



Centre for Educational Development
Appraisal and Research



DANCE AND DRAMA AWARDS SCHEME

EVALUATION PROJECT – PHASE II

2nd INTERIM REPORT

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DADA Awards Evaluation Project Phase 2 – 2nd Interim Report: 05/07

Part One – Executive Summary and Overview of Evaluation Findings

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This is the second of six reports produced for the 2nd phase of the DADA Awards Evaluation Project and represents evaluatory work undertaken by the CEDAR/University of Warwick Team between 12/03 and 4/04.
- 1.2 The report is structured in two parts. In part one we present an executive overview and summary of the work undertaken and draw attention to any recommendations or issues arising from the evaluatory work. In part two, we present the technical papers on which the overview and its recommendations are based.
- 1.3 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**
- 1.4 The work presented in this report (IR 5/04) relates to all four of these key themes:
- 2.0 DADA Economic Assessment (TP039)
 - 3.0 Access issues and initiatives
 - 4.0 The context for evaluating destination data
 - 5.0 New Performers’ working lives – a pilot study exploring first work experiences of the 2002 cohort (TP040)
 - 6.0 Evaluating graduate destinations – Drama and Stage Management (TP041)
 - 7.0 Dance employers consultation exercise (TP042)
- 1.5 In IR1 (01/04) the evaluation team made a number of recommendations for further improving the effectiveness of the Awards in terms of achieving their desired outcomes. The DfES has already made progress in responding to these recommendations, in particular the DfES has focused on tackling issues, raised in earlier evaluation reports, related to the under-representation of BME students and students with disabilities in training and the need for more comprehensive and reliable data to support the claim that the Awards have been successful in preparing students for productive careers in the cultural and creative industries:

The DfES have:

- Sponsored a major National conference on the training needs of performers with disabilities in partnership with RADA
- Contracted ADA inc to draft disability guidelines for providers
- Contracted ADA inc to run on-site disability awareness training for providers
- Contracted PriceWaterhouse Cooper to design a marketing strategy for attracting more applicants for training form BME and disabled populations.
- Commissioned a series of partnership projects with employers of performers with disabilities
- Contracted CDET/NCDT to collect comprehensive and reliable pre-entry and destination data on behalf of providers. The pre-entry data will provide important information for tackling issues related to access to training and the destination data will provide a reliable evidence base to support the ALI/OfSTED judgement that all graduates find successful careers in the industry. This data will be vital to establishing the success of the Awards in achieving access with excellence in the training sector.

- 1.6 The DfES initiatives and actions reported above should be considered alongside on-going DfES work in relation to sector development, disability and destination data.

In particular, the DfES has already achieved the following (see DADA Evaluation Project Final Report 01/03):

- A nationally recognised qualifications regime in partnership with TCL, which has ensured that there is a 100% success rate for all Award and non-Award holders.
- 100% occupancy rates for the Awards thus ensuring that the available budget is used effectively
- A QA regime involving ALI/OfSTED whose various reports have confirmed the quality of training for DADA students and others.
- An very good judgement by ALI/OfSTED on the career success of DADA graduates
- Targets for increasing the diversity of the DADA Awards cohort
- A distinctive FE route for vocational training to complement the new HE public sector provision
- Delegation of operational management of the Awards to LSC.
- Injected £22m into the training sector and Increased the HE provision for vocational training by 300%
- Provided additional funding to support provider based Access training initiatives leading to greater diversity of the cohort in training in terms of students from low-income families
- Provided generous maintenance funding and child care support for students on low incomes

- 1.7 Further details of the DfES's success in ensuring that the Awards are fully achieving their economic, cultural and social objectives are provided in the Final Report of the DADA Evaluation Project 1st Phase (CEDAR 01/03) and the 1st Interim Report of the DADA Evaluation Project (CEDAR 01/04)

- 1.8 The DfES is now confident that recent initiatives can resolve the problems of ensuring that there is inclusive access to training for the most talented young performers and that the Awards lead to productive and successful careers in the industry. By building on its successful management of the 1st Phase of the Awards (1999-2003), the DfES now considers that it will be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Awards, by outcomes, in realising their principal aim:

The new awards are designed to support the continued growth and development of the dance and drama sectors by ensuring that the most talented students have access to high quality training which will prepare them for productive careers in the performing Arts. Graduates from the courses, which attract awards have traditionally worked as actors, dancers, stage managers, and technicians in theatre, television, film, radio and other performing arts. The increase in publicly funded training, qualifications and quality assurance associated with the awards should have direct benefits for the sector, economy and our national culture (DfEE 25/01/00)

- 1.9 There are no specific recommendations in this 2nd Interim Report. In the evaluation team's view, the recent DfES initiatives reported above as actions and new development processes will need some time to produce the desired outcomes. In the period 06-012/04 The evaluation team will concentrate on:
- a) reporting the successful outcomes of the DfES initiatives taken in response to the recommendations made in IR1.
 - b) In particular, the evaluation team will work to establish whether the DfES's initiatives, reported above, are effective, in terms of realising the Awards' objectives, by:
 - Monitoring and reporting on the outcomes of the disability initiatives
 - Monitoring and reporting on the 2002/3 cohort pre-entry and destination data collected by CDET/NCDT
 - Evaluating the outcomes of the current round of DfES funded provider-based access initiatives
 - Monitoring and reporting on the outcomes of the PWC marketing initiatives in delivering a more diverse and representative cohort in training for 2004/5
 - Gathering the information that the evaluation team considers essential to an effective economic assessment of the Awards
 - Further mapping and scoping work with providers, NCDT/CDET and other representative employers and agencies to establish a clearer picture of the labour market, destinations, relevance of training, patterns of supply and demand and to further confirm the reliability of the DfES claim that the Awards lead directly to successful and productive careers in the industry.
- 1.10 The overview of the evaluation work carried out for this Interim Report in sections 2-7, summarises the key findings of the Technical Papers in Part Two of the Report. This evaluation work was agreed with SG in 02/04 and is focussed on contextual work which the evaluation team, with the support of the SG, considers vital both to the confirming whether the Awards are effective and to informing the sector in establishing a clearer picture of labour market demands, the experiences of new performers in the labour market, assessing the quality and relevance of the training offered and informing discussions about the range of

courses and art forms offered by the Awards.

- 1.11 This evaluatory work has begun to generate a clearer picture of the correlations between provider and graduate expectations and employer's views of the training and labour markets.
- 1.12 The update on the economic assessment (2.0 & 039) stresses that the argument for DADA doesn't rest on a simple monetary cost and value equation. The economic argument for DADA is tied into broader social and cultural benefits. Lindley suggests, therefore, that the four most important outcomes for the Awards, from an economic perspective, are:
- **Equity**- extending access to training according to ability
 - **Leverage** – regulating the quality of provision, first in DADA Award providers and, then, across the training sector as a whole
 - **Employability** – enhancing job-search and career skills
 - **Transparency and credibility** – clearer quality standards in terms of employers, agents and other gatekeepers
- 1.12 In 3.0 we can report on the introduction of significant developments intended to develop the diversity of the profile of students in training. The DfES has initiated a raft of measures and initiatives designed to support both the sector and employers in extending opportunities for high quality training to all suitably talented performers.
- 1.13 The evaluation team has begun to survey the experiences of the first DADA Award graduates who entered the labour market in 2003. Following a pilot postal survey, which was reported in IR1, the evaluation team interviewed a selection of graduates and the outcomes of these pilot interviews are reported in 5.0 and 040. This data offers us a glimpse of the human stories behind the success of the Awards. In different ways these new performers confirm that their chosen vocation is more of a 'lifestyle than a career or a job' and that training had provided them with the attitudes and spirit to endure both the highs of good employment contracts and the lows of long periods of unemployment and frustration. Whilst this is only a small selection and inconclusive in itself it does begin to offer a picture of the kind of life that students in training are being chosen and trained for. Most of the new performers indicated that they would not have been able to complete their courses without the DADA Awards. Some face financial pressures in the first months after graduating said that they were glad that DADA support had enabled them to leave college without unmanageable levels of student debt.
- 1.14 In a follow up to a survey of Dance Schools reported on in IR1, the evaluation team visited Drama Schools (6.0 and 041) to assess the range of primary employment roles and employment contexts which Schools prepare students for. The purpose of this work has been to invite the sector to begin the process of matching their own training objectives and targets to a destination data collection system which will offer data for their own self-assessment of graduate employment patterns. The work has also been vital in collecting provider perspectives both on graduate employment and on systems of destination data collection. This contributes to the 'bigger picture' which will be vital to an

evaluation of the Awards success in terms of graduate employment. As a result of this exercise, the evaluation team offer draft models of destination data pro-formas based on data collected during visits. The models are in Appendix One.

- 1.15 In 6.0 and 042, the evaluation team report on the results of a survey of Dance employers, which was planned in order for the team to collect data on the relevance and quality of training and current trends in the labour market from the employers' perspective. It is interesting to see a number of cross references between the employers view, the training aspirations of providers and the lived experience of graduates one year into their professional careers. In many cases there is a close match between these three perspectives and we have also drawn attention throughout the report to those areas where either the graduates or the employers' appears to diverge from the providers' perspective.

2 DADA Economic Assessment

- 2.1 In Technical Paper 039, Robert Lindley, the economic analyst commissioned by the DfES, presents an update on his work on the economic assessment of the DADA scheme in preparation for the spending review in 2005. He reflects on the conclusions reached in his 2001 study and indicates how the evidence being marshalled under the DADA 2nd Phase evaluation can be used. This relates to assessing the outcomes of the scheme not only in terms of the development of the training sector itself but also the broader cultural and social agendas.
- 2.2 Following the submission of a draft of this paper, the DfES is now engaged with the contractor in further negotiations about the scale, parameters and research methods suggested in this paper and outlined in the original bid for the evaluation of the Awards
- 2.3 In the conclusions to his paper, Lindley suggests that there are four key outcomes for the project in terms of the economic perspective. In the next phases of the evaluation project, the team will be focusing on data relating to these four outcomes in order to evaluate and provide evidence as to how management, operations and graduate outcomes of the Awards are meeting the desired economic outcomes.
- **Equity**- extending access to training according to ability
 - **Leverage** – regulating the quality of provision, first in DADA Award providers and, then, across the training sector as a whole
 - **Employability** – enhancing job-search and career skills
 - **Transparency and credibility** – clearer quality standards in terms of employers, agents and other gatekeepers

3 ACCESS

- 3.1 In this report we can record further DfES initiatives, which may positively impact on the profile of the training cohort in terms of diversity and access to training.
- 3.2 The Awards are intended to promote equity in terms of access to high quality training for appropriately talented performers and stage managers. In earlier reports the evaluation team has recorded the significant increase in the numbers of students from low –income families now in training as a direct result of the DfES’s management of the Awards. The team have also drawn attention to the on-going under representation of students with disabilities and from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups in particular. It should be noted that the imperative of ensuring that the profile of students in training should reflect the plurality and diversity of contemporary British society is driven by commercial and industrial trends as well as by a broader cultural agenda supported by legislative and statutory obligations for both the training and labour markets.
- 3.3 The DfES has made significant progress in terms of providing resources and guidance to the providers in order to facilitate access to training for talented performers with disabilities. In the view of the team this work has been done with considerable sensitivity and has allowed providers with both the space and training to review their own potential to attract and subsequently train applicants with disabilities. The DfES approach has been to both challenge and support the sector through a combination of resourcing and leverage.
- 3.4 At the time of writing this report the following projects have been successfully operationalised by the DfES and will be closely followed by the evaluation team:
- 5/11 partnership projects with leading integrated and disability specific employers have been approved and initiated. Amongst these projects there is one which focuses on preparing performers with disabilities for audition
 - Comprehensive and expert guidance has been produced in the form of a specially commissioned manual for use by providers
 - One day disability equality training courses have been designed and offered to all providers
 - PriceWaterhouse Cooper have been commissioned to produce a marketing plan for increasing the level of involvement for both BME and people with disabilities. They are expected to produce recommendations to the DfES by the end of May 2004
 - DfES has contracted NCDT/CDET to collect, monitor and interpret pre-entry data which will be used to identify social, educational and cultural patterns amongst students applying for audition and students offered places. This initiative will assist the monitoring of access and equity within the Award scheme and how strategic interventions at the pre-entry stage might increase the diversity and plurality of the training cohort.

- 3.5 The evaluation team will also be closely monitoring the success, by outcome, of the current round of DfES funded access opportunities planned by providers to increase access to training.

4 Destination data

- 4.1 The evaluation team welcomes the contractual arrangements that have been established between DfES and NCDT/CDET by which both agencies will be responsible for supporting providers in collecting, interpreting and using pre-entry and destination data. As a result of additional funding from the Arts Council, NCDT will be exploring ways to map data on drama graduates through the development of course profiles, harmonisation of the information held on Spotlight and Equity databases and periodic surveys of live and recorded media employers to map training routes of employee artists and production staff.
- 4.2 This is an important DfES initiative, following earlier recommendations from the evaluation team, that gives greater recognition to the sector work done by NCDT/CDET and which will provide regular and robust data to demonstrate the DfES's success in securing the core objectives for the Awards
- 4.3 A key objective for this 2nd phase of the evaluation project is to assess the most effective ways of gathering and interpreting destination and pre-entry data. There are a number of 'drivers' that make this an imperative:
- As Robert Lindley, the economist appointed by DfES to provide an economic assessment of the Awards, suggests in his Technical Paper 039, both the Treasury and Ministers will need hard evidence for the next spending review, that the sector in general and DADA providers in particular are providing value for money in terms of the number of graduates gaining 'successful' employment in the industry. The DfES has now contracted with NCDT/CDET to ensure that this hard evidence is available.
 - A more rigorous and systematic collection of destination data is necessary for informing decisions about the allocation of Awards in relation to labour market demands and for providers' own self-assessment in relation to their mission statements and QA processes. This data may also usefully reinforce the qualitative distinction between DADA Award providers and other 'vocational' courses which do not meet the same stringent criteria in terms of quality of training and preparation for successful employment in the industry.
 - From 2006, HEFCE intend to apply the criterion of 'vocationality' to all publicly funded dance, drama and stage management courses, including the Hosiery Schools, which currently receive premium funding. This means that all providers who receive public subsidy either through HEFCE or DADA will be subject to the same level of scrutiny in terms of destination data. DADA Award providers are not being singled out for accountability in this respect.

- 4.4 In seeking to evaluate both the form and processes by which destination data will be collected, analysed and used by NCDT/CDET and the DfES, the evaluation team suggests that certain key principles may encourage the providers to see destination data collection as a positive benefit to individual providers and to the sector as a whole rather than as a 'covert' strategy for re-allocating awards at the next Review Meeting
- Data should only be used for the purposes of self-assessment by providers against their own criteria and institutional mission statements. It should not be used as the basis for crude comparisons or as the basis for 'league tables'.
 - Data should be sensitive to the vagaries and complexities of assessing career paths in the industry. The data will only be useful when it is tied to a much clearer picture of the relationship between training and employment and what counts as 'success' in terms of the outcomes of training.
 - Providers need support in order to collect and monitor the required information about graduate destinations
 - The sector, through its representative associations, needs to be fully consulted on what data should be collected, in what form it should be recorded, over what time span it should cover and how the data will be used to support the development of the sector.
- 4.5 The evaluation team notes that at the time of writing this report providers have not received contracts from the LSC for the year 2003/2004. The LSC contracts replace the 'requirements' or 'terms and conditions' that were previously issued by the DfES. The contract should have required providers to provide information to the DfES and the evaluation team in relation to both pre-entry and destination data. Although, the DfES do not see this as a problem, in the view of the evaluation team, this lapse has seriously affected the process of ensuring that the second phase of the evaluation leading to the next spending review provides the necessary data to inform ministers and the Treasury.

5 New Performers' Working Lives – A pilot study of first work experiences

- 5.1 A key test of the Awards' effectiveness in terms of the principal aim will be to demonstrate the effect of the Awards in terms of graduate employment outcomes. The DFES are working to ensure that the Awards lead to *access to high quality training which will prepare them for productive careers in the performing Arts. Graduates from the course, which attract awards have traditionally worked as actors, dancers, stage managers, and technicians in theatre, television, film, radio and other performing arts.* Through the data provided by NCDT/CDET the DfES should be able to show that graduates have productive careers in the performing arts in the employment contexts traditionally associated with the courses offered.
- 5.2 Although the DfES intends CDET/NCDT to implement 'simple measures' for recording basic destination data as proof of the efficacy of the Awards, the evaluation team indicated in IR1 and to Steering Group that this 'proof' needs to

- be considered in the context of a broader picture of graduate employment in the sector. This broader picture will provide a more complex but also more equitable foundation for 'valuing' the successful outcomes of the Awards. This further evaluatory work is also essential to building the kind of economic argument which the evaluation team considers important for an evidence based assessment of the Awards.
- 5.3 Although the DfES has been successful in diversifying training in the sector through distinctive HE and FE routes, and the Awards now operate in a regime which does not require the kind of detailed and robust destination data required in HE, the evaluation team think it would be ill-advised not to offer Ministers data worthy of comparison with HE and other vocational training routes. The strongest case can be made by offering the best information.
 - 5.4 In IR1, Rhys Davis reported on the results of a pilot survey of graduates (Technical Paper 036). The purpose of this pilot study was to test a detailed questionnaire to see whether it was capable of capturing some of the complexities of new performers' working lives. An important feature of the survey was to include periods of unemployment, financial information and the kinds of performance related and non-performance related jobs taken. Although this was only a pilot there was a high level of response. The evaluation team are now planning to send the revised questionnaire to all 2003 graduates so that a more reliable and comprehensive sample could be used in helping the sector to map out career paths after training.
 - 5.5 One purpose of the pilot survey was to provide evidence of the complexity of most graduates' first work experiences and therefore to prevent the use of crude and unhelpful measures of destination data as well as to demonstrate the difficulties in establishing what 'successful' might mean in terms of a graduate's first steps in the industry.
 - 5.6 The evidence from the pilot study also indicated that many graduates will endure acute financial problems which drive some of the decisions they take about what kinds of performance and other employment they seek. This information is useful in terms of the economic argument for DADA, because it reinforces the importance of publicly funding talented students who, because of the nature of their profession, may not be able to achieve their potential because of debts incurred during and after training.
 - 5.7 In order to facilitate a full response to a survey of 2003 graduates, the evaluation team's recommendation that all providers be required to send the survey forms to the last known addresses of 2003 graduates was accepted by DfES and Ministers. The data from this exercise will be held by the evaluation team and used to corroborate evidence of graduate outcomes collected by NCDT/CDET, on behalf of DfES, where appropriate.
 - 5.8 The pilot survey was a quantitative instrument and in order to further pursue the subtleties of new performers' working lives Sheila Galloway and Susan Band have undertaken a qualitative study by telephone interview with a selection of the respondents to the pilot survey (Technical Paper 040).

- 5.9 Although the selection interviewed may not be representative of the cohort as a whole, their responses highlight some factors which shape their initial professional experiences and the report is intended to add to the growing picture of evidence, both qualitative and quantitative, collected from providers, students, employers, professional associations which the evaluation team believe is needed prior to any recommendation about how destination data should be used to inform planning and the allocation of awards in the sector.
- 5.10 15 of the 18 interviewed had had DADA support as students, having trained at 9 of the schools receiving awards. Aged between 20 and 28 in 2003, all but three were white. Most were based in Greater London or the Home Counties. They were diverse in their attitudes, aspirations and motivation as well as their professional and other experience.

Name (anonymised)	Age	Qualification	DADA	Employment 2002 – 2003
Tammy	20	Diploma in Musical Theatre	✓	Singer/dancer cruise ship company Aug 02 – Oct 03
Nicole	25	National Diploma in Musical Theatre	✓	2 nd lead musical UK tour, West End 2 contracts Aug 02 – Sept 03
Lisa	25	National Diploma in Acting	✓	Canvasser, software company Actor/producer fringe company, pantomime
Suzanne	22	BA in Professional Stage Management	✓	ASM - 4 contracts: regional theatres and summer festival
Alex	21	BA in Professional Stage Management	✓	Runner, location assistant, TV company. SM concert tour Sept 02 – Aug 03
Sarah	20	National Diploma in Musical Theatre	✓	Sales advisor. Teacher, Saturday classes, dance and drama school.
Hannah	20	National Diploma in Musical Theatre and Performing Arts	✓	Dancer, summer seaside production and pantomime. Dancer, cruise ship 8 months
Emily	20	National Diploma in Dance (Musical Theatre)	✓	Singer/dancer, cruise ship 9 months
Stuart	26	National Diploma in Professional Acting	✓	Croupier and senior demonstrator 'magic' in store
Oliver	28	National Diploma in Musical Theatre	x	Swing dancer and understudy, major West End musical
Annie	20	National Diploma in Dance and Teacher Training	✓	Dance teacher and shop assistant
Stephen	22	National Diploma in Dance (Musical Theatre)	x	Fixed term contracts overseas July – Nov 02 theme park, Jan-Aug 03 cruise ship.
Fin	25	National Diploma in Professional Acting	✓	Fixed term acting contract, Theatre in Education
Christie	22	National Diploma in Musical Theatre (Dance)	x	Dancer, variety show. Singer, dancer, entertainer, Mediterranean Hotel April 03 on
Tim	24	National Diploma in Dance: Musical Theatre	✓	Fixed term contract ensemble dancer, major West End musical
Martin	24	BA in Professional Acting	✓	Drama teaching assistant. Community theatre. 2 TV roles.
Daniel	24	National Diploma in Professional Acting	✓	Theatre overseas
Michael	23	BA Course in Performance (Acting Option)	✓	Promotional work. Front of house. Lead role, pantomime.

5.11 The pilot interviews support some of the findings of other related studies, in particular:

- It was unusual for DADA graduates to be continually employed in the industry, although some are. It was also common for respondents to find a mix of employment contexts – dance, singing, cruise ships, commercials, musicals, teaching – although some did stay with one context such as musicals but again this might include a mix of regional and West End.
- Not all DADA graduates seek or enjoy long first engagements, although some welcome the financial stability, the further training and good start to their CVs offered by some long contracts
- Those DADA graduates who were successful in securing work were exhilarated and inspired by their exposure to live paying audiences and these opportunities were important in building confidence and enthusiasm for further job searches and auditions.
- Many of the DADA graduates commented on dilemmas in seeking work, including:
 - whether to work full time for a year in order to pay off loans before seeking relevant professional employment in order to pay off loans
 - whether to go for lucrative TV commercial or promotional work rather than for more ‘valued’ work which is less well paid
 - whether to go for breadth or depth of experience in the early years
 - finding work which allows time off for auditions
- In many cases contacts made during training with staff, guest directors/choreographers, agents and other students continued to be a factor in their job search.
- Most of the DADA graduates expressed satisfaction with their training as a good preparation for employment
- In some cases, cruise ships, TV soaps and TiE have replaced repertory work as good further professional training opportunities.
- In many cases non-performance related employment required good communication, inter-personal and presentational skills associated with aspects of performer training.
- Amongst this group, teaching was a common short-term safety net in providing income, some saw it as a possible later career option but most saw it as being ‘second best’.
- Some DADA graduates felt less well prepared through their training for certain aspects of their professional lives. These included: more advice on tax and other freelance management skills including negotiating terms and conditions; more access to ‘real’ audiences during training; more time and

attention to recorded media work

- From the respondents' perspective good employers pay fairly, treat employees with respect, take account of their concerns and give attention to their working (and where appropriate living) conditions. New performers value these features highly.

5.12 One respondent captured a general feeling when she suggested that working, or seeking work, in the industry was a *lifestyle rather than a career or job*. As well as referring to the continual quest for performance related work and the extent to which this quest determines other decisions made by graduates, this statement is also interesting in the context of what providers are training students to do. It suggests, for instance, that one measure of the quality of training in so far as it is an effective preparation for employment might be the extent to which it prepares students for this 'lifestyle' by giving them the attitudes, life skills, and 'doggedness' required to exist in the profession. In their study of both Drama and Dance providers' views of training outcomes (Technical Papers 035/041) Vivien Freakley and Susan Band note the emphasis providers place on preparing performers for long term sustainability, and flexibility based on core 'traditional' skills rather than for specific job opportunities.

5.13 Longer-term sustainability can only be identified by following up former DADA award holders as their careers develop. The information available to the team in 2003 meant that the pilot interview programme could not guarantee typicality. In future the collaboration of the schools in giving current information and access to former DADA students should make it possible to be more sure about the representativeness of those interviewed. For instance, this pilot study involved former students from just 9 schools. We know nothing about the individual work experience of DADA holders who trained at all the other schools supported by the scheme.

6 Evaluating graduate destinations – Drama and Stage Management

6.1 In Technical Paper 041, Vivien Freakley and Susan Band report on interviews with four DADA drama providers undertaken in February/March 2004. This paper follows up the dance pilot study reported in technical paper 035 : Evaluating Graduate Destinations. It reports on interviews with four DADA drama providers undertaken in February/March 2004. It seeks to contribute to the overall understanding of first work destinations and early career paths for actors and stage managers.

6.2 As with the prior study with dance providers, The aims of the drama providers study were to:

- seek out ways in which first work destinations and early career paths can be categorised so as to reflect similarities and differences across providers.
- open up the debate on the characteristics of a good start in the sector/s.

- investigate ways in which graduate employment performance might be assessed to ensure provider diversity and range.

6.3 The study suggests that constructing an evaluative framework for graduate destinations will be a challenge. Any such framework will need to recognise the diversity of credible career starting points for actors and make allowance for the prevalence of under employment. Nevertheless, the study has thrown up some interesting pointers:

- Providers are less concerned about “stardom” than they are about sustainability of career.
- Early success with a high profile first job in Television, film and/or Theatre might indicate the start of a high profile career but most likely it will not.
- A modest but broad-based start across all three sub-sectors would be more likely to indicate longevity.
- Working contexts such as cruise ships and pantomime with a good company and director offer the musical theatre performer good starts in terms of professionalisation and network-building for future employment.
- Soaps and drama series with their need for a constant supply of previously unseen actors in small parts offer a similar role in television. They enable essential access to television casting directors for future work.
- The development of related skills such as writing, design, teaching, management would enable the underpinning of more “risky” acting work and so enable longevity.
- Early career development is unpredictable but balancing reputation-building and financial security is key.

6.4 As a result of these two pilot studies it is now possible to suggest a map of employment contexts and employment roles for dance, drama and stage management, which is based on providers’ perspectives of the employment opportunities that they prepare students for. This ‘map’ may prove to be a useful guide for future work on destination data:

6.5 Dance (From technical paper 035 I/R 1/04)

Primary occupational roles identified:

- Musical Theatre performer ie multi-talented dancer/actor/singer.
- Dance performer in classical ballet, contemporary, jazz and entertainment dance genres.

Primary employment contexts identified:

- West End theatre shows
- Musical Theatre touring shows
- Dance or Ballet companies
- Cruise ship/cruise line companies.
- Commercial entertainment eg pop video, pop touring, fashion shows, trade shows.
- Show girl spectacles eg Moulin Rouge
- Hotel cabaret
- Holiday camp/park entertainment
- Self employment as an independent dance artist working on self-generated projects.”

6.6 Drama and Stage Management (From Technical Paper 042 IR 5/04)

Primary occupational roles identified:

- Actor
- Musical Theatre performer ie multi-talented dancer/actor/singer.
- Stage Manager
- Technician
- Technical designer

Primary employment contexts identified:

Block 1

- Television
- Touring theatre
- Repertory Theatre
- Radio
- TIE
- Film

Block 2

- Corporate/management training (role play)
- Commercials
- Voice overs
- Stand-up comedy
- Promotional work
- Self employment as an independent theatre practitioner working on self-generated projects

Block 3

- West End theatre shows
- Musical Theatre touring shows

- Cruise ship/cruise line companies.
- Show girl spectaculars eg Moulin Rouge
- Cabaret work

Block 4

- Event management/technical support
- Entertainment management/technical support
- Facility management technical support

Block 1 categories relate chiefly to the actor and stage management courses, block 2 to the actor courses, block 3 to the musical theatre course and block 4 to the stage management course. BUT there is significant cross-over, for example: musical theatre students may take on straight acting roles or voice overs, actors may work as technical support.

- 6.7 Although further development work in relation to destination data will now be undertaken by NCDT/CDET, the evaluation team have concluded their own development work in this area by offering for discussion draft pro-formas for the collection and recording of destination data as Appendix One of this report.

7. Dance employers consultation exercise

- 7.1 In Technical Paper 042, Vivien Freakley reports on the first phase of the Dance employers consultation exercise. The aim of the consultation is to investigate the ways in which dance employers seek out and recruit dance performers, the importance they give to CV/job history and their current perspectives on dancer “employability” across a wide range of dance working contexts. Technical Paper 042 reports on the first (questionnaire survey) stage of the consultation.
- 7.2 In the context of the DADA Awards, dancer employment contexts range across Musical Theatre, Classical Ballet, Contemporary Dance and culturally-diverse forms. Working contexts include cruise ships, commercial video work, television, film, West End theatre production companies, large/medium scale touring companies and project-based companies. There are different types of selection and employment practices across these categories.
- 7.3 The consultation was planned in partnership with the Council for Dance Education & Training (CDET) and Ofsted. The starting point of the consultation was to be a focus group with planned workshop activities but it proved difficult to arrange an event across the desired range of employers. Instead questionnaires were circulated and follow-up face-to-face and telephone interviews are planned.
- 7.4 This exercise has enabled the first attempts at:
- Constructing an employer database with potential to cover all sub-sectors of dancer employment.
 - Generating some understanding of the musical theatre/commercial dance supply chain through agents, casting directors and producers.

- Differentiating the recruitment methods used within the sub-sectors.
 - Confirming the importance of the CV/job history as an indicator of employability to the employer.
- 7.5 It has been less successful as a tool for beginning a map of employability qualities or finding consensual employer advice for improving training.
- 7.6 Perhaps the most important conclusion to draw from this study is the surprising lack of publicly-available information about employment in the sector. There is no doubt that within the sub-sectors, informal and semi-formalised networks enable the passing on of information about work opportunities but it is difficult to gain an understanding of how widely this information is distributed and how far all interested parties are able to access it. Among interested parties we might include the full range of potential employees, all agents and casting directors and of course all those involved in training the next generation of dancers. The latter in particular need up to date knowledge about the industry and its changing needs and at this moment it is difficult to know how they access this beyond a fairly narrow range of immediate contacts.
- 7.7 There is a great deal of work to do to map the dance employment landscape and to create structures by which employment market information can be shared across all interested parties, including policy-makers. This work is clearly far beyond the scope of the DADA project and the Warwick Evaluation team – it is more properly the remit of an industry lead body and Sector Skills Council.