PPA LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. Policy Statement

This policy includes:

- General information about Learning, Teaching and Assessment at PPA
- General assessment guidance on submitting work
- Advice on extensions and deferrals at PPA

1.1. This statement outlines how PPA supports students holistically to achieve academic success during their studies. At PPA from 2019-20 our learning, teaching and assessment strategy will be updated so that it is more closely aligned with that of DMU (2018 – 2023 Strategy).[1] Updates as part of revalidation are designed to ensure that PPA has robust learning, teaching and assessment procedures which underpin an assessment ethos which is *transparent, equitable, valid, reliable, consistent, just and enabling.*

1.2. In line with the good practice outlined by DMU, PPA is committed to offering a 'transformative and co-created education and student experience' for all students and all courses. The active participation of students in PPA's annual enhancement processes (including SSCCs and Module Evaluation Forms) is a key component in maintaining and improving the quality of learning opportunities.

1.3. At PPA staff undertake annual monitoring exercises (including the PAE and Module Evaluation Forms) to review our provision and ensure that it meets the benchmarks specified in external frameworks e.g. the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. From 2019-20, our HR staff will ensure that staff CPD and training opportunities are also integrated annually. This enables PPA staff to utilise technology appropriately to issue clear and explicit assessment guidance and provide timely and transparent feedback in line with the policies and procedures created by DMU, and to share best practice strategies. Observations will also be integrated into delivery from 2019/20 to enable PPA to disseminate best practice amongst the team and to identify and address any areas for development in a collegiate and timely manner.

2. Scope

2.1. Where applicable, the principles and procedures outlined apply to all staff and students studying at PPA. Where awarding bodies have their own published procedures, these may take precedent over the college policy.

3. Responsibilities

3.1. All teaching staff are responsible for using a range of delivery methods stated in the programme handbooks and specifications. These are carefully chosen to familiarise students with the ways of working they will encounter professionally. During their studies students will participate in rehearsal workshops, specialist studio classes such as voice tuition and dance training, small group seminars, one to one tutorials, public performances,

---

[1] De Montfort University (2018) *University Learning, Teaching And Assessment Strategy 2018 – 2023: Providing A Transformative And Co-Created Education And Student Experience* [Retrieved Online] https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/university-governance/learning-teaching-and-assessment-strategy.pdf [01 July 2019].

and lecture sessions. The variety of delivery methods are utilised to ensure that subject specific practical skills are supported by opportunities to develop critical and analytical skills.

3.2. All teaching staff must commit to offering the course delivery which is structured to guide students through a series of solo and group practical, studio-based exercises and projects that are underpinned by seminar and lecture-based classes. At Levels 5 and 6 a broad mix of delivery methods provide students with intensive, rigorous training in relevant practical skills (across the two programmes this includes areas such as jazz, ballet, tap, voice, text, stage combat, screen acting technique) supported by in-depth theoretical and historical analysis to contextualise practical choices. Each term students will have the opportunity to collate these methods and approaches in formative and summative performance outputs. These delivery methods culminate in professionally produced productions, independent research projects, and showcases at Level 6.

3.3. Course Leaders and Module Leaders should, at the appropriate time, introduce new members of staff to this policy and ensure visiting/associate staff such as mentors or SpLD support workers are also appraised.

3.4. Course teams should use the induction period, and then signpost all students hereafter to this policy.

4. **Actions to Implement and Develop Policy**

4.1. At PPA all teaching staff commit to embedding all the relevant and transferrable aspects of the DMU Strategy, specifically the three pillars to support the development of key skills. This underpins our approach for all students on all courses. PPA offers learning, teaching and assessment opportunities that foster 1. *Co-Creation*, 2. *Building Capability,* and recognise 3. *Universal Design for Learning.* At PPA our approach to Learning, Teaching and Assessment is to offer students:

- *Learning, teaching and assessment opportunities to be 'Industry Ready'*
- *Learning, teaching and assessment opportunities to build your capabilities in core subject and transferrable skills*
- *Learning, teaching and assessment opportunities to foster personal and professional growth*

4.2 At PPA, all students can expect to learn in an environment of co-creation. PPA offers supportive, personalised tuition from a range of leading professionals. Our staff offer challenging and inspiring guidance through a range of delivery methods (studio rehearsals, individual tutorials, seminars, workshops, and practical projects delivered in professional venues).

4.3 All students on all courses are respected as co-creators of learning, being empowered to have an active voice when making choices about performance style and content, their audition materials, and to ensure research projects focus on subject specific topics which are relevant and inspiring to them.

4.4 Delivery methods selected by Course and Module Leaders are designed to enable students to develop key skills (as outlined in the FHEQ descriptors and Subject Benchmarks). Students engage with a broad range of subject specific vocabularies, and techniques ensuring they can approach voice, movement, and performance work with creativity and integrity. The essential practical key skills are supported by theory classes that enable students to be able to critically interpret and engage with different performance histories, traditions, cultural frameworks and perspectives so that their design and production of performance work is undertaken with sensitivity and ethical rigour.

4.5 The professional mentoring scheme and pastoral tutor scheme ensure students get professional and personal guidance to enable them to learn and rehearse the key generic graduate skills needed for industry work such as how to manage workloads effectively, collaborate and communicate with others, meet deadlines, analyse and present findings or outputs in a range of formats.

4.6 Key employability and enterprise skills are also embedded into delivery. Students are given industry standard support to prepare for and undertake auditions, manage paid contracts alongside the demands of undergraduate study, and get both curricular and extra-curricular opportunities to develop their own professional projects, CVs and show reels. Strong links with local employers and opportunities to undertake projects within professional venues also enable students to refine their ability use industry recognised vocabulary, pursue goals with others, and utilise appropriate rehearsal techniques within the creative industries. At Level 6, Industry Masterclasses are also embedded into the methods of delivery offered so that students are given guidance from professionals on specialist subjects such as becoming a self-employed freelance artist to prepare for the transition into employment.

4.7 As outlined by DMU, PPA recognises that all our learners will arrive with different levels of readiness and prior attainment. To ensure that the varying needs and abilities are respected and supported, staff at PPA will offer personalised support to develop core performance skills (Movement, Voice and Performance). From 2019-20 Inclusion Plans, to ensure that learning is accessible to all, regardless of circumstance, will be offered to establish reasonable adjustments for students with a disability and specific learning difference. This support should enable student to develop the subject specific skills needed to progress without barriers to learning impacting on their attainment.

4.8 Key Skills in AfSAS & PiMT

Key Skills in AfSAS & PiMT		
Derived from the QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Dance, Drama and Performance July 2015 (Section 5: Skills)		
Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Subject specific skills		
Making, creating and performing (5.2)	Making, creating and performing (5.2)	Making, creating and performing (5.2)
Developing ability to apply a repertoire of practical skills to realise a performance.	Competent ability to apply a broad repertoire of practical skills to realise a performance.	Advanced ability to apply a broad repertoire of practical skills to realise a performance.

Developing ability to apply appropriate industry/practitioner techniques both solo and in group performance.	Competent ability to apply appropriate industry/practitioner techniques both solo and in group performance with creative flair.	Advanced ability to apply appropriate industry/practitioner techniques consistently in both solo and in group performance with creative flair.
Critical response/analysis (5.3) Developing ability to use Theatre/Acting specific vocabularies Emerging analysis of key areas such as performance space, histories and techniques.	Critical response/analysis (5.3) Competent ability to use Theatre/Acting specific vocabularies appropriately Consistent and clear analysis of key areas such as performance space, histories and techniques.	Critical response/analysis (5.3) Advanced ability to use Theatre/Acting specific vocabularies appropriately Strong analysis of key areas such as performance space, histories and techniques feeds into design of performance.
Applications and participation (5.4) Developing ability to make connections between Acting/Theatre and cultural debates. Emerging ability to create/analyse performance for specific audiences.	Applications and participation (5.4) Developing ability to make connections between Acting/Theatre and cultural debates. Emerging ability to create/analyse performance for specific audiences.	Applications and participation (5.4) Developing ability to make connections between Acting/Theatre and cultural debates. Emerging ability to create/analyse performance for specific audiences.

Generic and graduate skills

Self-management (5.6) Developing ability to set goals, manage workloads. Emerging ability to recognise industry requirements such as ethics, risk management.	Self-management (5.6) Competent ability to set goals, manage workloads. Consistently recognises industry requirements such as ethics, risk management.	Self-management (5.6) Advanced ability to set goals, manage workloads. Manages and meets industry requirements such as ethics, risk management.
Critical engagement (5.7) Developing ability to source, reflect and respond to diverse sources of information, theory and experience and present arguments.	Critical engagement (5.7) Competent ability to source, reflect and respond to diverse sources of information, theory and experience and offer reasoned arguments.	Critical engagement (5.7) Advanced ability to source, reflect and respond to diverse sources of information, theory and experience and consistently offer reasoned arguments.
Group working & social skills (5.8) Developing ability to negotiate with others, consider diverse opinions, and facilitate tasks in group settings.	Group working & social skills (5.8) Competent ability to negotiate with others, consider and respect diverse opinions, and facilitate tasks in group settings.	Group working & social skills (5.8) Advanced ability to negotiate with others, consider and respect diverse opinions, and facilitate tasks in group settings professionally.
Communication & presentation (5.9)	Communication & presentation (5.9)	Communication & presentation (5.9)

Developing ability to communicate ideas in visual, physical, oral and textual forms. Developing ability to synthesise and evaluate research, theory, and arguments.	Competent ability to communicate ideas in visual, physical, oral and textual forms. Competent ability to synthesise and evaluate research, theory, and arguments.	Advanced ability to communicate ideas in visual, physical, oral and textual forms. Advanced ability to synthesise and evaluate research, theory, and arguments.

5. PPA Learning, Teaching and Assessment Statement: Assessment and Feedback

5.1 Learning and Teaching is underpinned by a clear approach to Assessment and Feedback.PPA has adopted an *Assessment for Learning* (AfL) ethos, and there is a 'feedforward' approach underpinning the verbal and written guidance issued to students.

5.2 Staff must ensure that feedback is designed to 'feedforward', so students can clearly see how comments are designed to help them develop skills and knowledge for the next assessment set. This aligns with our (AfL) ethos, where assessment and feedback mechanisms create "opportunities to support and guide the learner's reflection in a climate of mutual trust and respect".[2]

5.3 Consistent with AfL practices, PPA staff must ensure they formatively assess learners at regular intervals, integrating a high level of peer and self-assessment into classes so that students begin to take responsibility for their own development. Staff must also offer regular formative verbal feedback and also offer written summative feedback, utilising VLE systems to support this. Course Leaders are responsible for ensuring teaching staff can utilise VLE effectively.

5.4 **Students are assessed both summatively and formatively at PPA:**

Formative Assessment: As specified by DMU, these are module assessment tasks which are designed to help students learn more effectively and to improve their performance. Formative assessments do not contribute to the marks awarded for the module.
Formative assessment at PPA includes: Dress and technical rehearsals of productions, sharing of practical work in process in classes, mock assessments such as practice presentations, opportunities to submit drafts of essays, or to upload process notes onto VLE for tutor formative feedback during the development process.

Summative Assessment: As specified by DMU, these are module assessment tasks are designed to test students' ability to meet the module learning outcomes. Summative assessments count towards the module mark which a student achieves and towards the award of credit.
Summative assessment at PPA includes: presentations, live performances, films, reflective assessments that monitor the rehearsal/research process written tasks including essays and dissertations, and oral exams.

---

[2] The Quality Improvement Agency for Lifelong Learning (2008) *Assessment for Learning* [Retrieved Online] http://sflip.excellencegateway.org.uk/pdf/4.2sflguidance_5.pdf [01 June 2011]. P.6

5.5 Assessment and feedback processes are subject to annual monitoring and moderation by internal and external staff, led by the Head of Academic Studies and Course Leaders. This enables PPA to ensure that the cycle of assessment tasks and feedback:

✓ Align to learning outcomes clearly
✓ Are supported by accessible and appropriate resources
✓ Students with extension/deferral requirements are signposted to appropriate support mechanisms and treated consistently in line with regulations
✓ Students who fail to meet the pass threshold/ require resits are signposted to appropriate support mechanisms and treated consistently in line with regulations
✓ Students who have reasonable adjustments are supported
✓ Assessments are scheduled appropriately so student attainment is not affected by 'bunching'

In summary, at PPA '[a]ssessment for learning is a continuous dialogue that should […] focus on the whole person, taking into account feelings as well as skills, and understanding any barriers the learner may experience'.[3] Our strategy is best summarised by the Principal's motto for all staff and students: 'work hard and be kind'.

Appendix A: PPA General Assessment Guidance

Submission of Coursework: Unauthorised late submission of assessments

Where coursework is submitted later than the original deadline without an application for an extension or deferral being approved by the appropriate member of staff, or where coursework is submitted beyond an agreed extension, then the following tariffs apply:

1 – 14 days late:	work is capped at 40%
Beyond 14 days late:	work will receive a mark of 0%

- If an assessment is submitted later than the deadline without an approved extension or deferral the mark received will be capped.
- If an assessment is submitted 1-14 calendar days late the mark for the work will be capped at the pass mark of 40 per cent for undergraduate modules or 50 per cent for postgraduate modules.
- If an assessment is submitted beyond 14 calendar days late the work will receive a mark of zero per cent.
- The above applies to a student's first attempt at the assessment. If work submitted as a reassessment of a previously failed assessment task is submitted later than the deadline the work will immediately be given a mark of zero per cent.
- If an assessment which is marked as pass/fail rather than given a percentage mark is submitted later than the deadline, the work will immediately be marked as a fail.

Written Submissions

Written submission hand in details will be specified on the module descriptor issued on Moodle by your tutor. Written submissions at PPA are submitted online as single Word document on the

---

3   The Quality Improvement Agency for Lifelong Learning (2008) *Assessment for Learning* [Retrieved Online] http://sflip.excellencegateway.org.uk/pdf/4.2sflguidance_5.pdf [01 June 2011]. P.3

relevant Moodle page via a submission link. The submission link will be clearly labelled with the task information, so you know it is the correct place to hand in your work. You must ensure that you hand in work before the deadline to avoid lateness penalties, and computer/technical issues will not be considered valid reasons for late submission. For written submissions:

✓ All students should ensure work is written in Arial 12-point font and double spaced

✓ All students should include page numbers as a header or footer

✓ All students must take care to cite all sources if they quote or paraphrase in their work

✓ All students should include a bibliography formatted according to the Harvard referencing system. The Harvard guide will be clearly labelled on Moodle. Harvard resources are also freely available online to all students from https://libguides.library.dmu.ac.uk/harvardguide

✓ Degree students should include their P Number at the top

Anonymous Marking

Programme teams shall mark anonymous submissions where possible and practical (essay- based assessment for example). Anonymity applies only to the marking process and ends before feedback is given.

For all assignments submitted on time, our aim is to mark and return your work within three working weeks, and no later than four weeks (20 working days) from the official deadline for any assessed piece of work. Your tutors will make every effort to ensure that this target is met. *However, with some diagnostic/annotated assessments (for example essays/dissertations) this will be extended; and you will be made aware by your tutor of an approximate timeframe.*

Notification of Results

Your marks in each module are provisional until they have been ratified by DMU and PPA, at the relevant examination board. You are notified of your final module grades by DMU after the examination boards have convened. These will be available through myDMU and you will be advised on this.

Appendix B: PPA Coursework Extensions and Deferrals Procedure

What happens if you need an extension or deferral?

Applications for extensions/deferrals of coursework should be negotiated in advance of the deadline date with the Head of Academic Studies (HoAS) who can provide you with the relevant forms for completion. These are also available and clearly labelled on Moodle. If a short extension, (up to 14 days) has been granted, or alternative assessment arrangements approved, the written confirmation from the HoAS should be attached to the assignment when handing it in.

In cases where an extension to a deadline for 14 days is not sufficient to meet the circumstances of the student, the student may apply formally to the HoAS requesting an exceptional deferral of the coursework assessment. You must include third party evidence.

What should I do?

Do you have extenuating circumstances that are affecting your ability to do the assessment? Extenuating circumstances are defined as 'genuine circumstances beyond a student's control, or ability to foresee, and which seriously impair their assessed work'. If you feel you have a valid reason(s) for an extension on any deadline concerning your course – it is **your responsibility** to let PPA staff know as soon as possible. Firstly, you should consider what options are available to you, and whether it is appropriate to make a request.

If, after considering your position, you would still like to request an extension or deferral – you should make your **Component/Module Leader and Tutor** aware of your intension to delay submission.

It is then **your** responsibility to ensure that the extension or deferral form and information is completed as fully as possible and forwarded to:

- **Head of Academic Studies** sarah@ppacademy.co.uk

Your request will then be considered and processed, and you will be contacted via your **student email.** The Head of Academic Studies, in conversation with your Course Leader(s) will take account of:

> ✓ The supporting evidence
>
> ✓ The closeness in time of the circumstances to the deadline dates
>
> ✓ Whether all coursework might have been equally affected
>
> ✓ The severity of the problem or impairment
>
> ✓ The length of time the circumstances or problem or impairment has lasted
>
> ✓ If accepted, this request can lead ONLY to a deferral of the coursework/assessment yet to be fulfilled
>
> ✓ Once submitted, coursework cannot be retracted and a request for extension applied for
>
> ✓ The final decision cannot be appealed, and the Head of Academic's decision is final

It is important that you complete each section and present your claim clearly. Normally, you should bring this to our attention at least **7-days before your deadline**; but we understand there may be exceptional circumstances that prevent this from always being possible.

To secure an extension or deferral at PPA:

✓ You must submit the correct form by the relevant publicised deadlines

✓ Understand that requests for an extension/deferral received after the deadlines will not be considered (this includes all forms of assessment including practical work)

✓ The Head of Academic Studies, in conversation with your module leader, will set the appropriate new deadlines for submission

✓ All new deadlines must be strictly adhered to

✓ Forms must be submitted as close in time as possible to the circumstances which they describe

✓ Retrospective medical certificates or doctor's notes will normally only be accepted if you consulted the doctor at the time of the illness

✓ They should be from your own doctor, and contain a clear and unambiguous medical opinion

✓ Remember that extenuating circumstances do not in themselves excuse a failure or poor performance

What is acceptable?

Acceptable	Not Acceptable
✓ Acute illness or injury that is serious and debilitating and occurs at the time of the assessments concerned	✗ Circumstances from minor accidents or injuries, ailments (e.g. a cold) or conditions that you normally can control (e.g. hay fever, headaches)
✓ Flare-up of chronic conditions, examples of such conditions may include asthma, allergies, depression or migraines	✗ Symptoms relating to normal exam stress and anxiety. You should develop strategies to cope with this.
✓ The death of a member of your immediate family or a very close friend	✗ Circumstances not related to the time of the assessment
	✗ Circumstances from your failure to manage your time effectively
	✗ Circumstances from your own negligence or carelessness (e.g. not getting up on time, going to the wrong room)
	✗ Circumstances as a result of bad planning (e.g. booking a holiday or making travel arrangements). It is your responsibility to ensure you arrive at the examination room before the start of the examination
	✗ Circumstances from extra-curricular employment or opportunities, unless specified in your course content or pre-agreed in certain circumstances prior to starting your training with PPA

Policy Approved: August 2019
Due for Review: August 2020