



Centre for Educational Development
Appraisal and Research



DANCE AND DRAMA AWARDS SCHEME

EVUALATION PROJECT – PHASE II

3rd INTERIM REPORT

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**Dr Jonothan Neelands
Professor Geoff Lindsay
Dr Vivien Freakley
Sue Band
Dr Sheila Galloway**

**Professor Robert Lindley
Rhys Davies
Heike Behle**

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WARWICK

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DADA Awards Evaluation Project Phase 2

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Executive Summary

This is the third report produced for the 2nd Phase of the DADA Awards Evaluation Project and represents evaluation and research work undertaken by the University of Warwick, CEDAR/IER team between 05/04 and 02/05

The evaluation of the DADA Awards is focussed on gathering and interpreting data in relation to four principal themes:

- **Improving access to training and equity for the most talented performers**
- **The collection and use of destination data to support the claim that the sector is effective in preparing new performers for the industry**
- **Surveying trends in the labour market and the 'employability' of graduates from training**
- **Constructing a sound economic justification for the Awards**

1 Outcomes 05/04 – 02/05

Since the last Interim Report the DfES has successfully managed a number of outcomes in pursuit of the key objectives of the scheme. These include:

- 1.1 The publication of Guidance on Disability Access; this is a detailed and ground breaking guide to every aspect of supporting the needs of differently abled students in dance, musical theatre and drama. In addition to practical advice the publication includes a foreword by Kim Howells, the Minister with responsibility for the DADA Awards, and an extensive directory of support and contact details. This publication is one aspect of the DfES's increasingly strategic development of guidance, practical support, advice and

encouragement to providers with the aim of widening participation to the highest levels of vocational training. It is an excellent example of the socially progressive influence the Awards are having on the private training sector in the performing arts.

- 1.2 A Marketing Officer has been recruited and appointed to the Awards following recommendations from PriceWaterhouse Coopers, who were commissioned to investigate the under representation of certain populations in the training cohort. The role of the Marketing Officer is to develop and implement a coherent and knowledgeable marketing strategy on increasing social inclusion and broadening cultural access to vocational dance and drama training through providing internal support to providers and through advocacy and representation of the Awards to external agencies and organisations. Again, this new post represents an important strategic attempt to realise the core access objective embedded in the operation of the Awards. Kien Bee Ong will be based equally in the sector bodies – NCDT and CDET – and will spend 25% of her time visiting providers to work with them on marketing issues.
- 1.3 The DfES has commissioned a programme of Leadership and Management Training for providers in recognition of the difficulties faced by small providers in accessing and paying for such training. This initiative is in response to the OfSTED observation that in some cases the excellence of training offered by Awards providers is not matched by high quality management and leadership processes. This initiative is pro-active in terms of the next Review Cycle and will ensure that providers can present the best all round profile to satisfy the rigorous QA criteria proposed for the next round of Award allocations.
- 1.4 The DfES, through ADA inc, successfully delivered a programme of disability equality training from March to October 2004 for all providers and the results of the evaluation are presented as TP046 in Part Two of this report. This training was offered in recognition of the particular characteristics of the sector and the need to effect cultural change in relation to the training and employment needs of differently abled performers in dance, drama and musical theatre. This is further evidence of the DfES's commitment to providing practical support in relation to the challenge to the sector to realise the Awards objectives in terms of widening access to training.
- 1.5 A new student publication is being prepared for distribution through the DADA web site and hard copies to schools which is titled: Exits and Entrances: Students' Stories This is a student friendly version of the research done by the evaluation team into the employment experiences of new performers in the first year after graduation. This accessible guide offers students and their families a view of how training prepares graduates for looking for work and how to survive the ups and downs of building sustainable careers. It is based on in depth interviews with graduates as well as other statistical data collected by the evaluation team. It offers a very realistic and grounded account of what to expect in the labour market for the performing arts and again is a good example of the DfES's progressive policy of ensuring that every aspect of training and preparation for work is made transparent, realistic and accessible. The full text, without illustrations and other graphics, is reproduced as TP044 in Part Two of this report.
- 1.6 A provider funding review has been initiated in the run up to the next Review Meeting to allocate Awards in order to gain information on audited costs from providers. The review will result in a proposition to LSC with a fixed budget, unit costs and the number of

Awards that can be paid for in the next round. The funding review exercise will look at cost and management information; overhead and capital costs and income generation. The overall budget is fixed at £14m so any increase in unit funding will result in fewer Awards. The DfES has also established a system and process for the next Review Meeting which is due to be held in 02/06. The criteria prioritise quality of training and leadership as well as a pro-active approach to the access and widening participation agendas. The Review Meeting will also consider the relevance of training to the labour market and the balance between art forms.

2 Matters Arising from the Transition to LSC

- 2.1 As of 04/05 the Student Support Unit, which includes responsibility for the Dance and Drama Awards will move from the DfES to LSC. The Student Support Unit has a broad portfolio, which includes the Youth/Adult Learning Fund, Career and Development Fund, Transport and other areas of operations in the post 16 framework. New staff is being appointed and there will be no continuity of staffing from the previous DfES DADA Awards team. New staff appointments are in fact eighteen month 'loans' from the DfES so there may be another new round of appointments to replace staff on 'loan' at the end of this period.
- 2.2 In the final report of the first phase evaluation of the DADA Awards, the team drew attention to the leadership, management and operational achievements of the DfES DADA Awards team. These achievements included a highly effective use of the Awards to lever up standards of achievement, quality assurance, qualifications and access and inclusion initiatives across the training sector. The Awards also brought a period of stability to a sector which had previously struggled with a series of ad- hoc funding arrangements and created the ground for the establishment of significant new HEFCE funded provision in the sector.
- 2.3 The DfES were particularly successful in constructing sound arguments for the continuation of the Awards to the government spending review which has resulted in the relative security of the Awards and therefore of the training sector until at least 2008.
- 2.4 In the 2nd Interim Report of the 2nd phase of the evaluation the team made the following claim: *Whilst, organisational review is inevitable from time to time, we would point to the great strength and reliance that employers, providers and the sector bodies place on their work with the DfES contacts both at strategic and operational level. Every effort should be made to retain access to this resource and expertise, in the interests of the Awards, employers and students. Ultimately the scheme and its successful operation rely greatly on the partnership and understanding that exists between those involved in managing and operating it. This specialist knowledge is not widely available*
- 2.5 The evaluation team will monitor the effects of the LSC transfer on the Awards, but there is evidence that, in the short and medium term at least, there are some challenges for the LSC in terms of ensuring the future effectiveness of the Awards in achieving the objectives set by Ministers.

In particular the team is concerned that:

- The LSC has not issued contracts to schools to cover the period since the last Review Cycle in 2003.

- There has been no collection of equal opportunities or other data required from schools.
- There has been no reconciliation between funded places and places filled which means the budget is not being used or monitored effectively
- The DADA Awards will be part of the LSC's global budget request to the next spending review. No special case informed by expert professionals will be made.
- There will be no knowledge base apart from documentation to support the transfer from DfES to LSC
- The LSC has no comparable provision
- Unlike other comparable schemes, the DADA Awards are not supported by an advisory group of influential figures from the Dance and Drama world (see TP043). Once the DfES team is disbanded there will be no formal lobby for the continuation and development of the Awards

2.6 It is important to recognise that the DADA Awards are not part of a simple purchasing scheme, whereby public money is used to buy places on courses in the private training market. In order to achieve its objectives, budgets have also been allocated to a variety of initiatives to support the training sector in moving towards the objectives for the Awards, particularly in terms of access and inclusion agendas. A number of these strategic initiatives are positively recorded in section one of this executive summary. It remains to be seen whether this important socially and artistically progressive work will be maintained and developed by the limited and non-specialist resources of the LSC.

2.7 As stated in the July 2004 Interim Report (Technical Paper 039), this year's work relating to the economic assessment is to be concentrated in the six months up to October 2005. This will involve drawing on the quantitative and qualitative work available in order to relate it to a more economic perspective as set out previously. However, there are two new factors which need to be taken into account. First, the timing of the work for the economic assessment was tied into the need of the DfES for a contribution to the Spending Review process. It will be necessary to take into account the transfer of DADA to the LSC in this respect. This will be a matter for discussion with the LSC team taking over responsibility for DADA. Second, it has just been reported by the LSC to DfES that there is another data set potentially available for analysis. This refers to the collection of Individualised Learner Records (ILRs) by the LSC as part of its contract administration on behalf of the DfES. It remains to be seen how far these data can be analysed but a request has been made to DfES/LSC that, rather than discontinuing the collection of these data as proposed by the LSC, the exercise should be continued for the time being. Some analysis of these data may contribute to the economic analysis and, indeed, to other areas of the work.

3 Overview of Technical Papers

3.1 **TP043 – The English Model of Talented Provision.** In this paper Jonothan Neelands places the DADA Awards in the context of other government funded schemes for supporting the training of talented young athletes, dancers, musicians and actors. In particular the paper draws attention to:

- the fragmented management of talented provision which includes four different ministerial remits and multiple agencies, with often contradictory policies and objectives and considerable duplication of resources particularly in respect of the DfES provision, which in some cases provides funding under different schemes to the same students and institutions without there being any central monitoring.
- the disparity between the levels of support, pathways to progression and other forms of support given to athletes, musicians and ballet dancers between the ages of 8-25 as opposed to actors and contemporary and other genres of dance which are only supported from 16+
- the role played by powerful and important 'patrons' who dominate the support and advisory groups for athletes, ballet and music. Drama and other forms of dance are not as well represented by strong lobbies.
- The success of those schemes which are jointly managed by DfES and DCMS and which therefore combine in and out of school, private and public organisations and resources more effectively.
- The lack of a clearly defined social agenda including access and other issues relating to cultural representation in the support of musicians and dancers as opposed to the very strong social agendas associated with athletes and DADA.

3.2 **TP044: Exits and Entrances: Students' Stories.** This is the text of the new DfES publication based on the pilot study done by Sheila Galloway and Susan Band of how recent graduates were fairing in terms of employability, job search and establishing their professional lives. 'New Performers' Voices' was the first in-depth analysis of how former students' training had fitted them for work and of the ways in which they are seeking to develop sustainable careers. Within the overall evaluation of the Dance and Drama Award Scheme, this study complemented the 2003 pilot survey of recent graduates and by its attention to individual experience, is a central element of our multi-level analysis of graduate destinations.

The DfES team decided that this study included much which could be of value to students about to graduate, those considering a dance or drama course, and indeed their parents.

Initial responses to Exits and Entrances: Students' Stories confirm its relevance to students and potential as an output of the scheme at this point in its development.

The decision of the DfES team to publish a booklet with a Foreword by the minister and circulate this widely to existing students offers the chance of greater impact. This will sit alongside the existing 2004 information booklet outlining the Dance and Drama Awards, and the graphical design similarly gives providers the chance to highlight through photos and other images the work of their students.

3.3 **TP045 New Performers Survey 2004.** This is Heike Behle's and Rhys Davies' second quantitative survey of graduates one year after completing their courses and adds to the knowledge base established in the first survey completed in 2003, which formed the basis for the qualitative work resulting in Exits and Entrances: Students; Stories. It should be noted that this data relates to the first year of employment and as such does not claim to describe the career pathways of performers beyond the initial induction. However, the results are revealing and in the absence of any comparable data collection on destinations and on the economic and social profile of the cohort in training despite repeated recommendations from the evaluation team, this data is our only source of insight into DADA Award holders once they have graduated.

The DfES has drawn attention to the relatively small sample on which the survey is based and questions the value of the findings but the evaluation team has used multiple sources of data and different methodologies including the follow up qualitative work done after last year's survey as means of cross-referencing the findings presented here. We would also stress that there is simply no other data on destinations, earnings, social and economic factors available to the evaluators.

Headline findings include

- A majority of respondents are generally satisfied with their careers, with three quarters of respondents indicating that, with the value of hindsight, they would have taken the same course at the same institution;
- Levels of career satisfaction were however found to be higher among dance graduates compared to drama graduates. Levels of satisfaction were related to the length of time respondents had been engaged in performance activities and whether or not they were currently in a performance related activity;
- Respondents were least satisfied with their careers in terms of earnings and job security;
- A majority of respondents are generally satisfied with their careers, with three quarters of respondents indicating that, with the value of hindsight, they would have taken the same course at the same institution;
- Levels of career satisfaction were however found to be higher among dance graduates compared to drama graduates. Levels of satisfaction were related to the length of time respondents had been engaged in performance activities and whether or not they were currently in a performance related activity;
- Respondents were least satisfied with their careers in terms of earnings and job security;
- Approximately 1 in 10 graduates are unemployed at any one time during the first 12 months following graduation. Unemployment is higher among drama graduates;
- Assimilation into employment occurs during the first four months following graduation. Beyond the December following graduation, approximately a third of

respondents are employed within a non-performance activity, while half employed in a performance related occupation at any one time;

- The rate of employment within both performance related occupations and teaching occupations is higher among dance (compared to drama) graduates, graduates from higher social class backgrounds and graduates with a National Diploma (compared to a degree);
- Over the whole sample, on average respondents were employed in a performance related occupation (incl. Teaching) for 23 weeks. Twenty eight percent did not gain any employment within a performance occupation during this first year following graduation;
- At the time of the survey, the earnings distribution of those engaged in performance activities peaks at an equivalent of £12-14,999 pa. The earnings distribution of those engaged in non-performance activities peaks at an equivalent of £6-7,999pa. Approximately 1 in 4 holds a second job.

3.4 **TP046 Disability Training Evaluation.** Viv Freakley has provided a detailed evaluation of the DfES commissioned disability equality training based on questionnaires and telephone interviews which also sought data on wider issues relating to provision for differently abled performers. In her conclusion, Viv Freakley represents a set of key issues which the evaluation team agree need to be addressed in order for the momentum of progress to be sustained.

These include:

- On the whole, the disability awareness training was successful in achieving its goal of awareness raising among the providers and the strategic thinking is continuing within the schools. Many, however would have preferred the training to be more specifically-related to the field of vocational performing arts training.
- Some schools have already responded with action: including participation in the DfES disability projects, devising of new disability policies and the setting up of new partnerships for specialist provision.
- There remain three outstanding challenges for providers [1] capital resources for building adaptation, [2] accommodation of differentiated disabilities within their conceptual frameworks of artistic/industry standards of excellence and [3] capacity-building, staff development and the development of adaptive teaching, learning and assessment practice.
- It is pertinent to comment further on [2] in relation to dance. The dance providers are experienced in the vocational preparation of dance performers for three sub-sectors of the dance profession: commercial theatre dance, classical ballet and contemporary dance. Their rationales and value-systems are rooted not in the everyday norms of human physical performance but in the capability for transcending these norms. From that position very, very few people are able-bodied. These providers are striving to meet standards of excellence which are themselves continually being raised.

- In commercial dance the need to “wow” audiences with physical athleticism could be a factor. Equally, the over-supply of dancers might be creating a competitive edge of increasing athleticism in this sub-sector.
- Why is classical ballet thought by so many to be the least accessible? This could be firstly because it is largely still based on a 19th century repertoire and secondly, the performance of this repertoire has been refined into increasing virtuosity and athleticism over the years. In other words, its goals and parameters are very clear: it has a set pattern of steps and movements which either the dancer can or cannot do. The training leads by progressive degrees to the mastery of these steps and movements and the ability to achieve (or not) is clear at all stages. At the same time, artistic directors and audiences are looking for increasingly complex and innovative interpretations of the classics. Part of this complexity and innovation derives from pushing the boundaries of physicality and interpretation.
- Why is contemporary dance thought by so many to be the most accessible? The demands for technical virtuosity and athleticism are evident in contemporary dance as well – especially in the performance of contemporary dance “classic” repertoire. However, there are many contemporary choreographers who use the abilities of the dancer as the starting point for the creative process, rather than pre-choreographed phrases of set steps and movements. There is also within contemporary dance a strong nucleus of people who train the dancer’s body through “movement awareness” techniques which, although style-based are not rooted in mastery of a pre-determined vocabulary.

3.5 **TP047 Flexible Provision; Progress Report:** Sue Band and Viv Freakley have produced a progress report on the development of the three flexible provision partnerships with *Mind the Gap*, *Candoco* and *Graeae* covering the period 05/04 – 02/05. These projects are due for completion in 06/05 and will receive a more detailed summative evaluation.

The purpose of this report is to give an overview of the progress of each project, with an interim flavour of some of the issues highlighted.

At an institutional level, both drama-based projects have been successful in establishing partnership relationships with several provider schools, and the dance-based project has made similar practical links with one D&DA provider, and verbal expressions of interest from three others.

At tutor level, exchanges which have taken place have engendered a two way dissemination of good practice as well as a growing understanding among mainstream providers of possible ways forward towards integration.

As yet, INSET training activities are not well established, only two schools having expressed a wish to participate in the INSET training offered by Candoco, and Graeae having met with a similarly disappointing response.

However, the full extent of achievements made, difficulties encountered and their implications for disabled students’ access to high quality training in the context of D&DA

provision, will be more fully revealed as each project reaches its conclusion, and will be evaluated in the next report to steering group.

A range of issues have been highlighted by the companies, by provider school tutors and by students. Some are particular to the circumstances of each individual project and are detailed in the body of the report. Others have a more general application: overall, company representatives and provider tutors were in agreement that the following are among important issues arising from their engagement with the projects:

- Logistical implications for small companies whose central focus is not training
- Degree and nature of pastoral care required for students
- Some enduring, though overall diminishing, apprehension among provider tutors
- Need for planning ahead, especially materials and texts, with implications for provider schools
- Time needed to work with students' difficulties/disabilities
- The pace and speed of mainstream training and ability of disabled students to cope over a sustained period of time
- Progression alternatives for students
- Culture differences between theatre companies and training providers
- Companies' intention that ultimately mainstream training will render their training role redundant
- The long term nature of change

3.6 **TP048 Access Funding Evaluation:** Sue Band has produced this report based on DfES funded Access courses. Letters were sent to providers in November 2004, requesting details of activities which had taken place through the funding provided by DfES for access courses. The prime focus of these courses was to engage students who might otherwise not have had the necessary training and opportunity to audition successfully for a place at the schools in receipt of this funding. Where necessary, reminders were sent out in January 2005.

The paper outlines the various activities that were funded. There are variations in the detail of the reports received and in some cases schools have not submitted a report even though this was a contractual obligation.