

Programme Closure: Stage 1

Section 1: Programme Details

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| a) Programme Title & Department | BA in Performance & Creative Enterprise [in Drama from September 2019, formerly in Creative Learning] |
| b) Programme SITS code | UBAPERCOL |
| c) FHEQ Levels | 4, 5 and 6 |
| d) Final Award | BA in Performance & Creative Enterprise (level 6) |
| e) Interim Exit Awards | DipHE in Performance & Creative Enterprise (level 5) CertHE in Performance & Creative Enterprise (level 4) |
| f) Length of programme | 3 years |
| g) Mode of study | Full-time |

Section 2: Information about the proposed closure/suspension

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| a) Date of most recent (re)validation | 4 April 2019 (see note below) |
| b) Date of last admission | September 2018 |
| c) Date applications closed | 18 September 2019 |
| d) Proposed date of closure (assuming progression and completion within normal timescales) | July 2021 |
| e) Proposed date of closure (assuming progression and completion delayed by repeating students) | December 2021 (students due to finish July 2021 plus resit period until Sept, and potentially a period to see students out) |
| f) Proposed date of suspension | N/A |
| g) Proposed date when recruitment will be resumed (for suspensions) | N/A |
| h) Are other faculties are involved in delivering the programme? | Creative Learning |
| <i>This programme was located in Creative Learning until very recently, September 2019</i> | |
| i) Do other programmes use modules from this programme and /or will other programmes be affected by this proposed closure? | NO |
| <i>n/a</i> | |
| j) Does the programme involve external accreditation / professional recognition? | NO |
| <i>n/a</i> | |
| k) Is this a collaborative programme with a partner institution / organisation? | Not formally, although Barbican, via Creative Learning has had an active interest. |

Section 3: Information about current students and applications

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| a) Number of students currently registered on the programme | 17 [7 students in Year 2 and 10 students in Year 3] |
| b) Number of current students who have suspended studies | 0 |
| c) Number of applicants in the current admission cycle | 0 |
| d) Number of offer holders | 0 |
| e) Number of accepted offers | 0 |

Section 4: Rationale for programme closure/suspension

a) Key reasons why the closure/suspension of the programme is being proposed

Applications for 2019 entry were suspended in spring 2019 as there had been a low take-up in applications making it highly unlikely that the programme would meet its sustainable number target. Applications opened during the summer, alongside all other programmes, in the expectation that there would be a September 2020 cohort.

However, whilst under the leadership of Creative Learning the programme went through the revalidation process in April 2019; this was a challenging process and although the enthusiasm and commitment of the programme team and the students was commended, the revalidation highlighted a number of academic issues that needed to be addressed by July. Unfortunately, the Programme Leader left the School at the end of July (a scheduled completion of contract) without meeting all the conditions of revalidation just as the programme was about to transition to its new home in Drama in September. The revalidation conditions are being worked through to ensure that the quality of the learning experience and the standard of the award is maintained for the current students registered on the programme. However, the Executive Team took the decision not to invite applications for a programme whose shape and structure was likely to change significantly in the future. The decision not to recruit needed to be taken promptly so that potential applicants, and applicants already in the system had sufficient time to find an alternative programme and meet application deadlines (particularly in music) for September 2020 entry.

With collaborative practice training at the Guildhall moving into the Drama Department and with the School seeking to appoint a new Head of Interdisciplinary Practice, it was felt to be important that this new Head would have the opportunity to conduct a thorough review and reimagine the training in the area of collaborative practice, building on all the ground-breaking foundations and work that PACE pioneered. This would ensure that the BA in PACE programme (or its successor) was not simply imported into Drama, but was properly embedded into the department.

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| b) Is the programme being replaced? | YES |
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The exact nature and name of the new programme will be determined by the new Head of Interdisciplinary Practice via the validation process.

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| c) Will current students be invited to transfer to the replacement programme? | NO |
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n/a

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| d) Will current students remain on the existing programme? | YES |
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Current students were met in the first week of term to explore the rationale for the closure of the programme and to provide them with reassurance about the delivery of their programme, and the quality of the programme for the rest of their time here at the School.

Administrative staff were met in advance of the announcement to students, and the wider programme team was told by email at the same time and given the opportunity to meet with the Principal and VP & Director of Drama.

e) Further implications

There has been a lot of interest in the development programme from former staff and graduates of the MMus Leadership pathway who are keen that the School offers a programme in collaborative practice. These individuals, along with graduates of the programme, were also contacted on the same day as the programme team to confirm the School's longer term commitment to collaborative, socially engaged practice.

Section 5: Interfaculty consultation

If answering YES to section 2.h. and/or 2.i. this section must be completed

The Director of Learning & Engagement and the Director of Creative Learning were involved in the Executive Team's decision.

Section 6: Consideration by Senior Management Team

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| Date of consideration by SMT | Decision was taken outside of term-time by Executive Team on 5 September 2019 |
| Decision | Applications for 2020 suspended on 18 September pending programme closure procedures. |
| Rationale for decision | Programme will be reviewed and redeveloped by new Head of Interdisciplinary Practice. |
| Conditions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication strategy encompassing existing students, programme team, alumni, wider School, feeder schools.• Specific communications for applicants and former applicants depending on point in application cycle.• Programme Closure strategy (stage 2) |

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| Date Programme Closure Strategy to be submitted to the Board of Governors | 25.11.2019 |
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Stage Two: closure strategy

a) Details of student consultation

The PACE Programme Facilitator, Dinah Stabb, along with the VP & Director of Drama, Orla O'Loughlin and the Principal, Lynne Williams, met with the current students in the first week of term on Wednesday 18 September 2019. The meeting covered:

- Why the programme was being closed
- Confirming that there would be no impact on the delivery of teaching as the programme was seen out
- That the Programme team would ensure the standards and quality of the learning experience
- Assuring the students that the value of the programme was undiminished by the decision and that the good practice of the programme and its innovations would not be lost
- Assuring students that they could talk about any concerns or questions at any point.

The students also have access to the full support available from the Student Affairs team.

Other students

No modules from the programme are available either as a core or elective modules on other programmes therefore no students in other departments needed to be consulted.

Alumni

The School has written to all graduates of the programme to inform them of this proposal. Graduates have been assured that the School remains fully committed to training artists in interdisciplinary, collaborative and socially engaged practice and, although the programmes are evolving, the School's dedication to this work has not changed.

b) Details of inter-faculty consultation

Administration for the programme is currently split across two teams. There is a small administrative staff attached to the BA in PACE programme who coordinate the one-to-one teaching, administer the projects and assist with scheduling and who are also responsible for some music electives, and the CoLABorate and cross-School projects. They have recently transferred to Drama as part of a wider review of where support for degree programmes and related activity should sit. Admissions, assessment and financial awards for this programme have always been administered by the Production Arts and Drama Administration Office.

The decision was communicated to the transferred administrative staff in person by Dinah and Orla. As there is no Programme Leader on this programme currently all teaching staff are hourly paid. Prior to September 2019 the staff came under Creative Learning and from September under Drama for their contracted hours on this programme. Given the difficulty of finding a time when all staff could meet, staff were contacted by email about the decision and invited to meet with Orla, and Dinah the Principal on Tuesday 1 October at 11am to discuss the implications and to ask any questions.

c) Summary of impact/feedback from students and staff

The **student** reaction was mainly positive. They saw it as an opportunity for positive change. They hoped that the new programme would give more opportunities to collaborate across the School and that future students would feel part of the whole conservatoire. Some third year students were concerned about the validity of their degree in the light of the closure. Assurances were given that this would not affect its standing.

Teaching staff although acknowledging that the programme as it stood needed to change, expressed concerns that the teaching and learning developed over the 4 years might be lost. They were pleased to hear the reasoning that underpinned the decision and were glad to feel invited to be part of the conversations around the future, although wishing there had been consultation before these decisions were taken. On personal levels there was concern also about the loss of teaching hours and whether continued commitment was appropriate to a programme which as yet could make no offer to them as hourly paid practitioners.

The feedback from the transferred **administrative staff** was that the continual changes since December 2018 had impacted on their enjoyment of their roles. They felt their work had been made operationally and emotionally challenging by the uncertainty of their position and the lack of clarity of current and future job requirements. The move to Drama for these individuals is the first stage of a broader review of where curriculum activity support for PACE, some music electives and the CoLABorate and cross-School

projects should sit to be effective and efficient, and it is understandable that this change process might cause some anxiety. The closing of applications for the BA in PACE is an added factor but for the immediate future does not change their situation as the seventeen PACE students will continue to need support this academic year. One of the team, who was on a fixed-term contract, gave in her notice before the beginning of this term, and additional temporary support has been added to the team, pending the review.

d) Consultation with other internal stakeholders

The PACE Programme Facilitator, Dinah Stabb and the VP & Director of Drama, Orla O'Loughlin, have been in discussion with the Marketing Department about the communications side of the decision, and appropriate messaging on the School's website.

The Dean of Students, Katharine Lewis, has consulted with other student facing stakeholders to explain the context and rationale for this decision: The Heads of Registry, Library, Student Affairs, Production Arts & Drama Administration and Music Administration, and also the Access & Participation Officer. The Dean of Students has led the engagement with applicants and potential applicants.

A meeting with the SU President had not taken place when the Academic Board received this report given that the union had been heavily involved in induction activities at the start of this term. A number of issues will need to be discussed with the President to ensure that the quality of the student experience is maintained for the current students over the next two years and any concerns of the PACE students are heard and appropriately addressed.

e) Summary of impact/feedback

Registry

Registry has closed the application scheme for PACE, and all former applicants, and applicants in progress, have been contacted. Issues raised concerned future intermission, reassessment and deferral considered below and also adjustment to the External Examiner's contract.

Feedback from Library

The School's Library has invested in a number of resources to support the PACE programme and was asked to purchase new resources as part of the revalidation review of book lists. However, the resources have wider applicability and will remain a useful resource for all students. This collection will also be important for a future programme in interdisciplinary practice.

Feedback from Student Affairs

Student Affairs does not have any concerns at this time but issues may arise over the next two years, particularly in respect of any student who has a long term illness and might in other circumstances be seeking long term intermission.

Feedback from Production Arts & Drama Administration

The Head of Production Arts Drama Administration raised the same issues about future intermission, reassessment and deferral.

Feedback from Music Administration

The Head of Music Administration confirmed he did not have any concerns.

Access & Participation Officer

The BA in PACE programme has been helpful to the School in widening the diversity of the student body in the widest sense (state school, social and family background, ethnicity etc). Whilst the programme has never met the expected intake envisaged at initial validation (numbers that would have, if met, have had a significant impact on the School's access targets), nevertheless it has been a useful part of the School's offer, demonstrating in concrete terms the School's commitment to opening up specialist education to those not traditionally looking for a conservatoire education. A new programme, with a similar ethos, would be welcomed.

f) Consultation with external stakeholders

The incoming External Examiner, Ruth Torr, (who will commence her duties in September 2019) was emailed on 18 September, which included a copy of the email sent to PACE teaching staff. She has replied and she and Programme Facilitator are looking to find a suitable date to meet.

The programme does not have any formal collaborative partners or other organisations involved in delivery of the programme but discussions took place with staff with a Barbican remit. It also does not have any external accreditors or professional recognition bodies. The programme puts students on placements but these placements are arranged on an *ad hoc* basis depending on what opportunities arise in the profession and other suitable institutions.

g) Summary of impact/feedback

Closure will not have an effect on the validation arrangements or external accreditation of other programmes within the School. It will also not have an impact on any relationships with collaborative partners. There is no ongoing expectation by placement providers.

Section 4: Arrangements for teaching out the programme

a) What arrangements are in place for teaching out the programme, including assessment and reassessment

- Revalidation conditions are being worked through to ensure that the programme is fit for purpose for the current students.
- The outgoing External Examiners' comments will be met in part by meeting the revalidation conditions, other issues will be considered under the normal APE and External Examiner processes.
- All teaching for the BA in PACE in for 2019/20 and 2020/21 will be scheduled as normal.
- There are no students currently intermitting. However, requests in the future for long-term intermission may not be able to be met. A current third year student may be able to intermit and re-join the programme in 2020/21 but a current second year student will not be able to intermit this year or next as there will be no lower year to rejoin. Intermission is a discretion not a right and whilst the School will do everything in its power to accommodate student need, and will, where appropriate, consider a Special Scheme of Study (up to December 2021), options will necessarily be limited and a student may need to consider leaving with an exit award. If a student wishes to transfer to a suitable

programme at another institution the School will do its utmost to facilitate that transfer. If absolutely necessary, some bespoke teaching arrangements in the autumn of 2021/22 may need to be made to see students out.

- Standard reassessment or deferral will be possible between the end of the programme in July 2021 and September 2021 and it will be expected that where reassessment or deferral does not require teaching, that normal arrangements, approved by the School Board of Examiners, will apply.
- Reassessment or deferral beyond this date may be more problematic and alternative assessment arrangements will only be considered where practical, and where equality in assessment can be maintained. Again Special Schemes of Study may be deployed.
- There are exit awards available and all currently registered students are eligible for an exit award.

b) What arrangements are in place to mitigate the effect of programme closure on other students of the School

There is no anticipated impact on other students in the School.

Section 5: Action Plan

a) Communication of programme closure

Communications have gone out to current students on the programme, the programme team, graduates and former staff with an interest in the programme, and the wider School community. Specific communications have gone out to applicants and potential applicants

- There were no applicants holding an offer for the current recruitment cycle for 2020 entry.
- There was one applicant who had deferred entry on three occasions for a variety of personal reasons; as she will not be able to join the programme in September 2020 as anticipated, special arrangements, including a small, without prejudice, financial offer, have been put in place to support her in applying elsewhere for September 2020 entry. Her response has been positive about the help and support she has received from the School over the last few years.
- Applicants and potential applicants from the 2019 cycle who had been offered a free application to PACE for the 2020 cycle, have been offered a free application for any of the School's other undergraduate programmes.
- Potential applicants (ie started but had not completed their application) for 2020 entry have been advised that the programme is closing and have been encouraged to apply for another programme.
- This programme belongs to a very specialist sector. The delivery of the programme is not something the wider public necessarily have an awareness of and therefore no broader communication plan is thought necessary.

b) Future actions

- Meeting with SU President to be arranged with Dean of Students
- Programme closure plans to be shared with current students and another meeting later in the term to be convened for these students with Programme Facilitator and Dean of Students to discuss the practicalities of the programme closure and any concerns.
- Meeting to be arranged with External Examiner by Programme Facilitator, an amendment to External Examiner's contract to be made by Registry
- UNISTATS/Discover Uni information will need to be resubmitted.