



L-Università ta' Malta
School of Performing Arts



Expand your
thinking
through dance

Dance Studies

Department of Dance Studies
School of Performing Arts
Dance Studies Courses

YOUR CREATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Earning a degree in Dance Studies from the University of Malta provides you with invaluable training, experience, connections, and a portfolio of written and digital work that will make you competitive in the contemporary world of dance and performing arts. Whether you are just finishing school or looking to earn a Masters while working as a dance practitioner, we have degree programmes designed to keep you challenged as well as making you thrive, receiving in-depth, daily training in multiple techniques while also choreographing, creating websites, studying the roots and routes of dance, and preparing for the many facets of life as a dance artist.

WHO ARE WE?

The Department of Dance Studies at the University of Malta is a young and dynamic department working towards a balance of focus in both practice and theory. It is a rather unique university department which trains its students heavily in dance techniques, choreography, and technology, as well as offering in-depth theoretical and critical engagement with current research in history, performance studies, pedagogy, and performer's health. The aim behind this balance of focus is to provide the student and future dance artist with a varied array of options in her/his career, and a series of skills, focused and transferable, which will be of use in his/her future work.

WHAT DO WE OFFER?

- ⊗ Integrated learning experiences which emphasise the interdependence of theory and practice
- ⊗ An international group of lecturers, practicing artists, and scholars
- ⊗ At least two technique classes daily
- ⊗ Intensive practical workshops, choreography practicums, seminars, student-led work, independent work, regular tutorials
- ⊗ International guest choreographers and visiting lecturers, working in English
- ⊗ Well-equipped dance studios, seminar rooms, and a newly refurbished theatre
- ⊗ Opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration as part of the UM's School of Performing Arts

CHOICE OF PROGRAMMES

Our courses have been designed to appeal to students from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. First, the University of Malta targets students with a number of years of experience of practical dance training who wish to pursue a career in Dance as intending performers, choreographers, teachers, dance journalists, managers and administrators in dance schools, therapists, community dance workers, etc. Second, we encourage the development and lifelong learning of mature students (aged 23+) with a body of practical experience but no theoretical background who wish to learn more about choreography, dance theory, technology and dance, or pedagogy. It is the intention of the University that its programmes work towards cultivating Malta's own community of dance scholars and dance artist practitioners.

The Dance Studies Department offers a undergraduate programmes, including a Bachelor (Hons) in Dance Studies, as well as Bachelor of Arts programmes where you can combine studies in dance and other subject. We also offer postgraduate research at Masters and Doctoral Levels.



Photo by John Grech



Dance Tour 2015
Photo by Lucía Piquero

OUR STRENGTHS

- ⊗ Full-time honours degree, as well as options to combine dance with other disciplines at UM
- ⊗ An international tour for third year students
- ⊗ Opportunities to choreograph
- ⊗ Pointed theoretical engagement
- ⊗ English-based course on an island where the sun always shines
- ⊗ Good student-teacher ratio
- ⊗ An international group of students and lecturers
- ⊗ Tuition is free for all EU citizens
- ⊗ Opportunities for Erasmus + exchanges in your second year

STUDENT TESTIMONIAL

Alicja Sosnia, third year student, 2020 cohort

Studying dance at the University of Malta is quite an adventure. Combining theory and practice, the course provides various opportunities for everyone. Its international environment allows students to create beneficial networks, something which is essential in a dancer's artistic career. Full support of staff members helps to overcome all the challenges, from every day practice to pursuing your future plans. As a third year student, I am about to make a decision about which direction I would like to follow in my professional life. I am not sure what I am going to do yet, but thanks to three years of education here, I know I have many options to consider.



*Alicja Sosnia - Dance Tour 2019
Photo by Emma Tranter*

BACHELOR (HONS) IN DANCE STUDIES

The Bachelor in Dance Studies (Honours) is a 3-year programme combining practice and theory of dance, with a team of international lecturers, academics, and practitioners, and with a strong focus on technique and performance.

The students have two daily classes in ballet and contemporary dance, as well as improvisation and partnering; about half of the study-units are practice-based, including modules like choreography, dance forms and practices, dance and technology, or dance in the community; academic subjects then look at analysing dance practice from a critical perspective, and include modules such as dance as communication, dance and performance theory, or choreological perspectives.

Students have multiple performance opportunities throughout the three years, many of them in the University's state of the art theatre.

Practical units Technique training	Practice-Based units Study joins theory and practice	Theory/history Theoretical engagement with dance
First Year		
Ballet Graham Release Improvisation Partnering Body conditioning sessions	Dance Forms & Practices Dance and the Camera Foundations of Choreography Collective Performance	Dance in History & Society Dance as Communication The Healthier Performer
Second Year		
Ballet Graham Release Improvisation Partnering Body conditioning sessions	Dance Theatre Technology and Interdisciplinary Performance Choreography: Modernism and Postmodernism Dance Education Dance in the Community	Dance Criticism Movement Analysis Dance & Performance Theory
Third Year		
Daily technique class Professional practice in performance (classes, rehearsals & Dance Tour)	Final Choreography Performance Practitioners Individual Dance Project	Choreological Perspectives Dissertation


Collective Performance 2018
Photo by Rafał Mielczarek



DANCE TOUR

Prospective students who wish to adopt a more cross-disciplinary approach in their studies can study dance in tandem with another subject from the Humanities. There are two options of study:

Every year the Department organises a programme of choreographies by local and international artists, the Dance Tour. This show serves both as an experience of professional life for our students, and as a showcase of their work throughout their three years at university. The students work on the preparations of the show for two months and then present it both in Malta and abroad, Dance Tour 2019 held 15 performances in theatres, universities, schools, and care homes in Malta and UK. Past tours have visited UK, Spain, Italy, Holland, and France. Previous guest choreographers include Nawel Skandrani (Tunisia), Jorge Crecis (Spain/UK), Riccardo Buscarini (Italy/UK), Avatâra Ayuso (Spain/UK), Roberto Oliván (Spain), Máté Mészáros & Nóra Horváth (Hungary), Niels Plotard (France), Emmalena Fredriksson (Sweden/Canada), Yoshua Cienfuegos (Spain), Dana Raz (Israel), Samuel Guist (Romania/Germany), Athanasia Kanellopoulou (Greece), Kenneth Tindall (UK).



Dance Tour 2018
Photo by Niels Plotard

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN DANCE STUDIES COURSES

Prospective students who wish to adopt a more cross-disciplinary approach in their studies can study dance in tandem with another subject from the Humanities. There are two options of study:

- ④ The B.A. (Hons) students will have some technique classes, but their technique training will be more introductory and open. Students will be able to choose their own path in relation to the different areas of study, perhaps deciding to focus more on the management side of dance than in the performance side, or focusing on backstage work more than on choreography. The study units within the B.A. (Hons) are designed to give these options, opening an Honours option to students who are interested in more particular aspects of the dance discipline.
- ④ In the B.A. Dance Studies (Joint Area) the students will be able to pursue an interest in dance, without committing to full time dance studies and training. This will allow students to explore other areas of interest, while at the same time giving them the chance to approach dance at university level.



LIFE BEYOND UNIVERSITY - TESTIMONIALS FROM GRADUATES

I am an educator in State schools (teaching music as an option and as appreciation) but also work as a composer and musician in various aspects of the music business. I always believed that by diversifying, I could ensure I never lack the necessary drive and exposure to creative ideas. Undergraduate studies do just that; they expose students to a gamut of knowledge in order to broaden their perspective of the art and its industry. These studies were key for me because they helped me break into the field. They provided me with the opportunity to display my individuality and skills and also to form the professional contacts from whom I still keep learning today. The University of Malta undergraduate course in music studies was definitely a crucial stepping stone in my career.

Fabiana Mangialardi - Graduated 2016

Dance Studies opened many doors of knowledge and experiences for me. Dance has been, and still is my greatest companion since I was very little. I have always had an interest in exploring dance, studying and research about it. The Dance Studies course guided me pursuing this interest of mine and creating new ones, which then led me into understanding and shaping my career goals. It also led to an opportunity to be an apprentice with ZfinMalta, the National Dance Company of Malta. Nowadays, as a freelance dancer, I always look back and apply the knowledge gained during the three years and develop my skills further within my professional career.

Rochelle Gatt - Graduated in 2012 and 2015

The possibility of pursuing two separate fields at the University of Malta has opened a wider vision of an understanding what is socially expressed in the arts. The scientific degree of radiography has nourished my anatomical understandings of the movement of the body and the practices that promote a youthful body. The subsequent degree in the dance studies has led me to encounters of people coming from different cultures and backgrounds. This three-year dance journey has injected an infinite border of expression and understanding of dance beyond its aesthetical values. The dance program offers an understanding of the working environment of a dancer in a company on a daily basis, in addition to a tournée experience which settles and goes beyond the seas of Malta. My student years at the university of Malta has prepared me for entering other spheres related to physical theatre and therapeutic arts. I am currently following a Masters in Switzerland at the Accademia Teatro Dimitri which is the hub for amalgamating these engines and interests together.

Margherita Borg - Graduated 2015

I graduated with a B. (Hons) from the University of Malta and continued to further my studies at the University of Roehampton in London with a MFA in Choreography. The undergraduate course provided the skills, knowledge and confidence to further my interest in the field of choreography. The Dance Department also encouraged and supported the opening of the University Students of Performing Arts Association (USPA), which presented further opportunities within the performing arts sector. My studies in the field of Dance have led me to present and be part of choreographies in festivals and conferences both

abroad and locally. In addition to this, during the duration of the course, the committed staff have given us the opportunity to work with internationally renowned choreographers.

Elise Ellul - Graduated 2013

I joined the first cohort of students for Bachelors in Dance Studies in 2010 with the requirements of an intermediate level of dance in ballet and modern theatre. What was at the time a passion, became a profession for me thanks to this course. It helped me widen my knowledge on what dance is and what it can offer other than entertainment. I learnt various techniques of movement; I learnt to create and to collaborate. I started seeing dance as a means of expression and a form of communication. I saw its use to deliver to individuals, be it an audience in a performance or children in a school. I saw its importance in child development and therapy in the elder community. With the knowledge gained, I confidently can perform, teach and choreograph. Bachelors in Dance Studies has given me many opportunities in these three fields of a dance practitioner.

Stefanelle Cachia - Graduated 2013

I have always been passionate about dance having studied dance since the age of 3. Therefore, pursuing this on an academic and professional level was the next step. I was lucky enough to be part of the first cohort of Dance Studies students at the University of Malta. This course enabled me to deepen my understanding of this art form both in terms of performance but also to develop critical skills necessary when working within the performing arts. This experience taught me a lot of valuable skills that I use on a daily basis whether in my professional life or personal life. These skills have been pivotal in my career both as a freelance theatre manager, my work with ZfinMalta, the national dance company, as well as my current work with the President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society as part of the events team.



Dance Tour 2014
Photo by Emma Tranter



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Students choosing Dance Studies need to satisfy the University of Malta's General Entry Requirements which are meant to ensure that candidates have an adequate general educational background appropriate for tertiary studies. These consist of the following:

the Matriculation Certificate (which includes six subjects, two of which taken at Advanced Level and four subjects taken at Intermediate Level including Systems of Knowledge); AND passes in the Secondary Education Certificate at Grade 5 or better in Maltese, English Language and Mathematics.*

**Overseas Applicants: Normally qualifications that give access to education in the country of origin are favourably considered as long as it is ascertained that they are of comparable standard to the General Entry Requirements of the University of Malta. In some instances, applicants may be advised to follow a one year Foundation Studies Course. Maltese is not a requisite for overseas applicants. The language of instruction at the University of Malta is English.*

For full details visit: um.edu.mt/registrar/prospective/admissions or email: admissions@um.edu.mt.

Mature students

The University of Malta also welcomes applications from mature students, that is, persons over the age of 23 years. Theatre Studies is often a popular choice for such students who want to learn new skills to broaden their career options or simply to engage with a stimulating subject in a stimulating manner.

POSTGRADUATE OPTIONS

Master in Performance Studies (Dance) (Preparatory Programme) – Online tuition

The preparatory programme is aimed to ensure that students without a first degree in Dance or a Dance-related subject but with extensive experience in Dance (performing, choreographing and/or teaching) reach the required standard for admission to the course leading to the degree of Master in Performance Studies (Dance).

Master in Performance Studies (Dance)

This programme integrates theoretical approaches with artistic practices, focusing on the education of concepts, theories and principles in support of creative processes. The course is delivered in intensive two-week blocks, interspersed with independent study supported by a virtual learning environment.


Master of Arts in Dance Studies - offered Full or Part-time (by Research)

In this course students do their own research from a proposed project, choosing between studying for a traditional M.A., which is mostly based on original research, or for a Practice as Research M.A. (PaR). Each student is assisted by a dedicated supervisor or two co-supervisors

Master of Teaching and Learning in Dance Offered with the Faculty of Education

The MTL is a two-year full-time course, which enables graduates to teach at Primary and Secondary level. Skills acquired throughout the course are directly transferable to classrooms, schools and communities, and include teaching techniques, class management skills, teachers as leaders, democracy and social knowledge within the teaching profession, etc.

Ph.D. Study is also available. In the School of Performing Arts, research students have their applications appraised by the staff in one or more of our departments. Get in touch if you are interested!





Collective Performance 2015
Photo by Darrin Zammit Lupi

RESEARCH SPECIALISATIONS

The department is quickly becoming a hub for research on dance and performance, providing opportunities for staff, students, and guests to further their knowledge in the field. Aiming to stay current in its research focus, the department centres around contemporary concerns and areas of study within the theory, practice, and history of dance. The departments specialisations include:

- ⊗ Choreographic practices
- ⊗ Dance education
- ⊗ Community dance
- ⊗ Arts and disability
- ⊗ Philosophy of dance
- ⊗ Dance and emotion
- ⊗ Dance analysis
- ⊗ Dance anthropology/ethnology
- ⊗ Dance and public memory
- ⊗ Performance studies
- ⊗ Dance training
- ⊗ Performer's health
- ⊗ Dance and technology

COLLABORATIONS AND NETWORKS

Throughout its history, the department has developed strong links with local and international institutions including our colleagues within the Theatre and Music departments and other departments of the University of Malta, but also universities abroad such as the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad de Oviedo, Coventry University, and University of Roehampton. Some regular collaborators are:

- ⊗ ŻfinMalta, the national dance company of Malta
- ⊗ Spazju Kreattiv
- ⊗ Arts Council Malta
- ⊗ Opening Doors
- ⊗ Step up for Parkinson's
- ⊗ Malta International Arts Festival
- ⊗ Contact Dance Company
- ⊗ Dance Hybrid
- ⊗ Moveo Dance Company
- ⊗ ODT (Other Dance Theatre)
- ⊗ Junior Dance Company Malta and Bari
- ⊗ UNHRC Malta

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

The University of Malta traces its origins to the founding of the Collegium Melitense which was set up in 1592. Today, it hosts over 11,000 students following full-time and part-time degree and diploma courses. The University of Malta is the highest teaching institution in Malta. It is publicly funded and its structures are in line with the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area. It strives to provide courses that are relevant to contemporary needs of the industry and employers.




SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS

The School of Performing Arts brings together the disciplines of Dance, Music, and Theatre. Our innovative and engaging programmes highlight the performance dimension of the respective disciplines, integrating the interplay between technical and artistic aspects, and the ability to reflect critically on performance. We guide students to develop skills, knowledge, and expertise pertinent to 21st-century needs that will allow them to embark on relevant research projects and shape successful future careers. A whole range of professional opportunities exist today, locally and internationally, and it is crucial that students can graduate and work creatively in performance, education, community, research, and cultural management. We believe that growth in cultural development will further enhance the School's impact on a variety of socio-cultural spheres.



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