Relational Ethics: dance, touch and learning

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About the Author
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Introduction

The primary focus of this research is an exploration of ways in which we might align and enrich our appreciation of ethics as a relational attitude that underpins teaching, learning and the preparation for professional practice in dance. Valuable contributions have been gathered from a range of practicing academics with current experience of teaching in the disciplinary field of dance in UK Higher Education institutions. Particular attention has been given to the value of the use of touch as an important feature of dance based lifelong learning. The report also includes a literature review detailing pertinent references to philosophy, education, ethics, and dance. The aim of this inclusion is to build an open field of thinking in order to underpin further developments of the project.

Specific aims of the project.

1. To start to explore the awareness and integration of ethics in higher education dance programmes.

2. To consider how relational ethics might be used as an effective mode for identifying features of qualitative learning and teaching in dance.

3. To explore how ethics informs current practice and engagement with ‘touch’ in teaching and learning with students and tutors.

From a base in arts practices in education the discussion includes exploration of relational knowledge generation with specific reference to knowledge in dance where exploration of bodily tactility and the interface between ‘inside’ experiences and ‘outside’ relations are vital features of disciplinary identity.

In the expanding sector of dance in higher education refinements in appreciation for learning through touch are nurtured and enhanced utilizing a range of working processes that include collaboration, cooperation, peer-to-peer feedback, critical reflective practices, improvisation and movement awareness. What shapes the following discussion is recognition of these ongoing pedagogical encounters as corporeal experiences that mingle ethical awareness and aesthetic aptitude in fluid relation with critical, interpretive and evaluative appreciation of context.
To describe embodiment as intercorporeality is to emphasize that the experience of being embodied is never a private affair, but is always already mediated by our continual interactions with other human and non-human bodies (Weiss 1999:5).

From the outcomes of the survey undertaken as part of the research (see Appendix 3), it is evident that teaching and learning in dance, as practiced on undergraduate programmes in the UK, prioritizes opportunities for students to work and learn through interactions with peers and tutors and to come to know more about themselves through engagement in these social settings.

Listening to the Dance HE Community

A key starting point for the current project was a conversation with colleagues during a PALATINE1 event in 2010. The event, entitled Collaborative Art Practices in HE: Mapping and Developing Pedagogical Models, explored a range of issues and challenges that surround both module design and delivery in the area of collaboration in arts-based learning (Alix, Dobson and Wilsmore 2010).

The discussions generated during the event focused our thoughts on the role that personal ethical codes play in collaborative learning. By the end of the event we had agreement amongst a group of dance academics to find ways to initiate cross-institutional projects that could identify common concerns that arise when working with groups in dance. The discussion hinged on a number of key points; the increasing proportion of collaborative work that takes place within dance, the physically close working relationships often necessary when creating performance and the evident inclusion of improvisation as a key learning experience on many programmes of study.

This evolved into a common interest in exploring what might be identified as personal or institutional ethical attitudes currently in use in the discipline. We did think that we might find substantial developments in relation to work undertaken in the preparation for professional practice that is increasingly evident in undergraduate work and/or appreciation for the attention given to ethics in somatic practices that are increasingly popular in curriculum development.

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1 From 2000-2011 PALATINE was the Higher Education Academy’s Subject Centre for Dance, Drama and Music, funding projects and activities to support and enhance learning and teaching in the disciplines.
There are evident changes taking place in many of the core features of dance in higher education. These changes emerge from a generational shift in attention that is refocusing the identity of the discipline and securing its position as a twenty first century area of study and research within the academy. It was also evident in our conversations about collaboration that there are potentially critical consequences for socially engaged arts practice in HE that result from the decreased role of social interaction in early years education in the UK. The preconceived notions of divisions between mind and body that falsely pervade education continue to be detrimental to the learning opportunities of future generations. What is also at stake here is a loss in appreciation for the manner in which enhanced bodily awareness relates to ethical relationships, critical thinking and knowledge generation. Dance as a discipline is well placed to be the foundation of this work. Those who learn and teach in the discipline have experience in practices that rely on learning through non-verbal communication, often using touch as a key feature of working together.

In order to conduct preliminary research a number of institutions were approached in order to gather responses from students and staff about their experience of teaching and learning in dance. Representatives from nine institutions have contributed to this first phase project. All of the institutions involved offer dance at undergraduate level, either as a single or joint honours mode of study. The institutions involved include colleagues and students from the University of Leeds, University of Hull, University of Chester, De Montfort University, Coventry University, Edge Hill University, University of Lincoln, University of Central Lancashire, and the Northern School of Contemporary Dance.

A range of data has been generated through the use of a schedule of questions disseminated directly to colleagues and passed onto students via their own departmental staff. The questions shared with colleagues concern; the procedural use of ethics and touch in teaching, the management and design of the programme/s that they teach and personal insights into approaches to teaching and learning in dance. The student questions focus on experiences of personal learning through the use of touch as well as engagement in peer-to-peer experiences during taught sessions. We were particularly interested to explore responses to questions concerning the ways that touch effects teaching and learning and whether an implicit or explicit practice of ethics was favoured in support of the discipline.
Dance, Touch and Learning – Student Response

The use of touch in studio work

Perhaps unsurprisingly when students were asked about the use of touch in their studio work in dance they all expressed familiarity with the practice. They noted that this experience was most common in their work with peers during improvisation sessions and more specifically in contact improvisation. However, it was evident that touch features throughout practice based work including different forms of learning from choreography, to technique teaching, and collaboration.

Nearly three quarters of the students who responded had not felt discomfort in the use of touch as part of their learning and had felt no need to ‘opt out’ of the use of touch. The primary reasons given for incidences where ‘opting out’ was used revolved around the management of personal injury.

Positive features of learning through touch

When asked, in what ways touch had been a positive feature in their learning, the responses were richly detailed and pertinent.

One student commented that;

Contact improvisation has given me a deeper understanding of the density of the human body and how balance and weight can be transferred through the body. The bodywork exercises have allowed me to experience more feeling and a developed awareness of some of the more internal structures of my body and the movements that are available to me.

Another said that they had;

...never really thought about dancing without touch being part of the activity, it seems ordinary and everyday. I can remember thinking what a difference can happen when someone helps you to find how a movement or a position should feel rather than look, getting a sense of weight or resistance by someone working with you can make a real change in your understanding.
Another suggesting that…

…at times it has helped me understand the dynamic quality involved in establishing relationships in partner work. I have been able to feel the space and alignment that my tutor is trying to help me find. It helped me learn about tension and letting go.

Reasons for using touch in learning

Students were asked to consider the reasons why touch might be used as a feature of their learning experience. They were asked to prioritise a list of possible features that may underpin the reasons why touch might be used. The list included:

- To provide correction;
- To refine alignment;
- To provide precision in feedback;
- Used as a tool for communication in peer-to-peer teaching;
- A route to enhance self-awareness / bodily experience;
- To introduce new material;
- Aid to attending to detail in shared material;
- Supportive identity / self-esteem;
- Offer focused learning opportunities.

From the list shown below what do you think are the most useful reasons to use touch in learning in dance? Please answer in priority order with 1 as the most important.
Reading the chart above shows the relative importance that the group placed on each individual feature. The key shows the preference choices with ‘1’ as their most important sliding through to ‘6’. This question did mean that they had to choose to ignore certain features in favour of those they felt more important.

What can be seen in the chart is a consistent peak occurring at feature ‘5’ (route to enhance self awareness/ bodily experience). In reading from the base line of the chart upwards this feature may not be the key priority for every individual. However, it does feature consistently as relevant to their learning experience.

Feature ‘7’ (aid to noticing detail in shared material) shows a similar profile, though it features more strongly when rated as a third choice. It is clear that touch does not feature as a main experience in the introduction of new material in technical dance work (feature ‘6’), although it does feature more strongly as a lower priority- from 3 – 6.

**Feeling uncomfortable using touch**

When asked if they had felt able to opt out of involvement in touch during taught sessions they were less clear, with just over half saying that they felt able to do so. Perhaps this is caught up in a desire to accommodate the requests given by a tutor or not wanting to be seen to be different amongst peers. It may also reflect that the students had not considered the issue or identified their own right to step out of a situation that might make them feel uncomfortable. It is worth remaining mindful of the fine line that we as teachers can face in offering positive support in the face of challenging tasks, cajoling or coercive behaviours.

When asked for reasons why they may choose to opt out of the use of touch they suggested that this occurred on occasions when they found that communication about an actual set task had not been clear. The responses suggest a need for greater clarity in how we introduce working with touch. There are of course evident concerns for some students about their proficiency in working safely which can be heightened when asked to be responsible for others.

However from the collective responses to this question it is evident that there are instances where up to a quarter of students experience forms of discomfort when asked to work using touch. Finding ways to secure this group and to accommodate the broad
range of personalities and life experiences that feature in our studio environments is an important consideration in planning our delivery.

When tutors were asked a similar question concerning their experience of students ‘opting out’ during sessions the responses seem to suggest either injury or particular personal incidences where individual students needed support on a case-by-case basis.

What reasons might make you want to opt out of using touch? Please tick which ever are appropriate.

- Feeling uncomfortable about the task
- Not knowing the other people involved
- Not wanting to be lifted
- Feeling rushed into the process
- Lack of experience in the group
- Unfamiliar expectations
- All of the above
- Difficult relationships in the group
- Dominant individuals in the group

Being unfamiliar with some or all of the people in the group was cited as an inhibiting factor when working with touch. Early group bonding is important in establishing levels of trust and a shared community of experience. Care does need to be taken about the ways in which people join and forge an identity within groups. This is particularly pertinent for those who may, for whatever reason, be new to a programme of study, or have issues of continuity of attendance. It is also worth considering the impact of reduced contact time and the potential impact that this may have on the group’s interpersonal dynamics.
Students who noted their discomfort said that this occurred,

...usually when we are just starting in new groups and don’t know each other very well. I can remember thinking that the teacher might expect me to be able to stretch more than I can and being fearful of what they might do- but mostly this has been fine because you work together within a range.

and that;

It can be difficult when new members join the group if they haven’t been involved at the point when we started to get to know each other but you can quickly get over that. Sometimes people are frightened of their own weight when working together.

Agreeing rules for using touch

We asked the students if they agreed to the use of any specific rules when working with their peers in studio practice. In the chart above it can be seen that a majority of students either confirm that they do or suggested that it was sometimes appropriate to establish some boundaries. The detail shared in their individual responses shows a considerable degree of trust and flexibility. For example,

- …mostly try to make sure that everyone is working in the same way and being careful about what is expected and how to do things without damaging themselves and others;
- Touch does become very ordinary for us, it would be odd not to touch in dance;
- It is part of a shared and understood process;
- Knowing social boundaries means we don’t really have to set rules;
- Creating trust and using it in a POSITIVE way.
Dance, Touch and Ethics – Tutor Responses

The following is a review of responses shared by dance lecturers working in UK Higher Education Institutions. They were asked to consider a series of questions that addressed; their experience of teaching dance with groups of students, their awareness of key ethical principles and their engagement with evaluative procedures that may be institutional or sector wide.

The Use of Touch

All participants replied positively to the use of touch based learning in their teaching. Some identified that enhancing social awareness was a priority in their work whilst others focused on its use in providing feedback and supporting self-identity.

The comments included for example

_In the teaching of contact improvisation, touch is a fundamental part of my teaching. Touch in this context may not (or is rarely) given solely through the hands but through a fuller physical contact. Touch here provides a means to teach skills and provide instantaneous feedback in the one moment._

_My work facilitates a learning environment for the students to be curious and for them to share their learning and discoveries with one another._

_I use touch from the very beginning with first years and have never had an adverse response, but it is a quality of touch that is about listening to, as opposed to doing to, to enable the students to have and find their own experience as opposed to imposing something on them through touch._

_Touch is used in my sessions first in partner work to bring attention to how an area of the body may move, supported with visual material and dialogue, the students exchange and feedback on what they notice and feel both from receiving guided touch and giving guided touch. It is not about correcting each other and demonstrating a right and wrong, but to broaden our understanding of our own body and to work with this knowledge and experience._

What is interesting to note here is the considerable attention paid to the building and securing of a community of practice through the work running alongside the use of touch as a direct form of communication about the movement work and the context. When nudged to prioritise the ways in which they might aim to utilise touch in their teaching, participants found it difficult to rank the identified features.
One respondent commented on the difficulty of ranking, as they would have placed many of the choices on equal terms. This is understandable as many of the features can be said to interweave with one another. However a number of interesting and somewhat unexpected outcomes can be noted from the responses.

The most immediately visual feature of the chart is the clear agreement shown by many (nearly three quarters) that touch used as a route to enhance self-awareness / bodily experience was a key priority. The feature scores one most often overall. What is also interesting is that whilst touch is evidently not a primary feature in introducing new movement material it does still feature as a mechanism for correction during studio work. Touch is clearly important in the support of self-esteem and does feature as an important contribution in peer-to-peer feedback. These features were valued more highly overall than the provision of corrections between tutor and student, which may well have been the response for an earlier generation.
Support and staff development

When we asked about areas where it would be beneficial to have additional support in terms of ethical approaches to teaching one participant’s response succinctly captures the tenet of our discussion, using the ‘other’ category to argue that,

As touch, is often informed by some form of ‘somatic’ practice, I consider it essential that tutors who use this should be additionally trained in or informed about the potential psychological implications of their work for students taking part. Due to the often debated, therapeutic potential of such practice, I believe tutors would benefit from additional knowledge in research findings from existing disciplines such as psychology or psychotherapy, as well as other.

Evidence of interest in professional development that explores a range of interpersonal relations informed by social and cultural differences is clear. It is interesting to see that the participants valued discussion of ways to manage interrelationships between students. This is something that we had discussed during the initial conversations of collaborative work with colleagues from other disciplines.
A number of considerations come to mind when reflecting upon the responses to this question:

1. The impact of decreasing contact time for teaching, familiarity and group cohesion
2. The attention given to the preparation of group assessments.
3. Preparedness for shared group responsibility during projects when there has been little contact time.
4. The need to engage students more fully in understanding processes of assessment, and their own learning attitudes in order to build a community of practice that can drive forward independent learning and critical engagement.

**Implicit and explicit use of ethics**

One of the key concerns in beginning this project was to explore the relationship between implicit and explicit practice of ethics in teaching. We asked participants to identify which approach most clearly identified their attitude to engagement with ethics and received a mixed response. Participants preferred most often to identify their approach to ethics as a combination of implicit and explicit attention.
We then asked if participants thought it preferable or not preferable for ethics to be implicitly practiced. Whilst the majority remained unsure there was an increase in the number showing preferences for both the implicit and explicit categories. Some responded with ideas that provide a clear signpost for future work.

I think there might be a level to which some factors constituting ethics in teaching could be explicitly practiced. This would allow for standards of practice to be maintained which can occasionally be compromised when not enough critical thought and reflection of professional practice takes place. However, this should come with a level of freedom for the practitioner.

If it operates on an implicit level that has an earlier level of agreement I think it might be preferable. If everything relies on explicit exhibition of procedures it might lose trust. It is tricky touch speaks in different, often more complex ways than words. We could benefit from agreed manners of behaviour but not sure we need an enforced rulebook and gatekeeper.

However, when asked a further question seeking clarification concerning an explicit practice of ethics in teaching, the majority identified it as a preferable choice.

Whilst less than a quarter of the participants identified their own approach to ethics as explicit, more than three quarters of the group thought that it would be preferable for ethics to be explicitly expressed. The answers here do seem quite contradictory, interestingly this particular group of questions were the most frequently avoided by participants.
Introducing and monitoring ethics in practice

There appears to be some agreement across different institutions concerning the management of ethical codes of practice in terms of staff experience. This was evident either through staff development that had been attended or evidence of discussions taking place during team planning. There was very little evidence that agreed procedures were in place for the introduction of working with touch. Most of the participants said they were not sure or they confirmed that there were no such procedures in operation in their own institution. There is however some familiarity with the use of institutional or departmental introductions that address working practices during student induction procedures.
It is evident in the responses that discussions concerning ethics or at least ethical issues, do take place within the curriculum of the majority of programmes. The programme teams do appear to evaluate examples of good practice as part of professional preparation modules but evidence here would suggest that ethics plays a minor role in content and discussion. It would be useful to continue this exploration in order to identify how and in what context ethics is integrated into ‘awareness raising’ as part of professional development.

The responses from colleagues do confirm that consideration of ethics does feature across a broad range of teaching experiences, involvement in workshops appears to to be a key feature of this process, which is supported by seminar discussion.
At the moment departments tend not to have a designated individual to oversee engagement with ethical procedures. The majority of teams do not include ethics in the annual review of modules or the participant was not sure of the policy in the area.

Whilst the majority of staff were aware of the legal implications of implied consent and had some awareness of their university policy concerning negligence or malpractice, more than half of the participants were unsure of the existence of ethical codes for approaches to individual and group engagement promoted in the dance sector. Those who did know of existent documentation referred to the Framework for Community Dance (Foundation for Community Dance, 2006) and the now out of print Dancers Charter published by Dance UK (2001).
Conceptual Foundations: A Literature Review

Ethics of embodiment

In the background of this research resides interest in fostering a debate concerning the identification of an ethics of embodiment, where experiences of transformative learning can be closely aligned with thinking generated through ‘bodily-dwelling’.

The comment by Schenck (1986:44) that the body is ‘…our centre of activity in the world’ is significant here, where the body can be understood as ‘literally our selves expressed’ (Schenck 1986:46).

Where feasible, advantage has been taken to share a range of cross-disciplinary perspectives. Although this does include the early positioning of ethics as a moral imperative exhibited through the practice of codes and principles. The intention is to foster appreciation for an adaptive ethics of practice emerging through responsible and responsive engagement with others.

Ethics in practice

When referencing a standard dictionary definition, ethics can be understood to mean the philosophical study of the moral value of human conduct and of the rules and principles that ought to govern it.

The field of ethics (or moral philosophy) involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behavior. (http://www.iep.utm.edu/ethics/)

This study considers ways in which we might function within codes of acceptable behaviours, as well as identify what behaviours could be said to have integrity, to be considered fair, informed and equitable.
It is an arena immersed in politics, power, authority and cultural difference. When considering ethics there can be a tendency to think in the terms of sets of rules that must be followed, rules that some might see as offering little more than constraint. Such an approach tends to compartmentalize ethical concerns into something to be identified, managed and set aside as completed.

Agreeing to accept given rules can undermine the potential value and enrichment that can be found in attending to the effect and affect of one’s own lived experiences. However, there is value in acknowledging that to study ethics is to consider the norms and standards for human behaviour, as well as to examine moral statements and judgements. These can be culturally specific, although the United Nations does continue to work towards what might become a universal adoption of codes.

However, ethics is both a subject of philosophical inquiry and a way of being in the world. Through engagement with ethics one can connect the nature and properties of knowledge with discourse about engagement with ethics and with actual day-to-day experiences of ethical situations. There is an extensive literature that addresses ethics from various philosophical perspectives to the practicalities of engagement in educational ethics; ethics in research can vary across disciplines.

**Thoughts on a working definition**

Ethics will be considered throughout the report as a behavioral attitude that informs the ways in which we establish a moral position in relation to another, or others. The etymology of the term *ethics* can be traced to *ethos*, which refers to moral character, disposition or habit.

The idea of *habit* can encompass actions evidenced through the repetition of certain traits and attitudes. When these are considered together they contribute to what might be seen to constitute individual character.

What is likely to make a distinct difference in your reading of this report is the position that you hold in relation to these early definitions. Clear difference can be found in the dichotomy between those who consider that our ethical stance is derived from responses to a set of given moral principles and those who understand their discrete
ethical identity to be based on a bodily-dwelling, that informs their individual sense of responsibility to being-in-the-world.

**Ethical frameworks**

An example of three ethical models based in a framework of human rights policy can be found in The International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies report entitled ‘Ethics in Cultural Policy’ (ifacca.org/topic/ethics-in-cultural-policy). They include,

1. **The ‘ethics of principles’**
   addresses universal principles such as honesty, justice and respect. Actions are governed by principles that should not be broken, and judged by intention rather than any consequences of actions taken.

2. **The ‘utilitarian ethics of consequences’**
   prioritizes the ‘goodness’ of outcomes such as increased knowledge. Thus the rightness or wrongness of actions is judged by their consequences rather than their intent.

3. **The ‘virtue ethics of skills’**
   stresses a contextual or situational ethical position. It emphasises the moral values and ethical skills in the negotiation of ethical dilemmas, utilising the reflective skills of dialogue.

**Relational consideration of ethics**

According to cultural theorist Sara Ahmed (2000) an understanding of ethics might be established by considering how we as individuals each individually accommodate our encounters with others, more specifically, ‘… how one can live with what cannot be measured by the regulative force of morality’ (2000:138).
In deciding to consider what might identify a relational stance to ethics there is need to concern personal attitudes found in everyday engagements. In this there is the inevitable need to address the ways in which we each deal with the complexities of difference, variability and change in our encounters.

Ethics in this sense concerns how we engage with the possibilities afforded by the not-yet-known. How we might cultivate such sensitivity to context or to what Bennett (2001:3) identifies as an ‘…ethical generosity and sensitivity towards (an) other’ remains the focus. In Bennett’s argument she goes on to suggest that the adoption of codes and criteria may well be an indispensable part of ethical practice but if these are introduced and enforced through obligation there is evidently insufficient impetus to meet the affective aspirations we might hold.

It is possible to inform your own sense of personal responsibility and integrity by establishing a number of organising principles to underpin an ethical stance without the need to have them act as rigid codes. Three such principles are proposed by Seiber (1992) and include, ‘beneficence’ that aims to maximise positive outcomes whilst minimising harm, ‘respect’, that protects the autonomy of individual persons and ‘justice’, that seeks to ensure that procedures are non-exploitative.

In her work Telling Stories, Revealing Lives Carolyn Ellis considers various dimensions of ethics in research. She draws on the work of Guillemin and Gillam (2004) to contextualize two modes of identification with ethics; the first, procedural ethics and second, situational ethics.

**Procedural ethics**

…associated with institutional mandate via agreed principles and protocols including informed consent and protection from harm,

**Situation ethics**

…takes an operational approach to the practice of informed ethical decision making in unpredictable situations.
According to Ellis there is a third dimension; what she calls relational ethics.

*Relational ethics requires researchers to act from our hearts and minds, acknowledge our interpersonal bonds to others, and take responsibility for actions and their consequences* (Ellis, 2006:3).

Support for this stance comes from work by others including, Bergum (1998) and Slattery & Rapp (2003). Together these authors prioritize the need for an ethical stance that openly acknowledges that there is often a need, ‘to deal with the reality and practice of changing relations … over time’ (Ellis 2006:4). It is this different approach to ethics that underpins the non-exploitative learning environments that we often seek to foster in dance.

In the work by Ahmed, Bennett, Seiber and Ellis you can trace the influence of the philosophical explorations of Spinoza. His writings share the idea that a practice of relational ethics would focus on the question of what a body can do in any given situation or through any decided action. Massumi’s (2003) reading of Spinozian ethics suggests that there should be no necessarily positive or negative actions to be assessed against preset classifications or codes. Ethics involves working together to secure understanding of the situation that a group may find themselves working in and having to negotiate at any given time.

*Ethics in this sense is completely situational. It’s completely pragmatic. And it happens in between people, in the social gaps. There is no intrinsic good or evil. The ethical value of an action is what it brings out in the situation, for its transformation, how it breaks sociality open. Ethics is about how we inhabit uncertainty, together. It’s not about judging right or wrong* (Massumi 2003:7).

As the discussion moves forward it is aligned with the articulation of relational ethics given above. Part of the task here is to explore the place of ethics in the current practice of teaching and learning undertaken by teams of academics who are delivering undergraduate dance programmes in the UK.

What is evident from the publicity for programmes is that they promote learning environments that can be seen as primarily relational in nature. Although there is to some extent a co-construction of the community of practice in any context it is often evident that differentiations between roles, experience and power do exist. Addressing the ways that these situations and positions are considered will be discussed as we move through the stages of the report.
**Articulating Education**

The pivotal aspect of education that is threaded throughout the discussion is the promotion of learning in dance as a humanising pedagogy; one that supports the development of the individual through a combinatory matrix of enhanced ethical and aesthetic awareness, encompassing empowerment, through individual and social integration. From this, evolves a way of seeing education as a process through which, in an atmosphere of inquiry and exploration, individuals can be offered opportunities for the development of reasoning processes that in turn lead to an increasing facility for critical engagement with their independent perceptual and conceptual range.

There do not appear to be proposals on the horizon to promote the creation of the articulate public that Dewey (1934) favoured, instead we see what might be called ‘minimal selves’, resulting from narrowly focused short term goals and impoverished educational opportunity (Lasch 1984). There is not sufficient scope in the present discussion to frame curriculum content, or approaches to assessment instead, focus is directed to consideration of what underpins an holistic transformative learning experience.

What we promote is a view of dance as an ethico-aesthetic education that seeks to expand perceptual powers and the cultivation of sensibility leading to the apprehension of the world (Broudy 1972; Simpson 1985). In the formative educational philosophies of Dewey (1934), where education is viewed as a process in continuous formation of experience, experiment, and transaction, there are lucid arguments that can support such an approach.

Greene (1988:22) encapsulates many similar ideals, when arguing for education to be conceptualized as ‘a process of futuring’, of releasing persons to become different, of provoking persons … to take action to create themselves'. The implication for tutors, particularly in the field of the arts in general, and dance in particular, is the intentional consideration of the manner of approach to teaching and learning. What we visit in this research is the mingling of an ethical, aesthetic and critical sense of perceptions and acuity, prioritising a personal range of inquiry as a form of relational education.
A Civilizing Education: Relating Touch, Thinking and Ethics

A route into this discussion can be traced in the work of pragmatist aesthetcian, John Dewey who in *Arts and Experience* (1934) wrote that there was need to rebalance the compartmentalization increasingly evident in our modes of thinking, knowledge generation and experience, something that is as evidently relevant today as it was for Dewey in the American education system of 1934.

Throughout his work he promotes the need to move away from the entrenched intellectual dualisms between body and mind or soul and matter, suggesting that these positions had themselves only evolved from a sense of fear of how to explain the ‘unknowns’ of life experience.

There has been and still is a continued struggle in gaining permission to possess awareness of the experience of our own body, to be free of the straight-jacketed modes of knowledge generation that define our education systems, academy and disciplines. As Foucault (1977) reminds us in ‘Discipline and Punishment’ and many dance scholars and academics will know and feel, ‘…it is always the body that is at issue…’

From the C17th forwards we have been educated in the divide between body as material matter and mind as an entity with no spatial presence other than a generalised notion that it is within the human brain. Descartes influential notion of, a pure thinking being, with no account of the ways that movement might be initiated, or felt bodily reactions acknowledged, has had a long lasting stultifying effect on the role of embodied practice in education (Johnstone 1992, Howes 1991 & 2005, Midgley 2004).

Even now with a growing wealth of research advancing in branches of neuroscience we remain plagued by somewhat subtler ideas of a sentient brain as an organ of awareness and a physical body as mechanical operator. In conceiving of our minds as something separate from the whole material world we have, at least in the West become used to the idea that we are other than the world, that we reflect upon it rather than exist as a feature of it. In the immediacy of the felt rhythms that move us to dance this imagined double separation acts as an inhibitor in our intention to enhance our knowledge as unified.
We remain on the verge of significant change with advances in research opening new vistas into understanding our human indivisibility. This is further developed in work that explores our role as part of a dynamic and interconnecting ecosystem. The overdue shift in appreciation of embodied knowing strengthens the longstanding arguments for the attributes of particular modes of learning practiced in dance pedagogy.

In 1958 when Laban reflected on his long career exploring movement theory he noted that he had;

…advocated and experimentally tried to pay more attention to human movement – bodily and mental - which is obviously at the basis of all human activity. Movement research and movement education have been neglected in our time and some failures of our civilization are surely influenced, if not produced, by this neglect (Laban, published in Ullmann 1984: 9).

For Shapiro writing in 1998, it was evident that changes were taking place in our appreciation of knowledge generation and that these had a consequent influence on relationships between tutors and students. She broadens and deepens the expectation of curriculum content, suggesting that

The intent of the learning experience moves from one of learning movement vocabulary for the sake of creating dance to gaining an understanding of the self, others, and the larger world for the possibility of change (Shapiro 1998:14-15).

The concept ‘emplacement’ can be useful here as part of this extending horizon of learning. It favours an appreciation for being contextualised and avoids the easy tendency to return to dualistic splits between mind and matter, a doctrine that remains hard to shake off. Emplacement embraces a felt sense of awareness, perception and the critically evaluative in responses to an ever-changing environment. It embraces a fluid state of development aligned with a cumulative appreciation of aesthetic awareness. Together these sentiments coalesce as part of an on-going quest to explore and understand how learning experiences can transform habits of mind. For it is by way of learning to handle our responses and reactions in rich combination that we might forge an enabling knowledge to support the possibility of positive change.
Changing habits of mind

In what might be as an holistic approach the goal is to find ways to maintain interactions between our sensory experiences, environments and interpretations and to move to a heightened appreciation of something that might be framed as an 'ethico-aesthetic life-world', uniting the aesthetic (sensual), literary (intellectual) and poetic (emotional) as features of unitary experience.

The approach affords learning experiences that are fluid in nature, that interlace memory, experience and adaptability with our 'immediate', and future, not yet known. This has lead to a growing presence in dance curricula in higher education of somatic practice in the form of 'somaesthetics'. It draws on the work of many scholars including Husserl (1962), Merleau-Ponty (1962/1964), Sheets-Johnstone (1990, 1992, 2009), Diprose (1994, 2005), Fraleigh(2000), Hanna(2004), Parviainen (1998), and more recently Shusterman (1999), Ginot (2010) Rouhiainen (2008) to identify a few.

In other fields there are similar explorations that may contribute to the wealth of understanding. For example Lefebvre’s (2004:23-4) talk of the immersive nature of participant observation of social interaction, something that has distinctly choreographic attributes. It is combining the social with the cultural, aesthetic and poetic, under an umbrella of what might be recognised as phenomenological inquiry, something akin to a combination of the social and kinaesthetic. Massey (2005) similarly calls for us to attend to our enhanced sense of on-going manoeuvrability. Such instances she says exhibit a sense of, 'momentariness' or the thrown togetherness of something continuously in formation.

It is through our own rhythms that we are inserted into the complexity of the world that we inhabit. This ‘totality of possibilities’, moves between an inside feeling of individual experience and the complex realm of negotiation and compromise generated through reciprocal engagements with others. The others that we brush past as we move through space, that we come into contact with in conversation, that we enter negotiation with in the practicalities of living socially.

It is through such sensation that we access the possibility of perception, as the starting point for knowledge. What this approach generates is exploration of a place for 'being in the world', a nexus of sensory somatic selves, histories, experiences, ideas, and
The synchronicity of these experiences acknowledges that we are in constant flux, adopting and adapting to the rhythms, emotional determinations and wisdoms of others and ourselves. It is interesting to note still further cross threads of influence in the work of Jonas (1979). In *The Imperative of Responsibility* he considers the urgent need for the realisation of the intrinsic links between nature and ourselves. He relates this attitude to the philosophical writings of Spinoza who in his work on ethics championed appreciation for our interconnectedness, rejecting the mechanistic view of the body, as insufficient, and instead identifying humans as, one indivisible substance living in relation with the world.

**Inter-subjective experience in dance**

In the following section focus is given in part to the range of negotiations that take place during the inter-subjective experience of dancing. In this reside aspects of phenomenology, an approach that foregrounds a philosophical engagement with everyday life in terms of individual corporeality and thresholds of social engagement. This is a context that might usefully be understood as ‘...an ethical economy of exchange’ after Williams (1996) in his discussion of ethical forms of practice evident in contact improvisation.

At the core of the discussion lies the notion that the ways in which we engage in relationships with others reveals the qualitative nature of the personal ethical codes by which we live and come to be identified. At the core of any professional practice and as exemplar curriculum, it is evident that attention has to be given to the ways in which we reveal our relationships.

This necessarily will include,

- building particular and sensitive relationships;
- giving attention to the context or setting;
- attending to the processes or activities involved;
- fostering a fluidity of dialogue that comes into existence between these features.

In dance in higher education experiences of embodiment and learning through direct bodily contact are acknowledged for the necessary contribution that they make to knowledge generation. For many dance academics the advantages inherent in this aspect of material thinking, are something akin to what Ellsworth (2004, 6) notes when she...
suggests that learning experiences should be considered as ‘…harbouring and expressing forces and processes of pedagogies as yet unmade, that provoke us to think or imagine new pedagogies in new ways’ (Ellsworth 2004:6). How we disseminate knowledge found through encounters of being in relation with others is important.

How we might move forward in order to implement new pedagogies in new ways is timely in light of the speed of ideological, technological and political change in the sector. This is particularly pertinent in dance where there has been considerable expansion in provision of the discipline in the academy over the past ten years and as in the cycle of fortunes we once again face an uncertain future.

As tutors, we can at times observe expectations placed on us to reinforce cultural norms through the adoption of prescribed theory and accepted cultural expectation. To change this position, requires conscious engagement in active reflexive processes, to allow for a broadening of scope and a willing acceptance of difference. Smith-Shank (1995), talks of a semiotic approach to pedagogy, where the facilitation of reasoning from sign to sign as a way of expanding and accessing interpretation, is the pragmatic focus. The ideas she proposes as semiotic, share similar motivations to what might be thought of in terms of aesthetic/ethical education. What is vital is the possibility of connections between new experiences in combination with the complex network of remembered traces from previous events.

A further point to reflect upon is what education might be but all too often is not, an idea that challenges what has become increasingly accepted in formal education systems and seeps in higher education through market driven ideologies of production. It is hoped that the approaches observed and adopted here foster greater ‘freedoms’ and access to conceptual gateways in learning through the promotion of versatile movement between different forms of knowledge and different manners of engagement. In this assertion lies the idea that education should focus on the entwining potential of human intelligence, enhancing an individuals ability to seek and find order in their experience, to make sense of their contextualised lived world (Greene 1988).

The communications we transmit through touch constitute the most powerful means of establishing human relationships, the foundations of experience (Montagu 1986:xv).
Relation Through Touch

…touching one another …is what makes [bodies,] properly speaking bodies (Nancy 1993:204).

With research work in education, social services and medicine revealing a growing atmosphere of fear and distrust where professionals are required to work to prescribed guidelines of what is deemed ‘safe touch’, it is interesting to note a growing interest in the arts and humanities seeking to connect with an understanding of the senses, the roles they play in the generation of knowledge and the impact they have on life experience (Howes 2005, Csordas 1990, Classen 2003).

In Anzieu’s (1990), suggestion that in our society physical and affective closeness is being unlearnt there may seem little opportunity to engage with change. But if as Mauss suggested in 1979, the attributes we acquire are from the society of which we are a part, then revisiting shared notions of a society and of what constitutes community is vitally important. In this lies the need to revisit the varied connections that exist in modes of communication.

Crucially there is a need to address fundamental questions about our values and the potential to learn through critical engagement with relational ethics. What are the broader consequences of our ever-diminishing access to communication through touch? The question itself stirs a range of what are perceived as social problems sourced in bodily perception to centre stage.

However, we remain in the situation where human responses once thought spontaneous, are increasingly suspended or interrupted if not openly prohibited, the end result being dysfunction or a disconnection in community cohesion, that we can ill afford (Furedi 2010, Piper and Stronach 2008). The situation is further conflated by an emphasis in the broader education system of what has come to be identified as ‘academic’ over the value of the ‘social / integrative’ in our systems of education (Foucault 1979 & 1981). There has been commentary suggesting that this drift as the goal rather than bi-product of changes in social norms that the aim has been to move towards risk avoidance with the priority given to policing, discipline and surveillance rather than understanding, an acceptance of difference.
Dialogic relations through touch

In a discipline such as dance, with a strong inter-relational focus, the need for ethical awareness in our approach and practice to the ways in which we interact with one another needs attention. The relationships that we as tutors share with the students that we teach create specific ethical situations in which students in individual and to different degrees place their trust in us.

The promotion of ‘dialogue’ through these interpersonal relationships needs to be established, forging new opportunities that can lead to a greater sense of fulfilment of human potential. Buber (philosopher, theologian, social-activist, pedagogue) offers useful insight here in an assertion concerning the role of an educator. He argues that, individuals develop and realize the complexity of their personalities through the relationships they develop with other people, with their environment, and with their spiritual beings (which, he suggests, as experiences of art). The existence of such ‘Dialogue’ means that a wholeness of understanding of self is the only place from which to engage with others.

Adopting such a stance, promotes a wisdom, that it is through self-knowledge that we relate to others, rather than through what is the more fashionable idea of identifying with the experiences of others first (Buber 1958, Haim 1986).

To achieve any range and articulation at the meeting point of what is after all an interdependence in personal relationships, Bristow & Esper (1988:71) argue that, ‘…we must be open to each other’s views of reality and prepare ourselves to accept that our views of reality may differ.’

The ways in which we come to understand notions of self often remain overly dependent on traditional notions of what constitutes an individual with less focus given to the impact of our inter-relations with others.

*Touch connects bodies, human bodies, bodies of thought, intermittently. As a political gesture, touch is an utterance geared toward an other to whom I have decided to expose myself; skin to skin. Touch is an ethical discourse because I cannot touch you without being responsive. For touch must always indicate its source, and its source can never be identified by an individual: touch is singular-plural. (Manning 2007:9)*
Manning goes on to talk of the body as a mode of articulation, the medium of negotiation and receptor for the ‘…politicolo-linguistic-affectual gesture that reminds me that my body is not one.’ (Manning 2007:10).

Touch continues to have a complex and somewhat problematic position in its association with knowledge formation, as the first sensory system to function; it facilitates the complex enactment of our individual self as well as of our social relations (Montagu 1986, Irigaray 1987). This inherent relational context has profound effects on the development of a sense of self, although some like Anzieu (1990) bemoan the plight of understanding the body as supplanted by other forms of communication that reinforce only non-touching through a subversion of proximity.

Touch is increasingly marginalised for its potential association with pain, abuse, authority and control. Experiences of touch are often framed as unwelcome, threatening and is even prohibited in many educational settings, care homes, religious institutions and sports fields. The escalating impact on intergenerational relationships is significant with a marked drop in community volunteering and parental involvement in classroom enrichment. As we witness a growing ‘crisis of touch’ where risk management and legislative compliance call for conformity to the detriment of opportunity and freedoms there is need to explore trust and ethical practice in professional and social spheres. Arguably the moral panic surrounding touch is diminishing the quality of communal lives in the broadest sense of the concept whilst often failing to protect the most vulnerable in society.

The rationale here is that it is the quality of touch rather than the quantity of touch that is of primary importance in our individual and socio-cultural development. That we touch and are touched is vitally important but it is how we are touched affects us, teaching us how to define boundaries and to understand ways in which we might live more beneficially together.

What may be key to this discussion is a growing compliance with preconceived explicit codes of ethical practice that for some people means that they are not personally responsible because the codes accommodate all modes of engagement. However we do need to be aware of the implicit responsibility to reflect and critically evaluate on our own practice; that attitudes to ethics are a matter of personal integrity and responsibility first, and that it is self-knowledge that informs your dialogue with others.
In work by Weiss (1999) we can see something of the consequences of this lack of attention to inter-corporeal dimensions when she repeats the call for the need to;

…turn our attention to the intercorporeality that gives depth to our body images and which,… enhances rather than diminishes, our sense of bodily integrity (Weiss 1999:169).

With a growing ‘crisis of touch’ where legislative compliance calls for acquiescence to rules and regulations across institutions, there is a growing need to explore that which might identify personal ethical practice as part of the professional preparation agenda with under graduates.

**Relational ethics as practice**

When we consider how we find ways to relate and learn from one another, attitude and appreciation of affect have to be taken in to consideration. Helen Cixious in writing about the ongoing maneuverability of such interrelationship suggests that it is,

…made infinitely dynamic by a ceaseless exchanging between one and the other different subject, getting acquainted and beginning only from the living border of the other: a many-sided and inexhaustible course with thousands of meetings and transformations of the same in the other and in-the-in-between… (Helen Cixious 1991:142).

Cultural theorist Thomas Csordas has addressed this complex realm of inter-corporeal interactions in a range of work that attends to understandings of corporeal specificity through the instances of relationships with others most notably in his work with others who are culturally different. As a cultural phenomenologist he suggests that we must synthesise ‘…the immediacy of embodied experience with the multiplicity of cultural meaning in which we are always and inevitably immersed’ (Csordas 1999:143).

What is interesting to note here is that our ‘immediate’ is always intertwined with the heterogeneity of cultural meanings and practices. What he argues most fervently is that understandings of self/body are necessarily ‘unstable and culturally variable’ (Csordas 1999:143). With this in mind it then becomes evident that it is not possible to present a culturally neutral reading of somatic interchange.
Even though it is as bodies that we come to make sense, that we evidence our uniqueness, this is never at a point of isolated beholding, instead, it always relates to social context of our discourse. Inter-personal touch in this situation folds back on itself as a reversible field of touching and being touched. Something Merleau-Ponty explored as the ‘double sensation’, of being toucher and touched.

If, in education, we are to attempt to promote the notion of empowerment, wherein an individual might become more fully aware of their potential, then support needs to be available through varied use of teaching strategies. Attitudes to teaching should fulfil a number of criteria, for example, the identification of objectives by individuals and groups, the active involvement in learning through decision making, evaluation and planning.

If, as suggested by Marsick (1998:133), students will commonly work in the 'knowledge domain' that is circumscribed by their tutors, then leading by example, by establishing less restrictive and prescriptive teaching and learning strategies become an important consideration. In the higher education setting, an environment needs to be fostered wherein students take greater responsibility for setting their own goals and making informed choices about how they aim to achieve them.

Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles (2000:229) refer to such an approach as ‘constellation competencies’ involving, creative thinking, fluency, originality, focused perception, and imagination. These they say can be grouped to form constellations in pedagogical contexts, requiring individuals to take ‘…multiple perspectives, layer relationships, and construct and express meaning in unified forms of representation’. These competencies are most often accompanied by other dispositions such as: ‘…risk taking, task persistence, ownership of learning, and perceptions of accomplishment’ (Burton et al 2000:252). They argue, that if teaching does not exhibit the rich fabric of these competencies then it offers a '…rather superficial menu of arts learning' (Burton et al 2000: 254).

If as tutors we aim to support students to become versatile and articulate individuals, recognizing shifts in their knowledge, helping them to explore and explain complex interactions in the midst of their learning then framing dance as a self-actualising field of study with 'conceptual knowing', rich in relationships is a valuable organising principle.
Identifying ‘threshold concepts’ or ‘conceptual gateways’ that an individual passes through in order to arrive at new understandings, is part of this quest. Meyer and Land (2003) identify these experiences are ‘transformative’ in that they offer a shift in the perception of the individual with respect to themselves and their learning in the discipline, to which we would also add, their social context. Such experiences are evidenced through spatial, rhythmic and bodily awareness in dance and strengthened further when combined with social and cultural mobility and collaborative practice. As Shapiro (2008:270) emphasises,

… Martin Heidegger argued, ‘reason is the perception of what is, which always means also what can be and ought to be’ (1968:41). It is this understanding of reason that concerns itself with possibility grounded in sensate-lived experience and that is made sense of through critical understanding and global ethical responsibility.

For Shapiro (2008) it is through such sensual reasoning that we can re-learn and take back our agency.
Summary

Within the increasingly complex arena of education there is a growing importance for a re-evaluation of ethical protocols in tutor and peer relations in a host of interactions but particularly in the context of touch. With more scholarly attention being given to consideration of sensorial awareness, we have the opportunity to address the cultural formation of a shared sensorial illiteracy that is being made increasingly evident in attitudes to learning. In order to do this we need to explore the complex intermingling of experience, perception and knowledge generation. With reference to the use of touch in dance we need to know more about what goes on within the range of the relational qualities of touch thereby garnering more support for our arguments concerning an education realised through a fuller range of embodied/emplaced processes.

In Ellsworth’s (2004:4) argument that ‘we are continuously and radically in relation with the world, with others, and with what we can make of them,’ the importance of understanding ourselves, as sensing, thinking, social and responsible persons becomes clear.

What is vital is a re-articulation of what we can come to know through our mutual connectivity alongside appreciation for the role that relational ethics can play in the critically engaged learning process.

...you cannot be wise without some basis of knowledge; but you may easily acquire knowledge and remain bare of wisdom (Whitehead 1967:30).

What has become more apparent in the process of conducting this research is the need to more fully explore the value of engaging students in modeling their own routes to learning and knowledge generation. In acknowledging the need for more interrelationships between areas of the curriculum we also need to attend to and foster more significant ways for students to come to know themselves as active and responsible individuals.

Tactile knowledge is gathered serially, through cumulative understanding of the continuity of the connections we forge in a world in constant motion. If we were to neutralize the opportunity to work in contact with others to the point of becoming insensitive to the rich scenario of interactions, we would forego a vivacity for life that
we can ill afford to be without. The case remains that the inherent relational context of touch has profound implications for the developing sense of self. An education that does not utilize touch that so purposely affords the possibility of forming our perceptions and therefore our knowledge is an education that is insufficient.

The argument made clear in this study is that if we, as educators, diminish or become fearful and so do not teach with touch, we devalue one of our most formative and informative sensations. What is most appropriate is to redress the growing fear of touch through a renewed ethical ethos that promotes it as a safe way to learn.

Earlier in the report it was suggested that students be introduced to and work within the multifaceted nature of dance, to learn to synthesise aesthetic ways of knowing through critical, ethical, and embodied forms of social analysis. If this connectivity were to be more forged in the delivery of curriculum students would have opportunity to begin to more fully engage with relational and moral aspects of their lived experience. The importance of our role as educators is to encourage change by challenging students to think for themselves and to be able to share the ideas and responses that they come to understand. Achieving these goals remains at the heart of what identifies high quality student learning experiences.

Collaboration with students in order to facilitate engaged learning is evidenced in a considerable number of the responses shared by colleagues during the survey for this research. Critical leadership from tutors by way of opening doorways to be explored helps nudge the early steps towards deep learning. In order to enhance the long-term impact of learning experiences we need to continue to seek liberty in an education that supports the development of versatile thinkers, evidenced across a range of modes of material thinking. It is this that could be the route to what we understand as a form of enabling knowledge and a key-identifying feature of dance as higher education moving forward.

… the subject matter of the new dance orientations … is about much more than just a change from one dance aesthetic to another, or just the introduction of ‘soft’ body techniques and unique bodyliness. It is about a change in the understanding of reality… This… has brought about new deep ecological ethics where the philosophical horizon is formed by the shared participation in being-in-the-world. (Monni 2006:170)
Recommendations

There is a considerable range of good practice evident in the sector. It sits as an untapped resource that could be shared across institutions and disciplinary boundaries. Many colleagues who responded to the survey questions continue to be involved in their own on-going reflection on practice. As a discipline we would do well to formalise this wealth of experience through broader dissemination and opportunity for debate.

By questioning what appears to be an increasing prohibition towards touch sourced in the contested space between political accountability, increasing litigiousness and educational pragmatism, it is hoped that a level of informed and sensitive debate can contribute to an enhanced appreciation for learning that incorporates our senses alongside other cognitive attributes.

The sparks that generated this research arose from a number of ideas that together can constitute an agenda for further debate at various levels and from this the following recommendations are proposed;

1. Promote relational ethics as part of the sustainability agenda in curriculum development. Include critical thinking at the heart of teaching and learning encouraging students to think through complex, often contradictory problems related to ‘real world’ experience.

2. Continue to research and debate the formation of a Practitioners Charter to be realised in collaboration with colleagues working in higher education and the broader professional field.

3. Heighten awareness of ethics as a fundamental part of dance practice, including the realisation that ethics concerns more than the rote learning of rules and procedures; that ethics are about shared responsibility, fashioned in-dialogue through the quality of personal practice.
4. Revisit the use of self-reflection and self-reflexive learning in dance. They have a distinct role to play in helping students learn how to respond to complex situations and behaviours. It is timely to revisit how we engage with students in open-minded rationality, alongside reasoned and insightful respect for the opinions of others.

5. To examine the provisions put in place for visiting practitioners and artists. This could support an explicit statement of the relational ethics in practice that informs the departmental approaches to working together in collaboration.

6. As a discipline, continue to explore relational ethics in terms of on-going socially engaged learning about ourselves through shared participation in being -in- the-world.
Bibliography


## Appendix 1: Institutions contributing to the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Title</th>
<th>BA (Hons) Programme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coventry University</td>
<td>Dance Making and Performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>De Montfort University</td>
<td>Dance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edge Hill University</td>
<td>Dance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern School of Contemporary Dance</td>
<td>BPA (Hons) Dance</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Central Lancashire</td>
<td>Dance, Performance and Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Chester</td>
<td>Dance</td>
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<td>University of Hull</td>
<td>Theatre and Dance</td>
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<td>University of Leeds</td>
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<td>University of Lincoln</td>
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<td>Dance and Drama</td>
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Appendix 2: Dance Department – Staff Survey Questions
Dance, touch and ethics

The following brief survey is part of a Higher Education Academy project that explores the manner in which touch occurs in learning and teaching in dance and the ethical concerns that frame these practices.

Below you will find a series of short answer questions that should take no longer than 15 minutes for you to complete.

There are a number of comment boxes included in the design of the survey. It would be extremely helpful if you could include some of your reflections about engagement with touch from your own experience in these boxes.

All information collected in this first phase will be used anonymously and contribute to an emerging review of practice in the field. I do hope to include a range of conversations on practice in the study so may well be in touch again soon.
Dance, touch and ethics

1. Does your curriculum incorporate the use of touch in learning and teaching situations?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

   If you answered YES, at which stages of the programme is touch involved? Yr 1, 2, 3 all

2. What is important about the use of touch in your teaching?
   Please rank these features in priority order where 1 is rated highest and 9 is rated lowest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>1</th>
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<td>Used as a tool for communication in peer-to-peer teaching</td>
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<td>A route to enhance self awareness/ bodily experience</td>
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<td>To introduce new material</td>
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<td>Aid to noticing detail in shared material</td>
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<td>Supportive of identity/ self esteem</td>
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<td>To offer focused learning opportunities</td>
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   Please add further additions that you think important

3. In which areas would it be beneficial to have additional support in terms of your own ethical approach to teaching?

   - [ ] managing interpersonal relations amongst students
   - [ ] staff/student roles and relations
   - [ ] maintenance of institutional policy
   - [ ] addressing social vulnerability in group work
   - [ ] embracing cultural difference
   - [ ] facilitating collaborative practice
   - [ ] working with peer-peer touch in feedback
   - [ ] approaches to tutor-peer touch
   - [ ] All above
   - [ ] Other (please specify)
Dance, touch and ethics

4. Do you allow individuals to opt out of touch between tutor and student in sessions?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Sometimes

5. Do you allow individuals to opt out of touch in peer-to-peer learning in session?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Sometimes

6. Have any students ever opted out of involvement in touch?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

   If YES can you outline the reasons and if it was resolved:

   

7. What role does touch play in your teaching?

   

8. Which term most clearly identifies your approach to ethics in teaching?

- Implicit
- Explicit
- A combination of both

9. Is it preferable or not preferable for ethics in teaching to be implicitly practiced?

- Preferable
- Not preferable
- Not sure

Please add any further comment:

10. Is it preferable or not preferable for ethics in teaching to be explicitly expressed?

- Preferable
- Not preferable
- Not sure

Please add any further comments:

11. Are there any things that cause you concern when using or observing touch in teaching and learning?
If there are concerns you want to identify please use the box below
12. Are you aware if the university has an ethical code of practice relating to touch in the work place?
   ○ Yes  ○ No  ○ not sure

13. Does your department use an internally agreed set of guidelines that identifies permissible practice of touch in learning and teaching?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Not sure

If you answered YES and are happy to share them please add them to the box or a link to locate them.

14. Is there a department procedure used to introduce work with touch to students?
   ○ Yes  ○ No  ○ Not sure

15. If you answered YES to Q14, when is the policy shared with students?
    If you answered NO go onto question 16.
    □ At the beginning of each module, as appropriate?
    □ At the start of each year?
    □ At the beginning of their programme.
    □ All

Please add any further comment/explanation. Thank you
Dance, touch and ethics

16. Does the curriculum include modules where ethics are formally discussed?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not Sure

17. If you answered YES to questions 16 please tick at what level/stage of the programme.
   If you answered NO, please move to question 18
   - Year 1
   - Year 2
   - Year 3
   - All

18. Does the curriculum include evaluation of 'good practice' and/or 'professionalism' in preparation for work in the dance field?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

19. If you answered YES, please tick at what level/stage of the programme
   - Year 1
   - Year 2
   - Year 3
   - All

20. When ethics are discussed in which teaching environments do the discussions take place?
    Please tick as appropriate
    - workshops
    - lectures
    - seminars
    - individual tutorials
    - personal tutorials

21. Does the curriculum include work in different forms of collaborative practice?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

If you answered YES please provide brief details. Thank you
Dance, touch and ethics

22. Does your department have a designated individual who oversees engagement with ethical procedures?
   ○ Yes ○ No ○ Not sure

23. Do you address ethical practices during annual review of modules?
   ○ Yes ○ No ○ Not sure

24. At the time of reading are you aware of the legal definition implied by consent?
   ○ Yes ○ No ○ Not sure

25. Are you aware of your university policy concerning negligence or malpractice?
   ○ Yes ○ No ○ Not sure
Dance, touch and ethics

26. Are you aware of an ethical code of engagement already in use in the dance discipline or dance sector?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If you answered yes and are happy to share the reference or link please add it here.
Appendix 3: Dance Department – Student Survey Questions
Dance, touch and learning

Learning through touch in dance

1. Are you familiar with using touch in studio work in dance?
   - Yes
   - No

   If you answered YES can you give an example of the ways you have worked with touch?

2. In what ways has touch been a positive feature of your learning experience in dance?

3. Is touch between tutor and student a common feature of your studio learning experience in dance?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

4. Is touch between students in sessions a common feature of your learning in dance?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

5. In which type of sessions is touch used most often? Please tick as many as appropriate.
   - choreography
   - technique
   - improvisation
   - collaborative workshops

6. Have you ever felt uncomfortable about the use of touch in dance classes?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

   It would be useful if you could give a brief example of your experience
Dance, touch and learning

7. Do you have any memories you can share of ways touch has helped you to understand the detail of movement material?

8. From the list shown below what do you think are the most useful reasons to use touch in learning in dance? Please answer in priority order with 1 as the most important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To provide correction</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>To refine alignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>To provide precision in feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used as a tool for communication in peer-to-peer teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>A route to enhance self awareness/ bodily experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>To introduce new material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aid to noticing detail in shared material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive identity/ self esteem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offer focused learning opportunities</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Do you feel that you are able to opt out of involvement in touch during a taught session?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If you have answered YES can you remember and say why it happened?

10. Have you ever opted out of being involved in touch during a taught session?

- No
- Yes

If you are happy to share an example of your experience please do so here
11. What reasons might make you want to opt out of using touch? Please tick which ever are appropriate.

☐ Feeling uncomfortable about the set task
☐ Not knowing the other people involved
☐ Not wanting to be lifted
☐ Feeling rushed into the process
☐ Lack of experience in the group
☐ Unfamiliar expectations
☐ All of the above
☐ Difficult relationships in the group
☐ Dominant individuals in the group

Other (please specify)

12. Do you set up agreed rules about touch in studio practice with your peers?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Sometimes

What is the most important thing to consider when working through touch and contact?
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