

Erasmus Policy Statement

London Contemporary Dance School International Strategy

London Contemporary Dance School (LCDS) is an affiliate school of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (CDD). As is with all the affiliate schools of the CDD, it is a small specialist institution providing internationally recognised vocational artistic training and education.

To date, LCDS's international policy has been grounded in the historic development of its education and programmes. The school was established in 1964 by a team of artists who founded an education grounded in the American contemporary dance tradition. Accordingly, for some years exchanges have taken place between LCDS and American Universities such as Cal Arts, Purchase College and the University of Hawaii, as well as Conservatoires such as The Juilliard School.

Over recent years there has been a shift, both geographical and philosophical, in the partnerships that we have nurtured and attracted and those with whom we have developed exchange and collaboration. Although we continue to believe that there is real value in staff and student exchange between North America and LCDS, we are also aware of the strengths of European Contemporary Dance, both educationally and artistically, and our need to be at the centre of a developing and strengthening European collaboration. To this end, over recent years LCDS has been working to establish ongoing collaborations and exchange with The Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris, The Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance, The Danish National School of Performing Arts and The Centre National De Danse Contemporaine, Angers, France. Schools like LCDS who specialise in the study of contemporary dance are at present in a very unique position.

In recent years, many European countries have been actively focused on either establishing or raising the profile of professional contemporary dance. This development has increased the need for educated artistic practitioners, researchers and pedagogues. Accordingly, specialised approaches to dance education have been developed and formalised in tandem with current professional dance practice. These recently established approaches have very particular identities, set up as a result of direct engagement with professional artistic practice, in essence, vocational institutions that reflect and, in turn, influence the art form.

The development of exchange and international programmes with particular reference to first and second cycle students and faculty has fed into and in turn been influenced by the CDD strategic plan for 2013-18 (CDD's International Policy incorporates the European modernisation and internationalisation agenda in higher education).

To that end, the Conservatoire confirms that its participation in the programme is part of its own strategy for modernisation and internationalisation. In order to grow its influence overseas in driving professional change and recognising excellent practice wherever it thrives. CDD will encourage the exchange of students and staff with European Conservatoire - equivalent Educational Institutions to inform and enhance the practice of its teaching, its curricula and its staff and student knowledge and skills. In this way, CDD and its Affiliates will contribute to the development of globally leading performance arts practice within and outside of Europe, the development of graduates capable of practising performance arts at the highest level, the development of innovative practice-led pedagogy in the performance arts and increased cultural understanding across European states.

It is essential for LCDS that the partner schools with whom we would wish to collaborate, have similar goals in terms of an educational provision that is informed by its proximity to the ever widening field of professional dance practice and research. We believe that we have a responsibility to develop such opportunities for our students and to ensure through our international partnerships, a culture of mobility that is impactful both during their time with us and on into their professional lives. Many of our staff join us after high profile international careers. Many continue to develop an artistic practice which in turn informs their teaching. The ability to share work and observe international educational practices will add an extraordinary dimension to the knowledge bank of our staff and with that our institution.

LCDS has, since inception, been an international school welcoming students from across the globe. If we are going to ensure that learning mobility is a significant and meaningful part of the culture of LCDS we need now to draw upon the aims, objectives, structures and global resource network that Erasmus Plus provides. We believe that our school has a major contribution to make to the current innovation that is taking place in contemporary dance education across Europe and to the over-arching spirit of mobility and collaboration represented by Erasmus Plus.

Strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects

LCDS has a long history of international collaboration. For many years the impact of global co-operation through exchange of students, staff and professional partners, has underpinned the development of our programmes and shaped the manner in which we educate, train and empower young dance artists. However, learning mobility, co-operation for innovation and embracing reform would be deepened through:

- Focusing staff and students' mind-sets and ambitions on far horizons and on challenges that are important to the performance arts world.
- Ensuring that LCDS has a diverse student body from multiple cultures and societies that enriches our intellectual and professional environment.
- Being hosts to international colleagues and ambassador, ensuring that the broadest possible knowledge base resides in our school.
- Welcoming staff to LCDS from all over the world and their different approaches, as well as their different cultures, enrich the education and student experience.

The framework that Erasmus Plus provides would give us the essential structure and support that would enable us to ensure that we are able to increase the opportunities for each individual student, providing the support that they need to be able to pursue and benefit from international exploration and learning. LCDS believes that it is our duty to ensure that all students and staff have the opportunity to be part of current innovation, both in education and professional practice.

Expected impact of participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on the modernisation of your institution

As an affiliate of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama www.cdd.ac.uk London Contemporary Dance School (LCDS) embraces the overarching international policy and strategic plan, developed by CDD, which has at its core the European Modernisation and Internationalisation Agenda in higher education. In order to grow its influence overseas as a partner in driving professional change and recognising excellent practice wherever it thrives, LCDS will encourage the exchange of students and staff with

equivalent educational institutions to inform and enhance the practice of its teaching, its curricula and its staff and student knowledge and skills.

Strengthening quality through mobility and cross border co-operation: Across Europe there is a very clear move by government to formalise HE qualifications within the arts education sector. One clear example is the introduction in France of a three phase, credit led system, (L,M,D) within Conservatoires and other Arts Schools and similar initiatives within other member states signals the development of an extraordinary range of collaborative possibilities for LCDS.

Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers that Europe needs: With over 40 years of experience in the field of dance in Higher Education, LCDS has a great deal to offer these newly established, degree awarding institutions. In turn LCDS and its staff and students have much to gain from the new practices that are developing within European arts education.

Improving the quality and relevance of higher education: LCDS will contribute to the development of globally leading performance arts educations and practices within and outside of Europe. The development of graduates capable of practising performance arts at the highest level, the development of innovative practice-led pedagogy in the performance arts and increased cultural understanding across European states.

Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development: Greater links between pan European partners through the development of more apprenticeships and learning placements with professional companies. The needs of an ever-developing artistic industry being fed back into our educations through the placement student experience and first hand feedback from future employers. Developing a constant exchange between the LCDS programmes of education and destination employers as to the relevance of the educational provision both at home and wider.

Improving governance and funding: As part of the CDD, LCDS is committed to being part of a strong, cross border leadership, informed by the understanding of the importance of collaboration and the need to influence appropriately so as to ensure sustained and supported innovation.