

## **Policy on Students' Completion of Degree** **Effective from September 2023**

### **Introduction and scope of policy**

1. This Policy covers undergraduate students registered on either the Foundation Degree or BA Hons (Top Up) Degree in Ballet & Contemporary Dance with Rambert School.
2. Rambert School does not encourage students to take up work with professional dance companies before completing the course. The aim is always for students to graduate with the BA (Hons) in Ballet & Contemporary Dance, as the training and performance opportunities offered by the School are seen as the most comprehensive preparation for dance employment.

### **Consideration criteria for granting permission to undertake a professional opportunity**

3. Notwithstanding the above, students may, in some cases, be given permission to accept the offer of employment or an apprenticeship or other professional opportunity during the course of their registration at the School by the Principal and Deputy Principal. Any permission granted will be conditional upon the particular circumstances of one or more of the following criteria:
  - a. How suitable the professional opportunity is in the context of the student's studies. Aspects of suitability may include (but not be limited to):
    - i. Relevance of the opportunity – how relevant is this to the student's discipline/future ambitions, and what does this mean in the context of their studies?
    - ii. Context of the opportunity – what is being asked of the student, who is the employer, what professional opportunities/experience will this give the student?
    - iii. Duration of the opportunity – can the length of absence be supported by the School;
    - iv. Mapping to the learning outcomes of the student's course – will the opportunity arguably allow the student to meet one or more learning outcomes, and if so which ones?
    - v. Future employment potential – might this professional opportunity lead to the future employment of this student;

- b. Whether the professional opportunity will allow the student to meet one or more outstanding learning outcomes;
- c. What stage of their course the student is at, including taking account of any upcoming/outstanding assessment periods, continuous assessment requirements and any individual and/or holistic pedagogic considerations;
- d. Whether the student has any individual personal circumstances that would, on the balance of probabilities, place the student at possible risk of non-completion of their course or place them at untenable risk of other detriment.

### **Raising a request to undertake a professional opportunity**

- 4. All students should approach the School Principal or Deputy Principal to raise a request and seek permission to undertake a professional opportunity whilst in the course of their studies. Requests can be made verbally in the first instance, but the student will normally be requested to send the request in writing to the Principal & Deputy Principal following an initial conversation.
- 5. Upon receiving an initial request the Principal and/or Deputy Principal will take an initial decision as to what further information is needed in order to reach a decision about whether permission can be granted to the student to undertake the professional opportunity.
- 6. Discussions will be seen as a three-way process between the prospective employer, the School and the student. For third year students, the School offers a negotiated credited placement pathway as part of RA3001 Special Project module; for these students, this option will normally form part of the School's considerations where it is appropriate and relevant. Each individual case will be negotiated with the Principal, Deputy Principal and Head of Studies in order to determine how the student will navigate the work placement and to ensure they are able to achieve all the course Learning Outcomes.
- 7. Rambert School is not obliged to grant permission to students to have time away from their studies. All requests will be considered on an individual basis. Due to our highly individualised educational delivery, no decisions taken in any individual case will be considered to create any future precedent. The School retains the right to exercise discretion in its consideration of each offer, in the light of the learning opportunity which it appears to present for the individual student.
- 8. In some circumstances, authorisation may need to be supported by the University of Kent (our validating body). Advice from External Examiners may be sought by the School where appropriate to assist with decision-making.

### **Guiding principles for decision-making regarding authorisation**

- 9. The following guidelines give indications of the aspects which may need careful consideration before a professional opportunity that occurs during the course of a student's studies is taken up:

- a) While studying at the School, the maximum duration of a work placement will be 6-8 weeks. If longer, the student may be asked to defer or withdraw from their studies at Rambert School;
  - b) The quality of the learning experience afforded by the involvement with a professional company should be considered by Rambert School as at least equal to that offered at the School;
  - c) The student should be able to continue to meet the learning outcomes of the course: in ballet, contemporary dance, critical studies and performance. The student will be expected to complete the essential requirements of the course:
    - All in-class assessments in ballet and contemporary dance
    - A minimum of two of the three solo assessments
    - Critical Studies – written work and presentation
10. Where permission is granted to a student to undertake a professional opportunity during the course of their registration, the student must fulfil all conditions and expectations placed upon them.

### **Requirements for authorised professional opportunities**

11. The following requirements are in place to ensure that the School fulfils its obligations to its students and meets its statutory requirements in line with the expectations of the Office for Students and other sector bodies:

#### ***Completion of course requirements***

- i. Where feasible, the degree should be completed in the normal timeframe.
- ii. The student will need adequate time to complete any outstanding written elements of the course that have not already been successfully completed.
- iii. The employer (where applicable, placement provider) would need to acknowledge the importance of the student completing their Foundation Degree or BA (Hons) Degree, allowing time and support as required. Good communication and flexibility where necessary from the employer is requisite.
- iv. The School must issue the employer with a copy of the Information Factsheet that gives details of emergency contacts, expectations of the School and what to do in the event of any concerns or complaints. The employer must confirm receipt of the Information Factsheet to the School.
- v. The School must issue the student with a copy of key information setting out the School's expectations of them. Relevant actions to achieve learning outcomes and/or any assessment requirements will be set out in a Support Through Studies Action Plan. Failure by the student to complete any such requirements will normally be managed under the [Support Through Studies Policy and Procedures](#).

#### ***Communication***

- vi. Regular contact and communication with the School by the student through Teams, calls and email must be timely and consistent. Students should

submit drafts of written work, responding to feedback by email or over the phone, and negotiated deadlines should be adhered to.

### ***Student conduct***

- vii. An understanding of and an abiding by the School's expectations of what is required of the student upon their return for assessments and performance is necessary. For example, other students will have taken their place in School performances and the student must be adaptable with regard to casting.
- viii. Students who spend time away from the School are still considered to be students and are not exempted from following the School's rules upon returning to school in relation to timekeeping, attitudes of respect towards members of staff and fellow students, and other disciplinary matters as set out in the Student and Handbooks and School Policies. Any breach would be treated in accordance with the [Non-Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures](#).

### ***Impact***

- ix. The participation and involvement of the student in dance employment, an apprenticeship opportunity or other professional opportunity should be seen as having a positive impact on the student's learning, achievement, and progression, as well as the profile of the school, not only in the short term.
- x. The experience in question should not be to the detriment of other students.

## **Concerns and/or Complaints**

- 12. If a registered student has any concerns or complaints relating to their experience with an employer providing such professional opportunities covered by this Policy, they should raise these with the Head of Admissions, Registry & Student Support under Stage 1 of the [Rambert School Student Complaints Procedure](#) in the first instance so that the School is aware and can support the student in resolving these issues.
- 13. In the event that the Head of Admissions, Registry & Student Support is unavailable, the Deputy Principal may be contacted by the student instead.
- 14. The Head of Admissions, Registry & Student Support (or if necessary Deputy Principal) will liaise with the student and any School staff member as necessary to ensure that the student is adequately supported.
- 15. Any issue of complaint will normally need to be addressed directly with the employer and the School will encourage and support the student to do so. There may be limitations as to any remedy the School may be able to facilitate.
- 16. Where the School is of the view that an issue of concern or complaint compromises or may compromise the student's experience, it may directly intervene to endeavour to resolve the matter. In serious or extreme circumstances, the School may exercise its full duty of care to its registered student and intervene to terminate the professional opportunity.