on different courses to you at uni, lecturers, etc – they may be useful at uni, or in the future. Keep any relevant coursework, or other evidence of what you can do and put together a portfolio to send off or take to interviews.

More case studies can be found on the Prospects web site:

www.prospects.ac.uk/links/performdeg and in the online version of this pack.

Task 6: Graduate case study

- ➔ Select several graduate case studies - some for your subject area are provided, but you can find many more from the links below:

Subject options on Prospects: <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/occupations> (choose Jobs and work, then 'Explore types of jobs' or 'Explore job sectors' and then click on case studies within individual profiles).

Look at those under:

- <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/performdeg>
- <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/adminarts>
- <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/pubfilmvidprod>
- <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/pubtheatre>

Or from the Sector Briefings on Prospects:

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/SectorBs>

- ➔ For each of your case studies think about the following:
 - What were the significant factors that helped this graduate decide on this career route?
 - What specific skills, qualities and attitudes were required for this job role?
 - How did the graduate gain both formal and informal training and experience, and enhance their CV to get started in this field of work?

- ➔ Imagine you are in a conversation with this graduate - using the template on the following page make notes on any tips you could pick up on preparing your future career.

CV!

- ➔ Then use the last column overleaf to note any particular actions you could take towards your own career preparation in relation to your studies, paid or voluntary activities, or developing your CV, based on the above.

My actions in response?				
Tips on how to prepare				
Relevant skills, and how gained				
Factors involved in career choice				
Case Study				

Task 7: Self-employment/Freelance working - Do you have the potential to run your own business?

In the performing arts sector, freelance working is common, or you may decide to start an arts business to facilitate cultural activities. You will need an enterprising approach, and to run a successful business, certain entrepreneurial skills are very important.

Take this quiz to see how confident you are in these skills. Circle the number on the scale that represents how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Then total your score.

I Can	Strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly
	agree		agree nor		disagree
1 Spot new market opportunities	5	4	3	2	1
2 Think of ways to improve services or activities	5	4	3	2	1
3 Identify areas for potential growth	5	4	3	2	1
4 Think of innovative ideas for business development	5	4	3	2	1
5 Imagine how my business venture will operate	5	4	3	2	1
6 Build relationships with potential sponsors/partners	5	4	3	2	1
7 Identify potential sources of funding	5	4	3	2	1
8 Work under pressure	5	4	3	2	1
9 Cope with stress	5	4	3	2	1
10 Be persistent despite setbacks	5	4	3	2	1
11 React quickly to change or failure	5	4	3	2	1
12 Follow up contacts and build networks	5	4	3	2	1
13 Convince others of my ideas	5	4	3	2	1
14 Persuade others to accept my viewpoint	5	4	3	2	1
15 Recruit and train key staff	5	4	3	2	1

What your score means:

- 50-75 You can start that business plan. You have the makings of an entrepreneur.
- 35-49 You have potential but need to push yourself. You may want to improve your skills in your weaker areas, or consider hiring someone with those skills.
- 20-34 You may not want to start a business alone. Look for a business partner who can compliment you in the areas where you are weak.
- Under 20 Self-employment may not be for you. You will probably be happier and more successful working for someone else. Only you can make that decision.

Career Planning - Next Steps After Graduation

By now you may have given some thought to your plans after graduating, and recent experiences may have helped refine your plans. For example, to pursue:

- Immediate entry to your chosen career, or a stop-gap job to pay off debts
- Experience related to your longer-term goals
- Further full-time or part-time study or some time out, perhaps a gap year

All these options require careful research and exploration, if you are to avoid mistakes, which are costly in time and money! Plenty of help is available to help you explore possible routes – use the linked resources on the following pages.

On the other hand, you may still feel very uncertain about the future - making career decisions is a PROCESS based on a careful evaluation of yourself and a thorough exploration of the options.

Use the on-line Careerplan <http://oldweb.northampton.ac.uk/stu/CMS/index.htm> to help you begin this process in a systematic way. You can then make decisions you are able to justify and act upon with real energy and enthusiasm!

Task 8: Assessing the suitability of job roles

- ➔ Understanding yourself and what you really want - not necessarily identifying specific job titles at first, but clarifying the factors which would be important in your ideal role. So, the first stage is to explore your own preferences and priorities, for example:
 - To use subject-specific knowledge or to use particular skills
 - To satisfy particular interests, or to achieve a goal
 - To feel a sense of purpose or value
 - To work within a particular work-place environment or culture

- ➔ Exploring some options - use the Job Roles record sheets to identify the skills and qualities required, plus the evidence you have already to demonstrate these to an employer.

- ➔ Broadening your ideas - use Prospects links to explore alternative options. Identify job profiles and follow cross-referenced information to explore other similar or related jobs. Note: over 50% of graduate vacancies are not degree-specific - employers often want generic skills more than subject knowledge.

- ➔ Listen to tips from previous graduates of Dance or Drama - use the case studies in the last section; if possible talk to people about the work they do, and ask for advice on getting started. You could also gather valuable information by contacting professional bodies - see the list of web resources in this pack.

Job roles directly related to your subject - are you suited?

Choose 3 roles below and complete the boxes. If you can easily find evidence from your experiences, then you may wish to investigate the role further to fully assess your suitability. Alternatively if there is a role you are considering but which you are struggling to find evidence for, then you might need to look at ways of developing your range of experiences, thereby improving your chances of success.

Job role	Skills and Qualities Demanded	Examples of Evidence
Performer: Actor/Dancer		
Director		
Community Artist/Facilitator		
Teacher/Lecturer		
Theatre/Dance in Education		
Drama/Dance Movement Therapist		

Job roles in which your subject knowledge and skills would be useful - are you suited?

Choose 3 roles below and complete the boxes. If you can easily find evidence from your experiences, then you may wish to investigate the role further to fully assess your suitability. Alternatively if there is a role you are considering but which you are struggling to find evidence for, then you might need to look at ways of developing your range of experiences, thereby improving your chances of success.

Job role	Skills and Qualities Demanded	Examples of Evidence
TV/Film Production Assistant		
Store Manager		
Choreographer		
Designer: Set/Lighting/ Costume		
Arts Event/Venue Manager		
Arts Critic/Journalist		

Further Resources on the Web*

Prospects web resources *Access these links online at <http://pdp.northampton.ac.uk>
(Links accessed July 2008)

1. Dance or Drama degree

Apart from suggestions elsewhere in this pack, the following web-based resources on Prospects (www.prospects.ac.uk) are excellent for broadening your ideas.

- Options with a Degree in Dance, Drama or Performing Arts
<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/performdeg>
- Your Degree What Next? <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/yourdegree>
- What do Graduates Do? <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/wdgd>

2. Employment sectors

Prospects Sector Briefings give an overview of an employment sector with example roles for graduates and how to get started, plus case material. Here are some examples which might interest you:

- Advertising and Public Relations <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/advertisingsb>
- Broadcast, Film and Interactive Media <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/broadcastsb>
- Creative and Cultural Arts <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/culturalsb>
- Education <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/educationsb>
- Health Sector <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/healthsb>
- Sports and Leisure <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/sportsb>
- Voluntary Sector <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/voluntarysb>

3. Occupational profiles

Each profile has cross-references to other roles to broaden your ideas, and includes information on typical activities, training and career progression, work styles, salaries, vacancy sources and many links for information. Make a start with:

- Arts Administration <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/adminarts>
- Health Therapies <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/healtheraspec>
- Broadcasting, Film and Video Production
<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/pubfilmvidprod>
- Performance <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/pubperform>
- Theatre <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/pubtheatre>

4. General links

- Prospects Planner - guidance package to help match your preferences and strengths with aspects of graduate roles <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/pplanner>
- Postgraduate Study <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/pgdbase>
- Postgraduate Fairs <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/pgfairs>
- Postgraduate Funding <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/fundstudy>
- Job Hunting <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/jobhunt>
- Applications and Interviews (including CVs)
<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/appsinterviews>

Links for professional development in the cultural industries

Organisations supporting skills, professional and career development in the creative industries

- Palatine <http://palatine.ac.uk/>
- Association of British Theatre Technicians <http://www.abtt.org.uk/>
- British Actors Equity Association <http://www.equity.org.uk/>
- Dance database <http://www.theplace.org.uk/>
- Independent Theatre Council <http://www.itc-arts.org/>
- Broadcasting, Entertainment Cinematographic and Theatre Union (BECTU) <http://www.bectu.org.uk/>

Some more professional training links

Recommended Dance web-sites can be accessed from this page of Dance resources

- <http://www.palatine.ac.uk/directory/index.php/Dance/>
- Recommended Drama web-sites from this page of resources <http://www.palatine.ac.uk/directory/index.php/Drama/>
- Professional training and development (youth drama) <http://nayd.ie/training/show/artstrain#participants>
- Dancers' Career Development <http://www.thedcd.org.uk/>
- Careers in Film Performing <http://www.skillset.org/film/jobs/performing/>
- Getting in to theatre work <http://www.thestage.co.uk/connect/>
- British Arts <http://www.britisharts.co.uk/>
- The Actors' Centre <http://www.actorscentre.co.uk/>
- National Resource Centre for Dance <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/NRCD>

Enterprise and self-employment

National Council for Graduate Enterprise <http://www.ncge.com/communities/careers> - lots of useful resources both in this section and the Flying Start section with advice on business start-up

Self-employment:

http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Self_employment/p!eFcmg

Skills sector training organisations

- Creative and Cultural Skills <http://www.ccskills.org.uk/>
- Audio Visual Industries/Skills for Media <http://www.skillset.org/>

Internal resources

Use Careerplan (<http://oldweb.northampton.ac.uk/stu/CMS/index.htm>) for your complete guide to Career Management Skills, including sections on Improving Chances, Making Applications and Networking Skills

Careers Service resources

<http://www.northampton.ac.uk/departments/student-services/ecg/student-graduates/> include Further Study options, Working abroad and gaining experience – visit the Careers Information Centre for more detailed resources which include specific web-site lists for all sectors of employment and areas of interest.

Task 9: Exploring career options - Broadening and focusing your ideas

- ➔ Start with career ideas of your own, suggestions generated by Prospects within Explore Types of Jobs, or in the sector briefings. Each of the profiles has a list of related job titles, so you can use them to cross-reference and explore areas of work you may not have considered before.
- ➔ RECORD YOUR RESPONSES to different roles, both negative and positive, and build up your own list of job aspects which appeal and those which you would rather avoid. This list will form the criteria for your ideal job which can be more useful than traditional 'job titles' which may be restrictive and unhelpful. Knowing what you want and why is also very useful at the application and interview stage.

Include Factors	Avoid Factors

- ➔ Remember that ***within a particular career area***, there may be ***different jobs or different settings*** which can alter the whole work context and lifestyle experienced. Think about which particular job roles might suit your needs and personality - this means a thorough exploration of how a career might develop and the different contexts in which it might be carried out.

Focusing your Ideas

- ➔ Now using resources listed, try exploring your preferred options in greater depth. Choose two or three possible careers to look at in more detail, and identify the skill, interest, motivation, and personality factors which make these a good match.

Job 1	
Job 2	
Job 3	

- ➔ Imagine you are answering questions on an application form or at an interview and answer them for each of the above jobs:
Why do you want to work in this particular field?
What particular contribution do you feel you can offer?

Task 10: Career action plan

Preferred Career Goal	Planned Entry Point/route (further study, training, experience)	Further Action Needed (information, contacts, vacancy sources)
Preferred Option:		
Alternative possibilities:		

If you are still undecided and need to explore a range of options, use the checklist below to help you identify some actions to ensure your next steps are clear - these could include taking time out, but it still needs planning!

Use Prospects	Visit careers information centre	Make contacts to gather information	Update/ refine CV - check with adviser	Explore options to gain experience	Research vacancy sources
Dates and outcomes					

Task 11: The art of networking - Making, nurturing and using contacts

Networking is an essential skill for gaining a 'foot in the door' in competitive sectors such as theatre, media and PR, and in the creative arts/cultural industries generally, and also for accessing valuable (and often elusive) work placement

opportunities while a student. It is also crucial for success in generating opportunities for career progression, and enhances the enterprise skills needed for those pursuing portfolio or freelance working, and self-employment.

➔ Imagine a friend has mentioned some resources/contacts you might use in order to gain experience in an area of the performing arts/cultural sector which interests you greatly. List three action steps you could take to gain a period of work experience during the Easter or summer vacation.

CV!

- 1
- 2
- 3

➔ Write a few sentences outlining your initial conversation on the telephone persuading the busy unit manager to give you an opportunity to meet.

➔ You are at a specialist careers fair organised by the professional body and trade groups associated with your chosen career. In addition to your well-prepared CV, how might you introduce yourself to make a lasting impression?

➔ Keep a record of your networking contacts, resources, and information.

Date	Organisation/ Employer	Named contact, email and telephone number	Information: opportunities, entry points, routes, advice, web links	Comments and action, date for follow-up

Task 12: Agency/audition records

Keep an ongoing record of your agency contacts and record any auditions offered, together with the outcomes. Your personal reflections on

the experience and any comments or feedback on your performance can help you learn from these experiences and use them for the future.

Date	Agency contact details	Notes on opportunities, areas of work	Audition details: role, characterisation, interpretation	Outcomes, feedback, and follow-up action

Tips:

- ➔ Familiarise yourself with both the role and the context - the bigger picture; read and re-read any instructions and information
- ➔ Learn and rehearse texts thoroughly: have several audition pieces ready for last-minute opportunities
- ➔ Be flexible and respond to directions/advice given on the day - demonstrate your adaptability
- ➔ Ask questions for clarification, and ask for the chance to re-run

Further information is available from:

The Stage - <http://www.thestage.co.uk/connect/howto/auditions.php>

UK Performing Arts - <http://www.ukperformingarts.co.uk>