



Pedagogical concept of the Ballet Academy

University of Music and Performing Arts Munich, Germany

**adopted on 29.09.2020
(English version)**

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1. Introduction

1.1 Aim and orientation of the pedagogical concept

The pedagogical concept describes the main features of the educational vision at the Ballet Academy of the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich (Hochschule für Musik und Theater München - HMTM). It was created by the entire team of teachers of the Ballet Academy as a binding document. The concept is intended as an orientation framework that, in combination with the mission statement of the Ballet Academy and the entire University, gives special weight to the Academy's educational mission.

The concept coordinates and makes transparent the overall educational approach, the main focal points and goals, the basic didactic strategies and methods as well as the quality assurance relating to the work with Bachelor students and young Junior Study Course students. On the one hand, it corresponds to the ethical principles of the entire University of Music and Performing Arts Munich and on the other hand it contains clear guidelines for their implementation, including further measures for the quality development of the teaching / learning conditions.

This pedagogical concept is primarily aimed at all students and teachers at the Ballet Academy as well as at the University as a higher institution, the parents of the young students and the general public.

1.2 About the Ballett-Akademie of the HMTM

Konstanze Vernon (1939-2013), prima ballerina and later director of the Bavarian State Ballet and the Ballet Academy, contributed significantly to the establishment of an exemplary ballet education in Bavaria. In 1978 she founded the Heinz-Bosl-Foundation for the promotion of ballet education. At that time, she was already head of the "Department of Ballet" of the then still so-called Hochschule für Musik München. The Ballet Academy was the first West German training center for ballet in which dance education was based on the Vaganova method. International competition successes, awards and engagements with internationally renowned companies strengthened the reputation of the Ballet Academy as one of the first international centres for classical stage dance with students from the age of 8 years. Today, of course, other dance techniques are also offered, such as contemporary dance, character dance and improvisation, as well as relevant theoretical subjects such as dance medicine, dance history and music theory.

In 2010, as a result of the requirements of the Bologna Process, the Bachelor's degree program in Dance was established; this represents the conclusion of the 10-year training at the Ballet Academy. In addition to performances in the university's own theater, the approximately 100 students from different parts of the world are given the opportunity to present their skills at renowned Munich theaters such as the National Theater and the Prinzregententheater.

The classrooms of the Ballet Academy are located in Schwabing, the traditional artists' and students' quarter of Munich. A total of 1,650 square meters, distributed among six studios, are available to students. The training rooms, as well as the two theory rooms, are equipped with modern video and music systems. With 360 square meters, the large hall offers ideal rehearsal and training conditions to convey a realistic stage feeling.

The Ballet Academy, the Heinz-Bosl Foundation and the Bavarian State Ballet are closely networked. For example, students in the Bachelor's program occasionally participate in the performances of the Corps de ballet of the Bavarian State Ballet. In the new versions of *La Bayadère*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Raymonda*, choreographies were also created especially for the preparatory students of the Ballet Academy.

The Bavarian Junior Ballet Munich acts as an interface between university education and career entry. Under the direction of Ivan Liška, the company was founded in 2010 as the Junior Company of the Bavarian State Ballet or Bavarian State Ballet II on the initiative of the Heinz-Bosl Foundation, the Bavarian State Ballet and the Ballet Academy of the HMTM. The Bavarian Junior Ballet Munich consists of volunteers from

the State Ballet as well as of ballet students of the HMTM, some of whom received scholarships from the Heinz-Bosl-Foundation. In this ensemble, the dancers are given the opportunity to begin and consistently continue their careers at master class level. The young dancers perform both in Munich and in the context of guest performances, nationally and internationally.

Since 2010, the Ballet Academy has been a member of the “Ausbildungskonferenz Tanz” (AK|T), a national interest group founded by representatives of all dance training institutions in Germany. The group has set itself the goal of enhancing the quality of professional dance training in Germany (Bachelor’s, Master’s, diploma courses / stage maturity examination).

2. Pedagogical vision and ethical principles

Worldwide, dance and especially ballet education has been in a process of revision for some years now. In spite of the many progressive theories that have arisen during the 20th century – feminist, critical, democratic, reform-pedagogical – dance education is still struggling against its strictly authoritarian history (Alterowitz, 2014; Lakes, 2005; Sööt & Viskus, 2014; Zeller, 2017).

Currently, a fundamental change is finally taking hold in numerous ballet training programs in the West – a change that the Ballet Academy of the HMTM wants to actively shape and promote with this concept.

2.1 Historical-cultural roots of an authoritarian dance pedagogy

Dance education is rich in tradition: teaching practices and standards have been passed on from one generation to the next according to a specific model of transmission. Students learned by imitating the movement sequences of a dance teacher. Many dance educators still adopt this approach today, as they have experienced the same way of teaching during their training.

Some ideological roots of authoritarian teaching methods are presented here as a basis for further discussion:

- Authoritarian teaching methods are a reflection of political-cultural ideologies of the autocratic society within which ballet as an art form emerged. Guidelines, evolved and practiced at Renaissance courts in 15th century Italy, were developed and codified in the French court of Louis XIV, becoming the foundations of classical ballet. These still serve as the basis for today’s understanding and practice of ballet education. Consequently, many of the values and ideals of the dominant classes were passed on in the *métier* of classical dance, whether technique, choreography or teaching.
- Such an authoritarian concept of education has its origins in the 15th century, an era that sees education as a deepening of given knowledge. In this tradition, the task of dance teachers as “masters” is to pass on pre-existing knowledge. The students as “apprentices” are seen as passive recipients and means of expression for the artistic visions of the teacher.
- Dance education as an almost military exercise is based on values such as self-discipline, obedience, submission and suppression of one’s own personality. The dance teacher’s goal is to “break” his students in order to “shape” them in a new way, bringing them into the given ideal form. A strict dance education should make students strong and resilient so that they can prove themselves suitable for their later professional activity.
- A culturally influenced understanding of the body influences the teacher in the work; relevant metaphors define the students’ body as
 - a beast of burden that needs to be whipped in order to perform its required workload,
 - a well-functioning machine that needs to be kept running by an experienced technician in order to work efficiently
 - a visually beautiful art object that can be viewed as a sculpture,
 - a piece of clay, which has to be shaped by the teacher.

- The “teacher” role is rejected by many artists, as artistic talent and good reviews are the only qualifying criteria for the title of “master pedagogue”. Many teachers actually do not consider themselves to be teachers at all and therefore show little understanding of the necessary educational processes.

2.2 Unethical and authoritarian behaviours in dance education which we reject

The behaviour of teachers and their pedagogical strategies convey rules, beliefs and ideologies that seem as important as the curriculum itself. Physical or psychological abuse and violence in any form are not tolerated at the Ballet Academy:

- inappropriate, insulting and humiliating feedback as well as discriminatory behaviour either through verbal language or body language
- arbitrary and inappropriate remarks regarding weight, body type, etc. - so-called “body-shaming”
- negative comparisons with other students and the unequal treatment of privileged, talented and therefore “favoured” students as compared to others
- communicating in a language that is not understood in the same way by all members of a multicultural group
- the conviction that only final results are important and that only “perfect dancers” will serve as proof of one’s own excellence in teaching
- forms of punishment for “non-respectful” behaviour of students who question the authoritarian conduct of teachers.

In the view of the Ballet Academy, behaviour in the forms listed above is not permissible. It promotes an atmosphere of abuse – both psychological and physical – which can lead to regressive and undemocratic relationships. Such behaviour is in no way acceptable in terms of a progressive pedagogy, as it does not support a deeper way of thinking, rather it creates fear, stress and lack of motivation within the person’s learning process. Those who cling to authoritarian values do not respect the individual lived experience, the mind and the inner emotional world of the students, and silence their inner voice. Even the highest professional and artistic competence in dance does not justify authoritarian behaviour in teaching. A further danger is that young dancers internalise this high-handed attitude and – consciously or unconsciously – later on carry forward this “tradition” as teachers themselves, without ever having critically questioned it.

With the present pedagogical concept, the Ballet Academy of the HMTM explicitly intends to interrupt such a tradition of authoritarian dance education.

2.3 Our educational vision: Holistic perception of the dance students

At the Ballet Academy, we regard all bachelor students and young students as individual, competent and communicative personalities who take responsibility for their own development and education. The prospective dancers are trained to cultivate the perception and mastery of their own bodies, to cultivate their intelligence and sensitivity and to expand their cultural horizons. Their commitment to improving their performance is very pronounced, and the danger of overload and injury – both physical and psychological – is quite high. Teachers and students therefore work hand in hand and strive for a healthy dance education in the context of high technical demands.

Young people are curious and eager to learn; they are naturally motivated to develop and learn, they enjoy their work and want to give their best. We teachers at the Ballet Academy believe that all students pursue their goals with optimism, enthusiasm and dedication, are focused on progress and want to work at their optimal level. Only in an environment of mutual respect can open discussion, self-reflection and motivation be encouraged. We therefore see ourselves in an accompanying function and want to create a working atmosphere that challenges, stimulates and inspires dancers.

Dance is closely connected to the search for identity of the individual. Dance lessons cannot be separated from the general development of the whole person. The dancers are thus no longer regarded as trained bodies, and the effects of dance activity are also seen in relation to the development of their individual personality. All students are valued according to their qualities and, through the interaction and trusting relationships with other students and teachers, they are given the opportunity to expand their skills and develop their personality. The goal of our student-centred teaching is to advance proven traditional teaching methods, to utilize new knowledge resources and to enable students to reach their full potential.

2.4 Our framework for a new dance pedagogy

A reform in dance education is long overdue, and there are many approaches to changing it. With the aim of developing a contemporary dance pedagogy, we teachers of the Ballet Academy are guided by the following principles:

1. As dance educators, we want to **question the assumptions of our own pedagogical heritage**. We must evaluate our teaching methodology and, where necessary, adapt it. This self-analysis will take some time until a rethinking of the educational approach has taken place and is finally applied. Despite possible resistance within the system – and a certain loss of identity – we as the current generation of dance teachers should reconsider our educational values, behaviours, and practices.
2. We want to broaden the focus: **from what we teach** – dance as an art form – **to how we teach** dance. Successful teaching includes professional competence and pedagogical content knowledge as well as the ability to combine both in practice. Professional dancers must learn to put their expertise and experience into a pedagogical format that is appropriate for the students and the teaching situation. Transforming knowledge of dance content into knowledge of teaching/learning processes involves much more than just dance technique and body control: teachers need a wide range of teaching strategies to motivate and inspire their students.
3. We are willing to practise **self-reflection**, i.e. to make our pedagogical decisions transparent and consciously base them on philosophical, aesthetic, psychological and anatomical considerations. We are prepared to respect and value the diversity of the different pedagogical approaches, teaching methods and dance orientations as long as this diversity can be ensured as a positive enrichment for the advancement of our students. The freedom of teaching always goes hand in hand with pedagogical responsibility and does not mean in any way that the teacher is untouchable. The promotion of a continuous and constructive-critical dialogue among teachers seems to us to be central in order to understand and develop ourselves as a reflective and learning community.
4. It is of fundamental importance to us to build a **professional relationship with all students** that is **based on esteem** and **promotes students' agency**. Students must always be seen as whole persons, i.e. holistically with body, mind and soul, with all their emotional, social, aesthetic, creative and spiritual aspects. Mutual respect and open communication are the highest priority; teachers must earn students' trust and not take it for granted. Teachers must also recognize the diversity of students, respond to their individual needs, and be aware that students' cultural-educational backgrounds may be very different from their own.
5. Finally, we emphasize the **pursuit of professionalism and artistic excellence**, the main objective of the Ballet Academy: We, the teachers of the Ballet Academy, want to offer our students a healthy and motivating learning situation, so that they in turn can reach their full potential. Our students should gather a wide range of experiences in the field of dance, which they can build upon as talented artists, intelligent observers, thoughtful agents, open-minded creators and questioning critics. A forward-looking dance education does not mean that students will no longer develop strong technical skills or an understanding of its tradition, rather it means that professional learning must take place in a holistic way, that is effective and at the same time sustainable. In such a framework of self-responsibility and self-reflexivity, criticism can be seen as something positive that motivates students to cope with the learning workload in an optimal way.

2.5 Code of ethics and professional conduct for all teachers and dance accompanists

We, the teachers and accompanists of the Ballet Academy, commit ourselves to the following guidelines for professional and personal conduct:

Integrity

- We behave with integrity, both in personal and professional relationships. Integrity is based on profound ethical principles and means honesty, righteousness, empathy, trust and respect.
- We fulfill all professional requirements with the necessary care.
- We strive for high standards to live up to the reputation of this unique art form.
- We support the students' collaboration in an open, cooperative manner, and aim to foster their development as professional dancers as well as human beings.
- We treat all those working in the Ballet Academy (students, colleagues, administrative staff, etc.) with respect and recognize them as independent, equal human beings.
- We respect the diversity of human existence and strive to support the autonomy of each individual.
- We refrain from any discrimination against students, colleagues and administrative staff – whether on the basis of skin colour, gender, sexual preferences, religion, age, disability, national or social origin, etc.
- We evaluate students according to shared criteria and strive for objectivity in all judgments.
- We work together with colleagues and staff of the Ballet Academy in a collegial and cooperative manner.
- We define our own personal limits, adhere to them and ensure healthy relationships with all students, colleagues and other staff.
- We conduct ourselves in a manner that protects the well-being and safety of students.

Professional competence

- We want to constantly enrich the quality of the teaching/learning experience at the Ballet Academy.
- We communicate objectively and constructively with students, colleagues, other staff and – where relevant – with students' parents.
- We recognise our own deficits in professional knowledge or competence and take steps to remedy them as far as possible.
- We are constantly striving to improve the quality of our own work and take responsibility if improvements in our own behaviour seem necessary.
- We always reflect on our own working methods and actively listen to possible critical feedback from students, colleagues and other employees.
- We support other colleagues based on our own experience, expertise and competence.
- We regularly and actively participate in teachers' meetings and professional development courses.

Understanding, Sensitivity and Empathy

- We create an open working atmosphere that motivates and inspires. We value individual experiences, skills and interests and encourage them to unfold.
- We strive to build relationships that enable mutual respect for different viewpoints.
- We encourage feedback, accept it positively and integrate it actively into our own pedagogical work.
- We strive for a language that is understood by everyone and therefore contributes to an understanding of the collective and at the same time individual dance experience.
- We respect and acknowledge the positions, experiences and professional competencies of other colleagues.
- We take responsibility for the well-being of others and encourage students to be equally responsible for their behaviour towards others.

Discretion

- We assure that information entrusted to us will not be used for personal benefit, nor will it be passed on without the consent of students, parents or colleagues.
- We regularly familiarise ourselves with the applicable data protection regulations and observe them.

Legal requirements

- We comply with all regulations and laws, especially with regard to health and safety at work.
- We regularly familiarise ourselves with and comply with the legal requirements regarding copyrights and rights of use.
- We comply with all legal requirements of the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich.

Health and safety at work

- We are familiar with child protection laws and comply with them.
- We assure ourselves that nothing we do will in any way affect the safety, health and well-being of students.
- We adhere to all health and safety regulations and familiarize ourselves with all safety precautions in order to be prepared and able to react in case of medical emergencies.

3. Basic principles, educational goals and teaching strategies

3.1 Fundamental educational principles

The main features of the pedagogical activities at the Ballet Academy are

- student-centred learning
- personality development
- development of professional, artistic, cultural, personal and social skills
- individual support of students / equal treatment of all students in the group
- integration in social contexts
- self-determination and co-determination / Participation in a democratic community
- excellence and top performance.

3.2 Goals of the training

The aim of the training at the Ballet Academy is to educate and train students as mature, independent, thoughtful, curious, open-minded and creative artists, and to enable them to work as soloists or group dancers in classical and contemporary dance.

Additionally, during their training at the Ballet Academy students acquire an excellent basis for transferring the acquired skills to other disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields through possible additional qualifications or a further course of study, and later on to work in areas such as dance education, choreography, physical training, dance science, etc.

Through the junior program and bachelor's degree program, students acquire dance-artistic qualifications that enable them to practise their profession, e.g:

- professional mastery of the body: technical maturity, stylistic diversity, interpretative differentiation, expressivity
- individual dance-artistic profile development
- improvisational skills
- training of music listening skills
- extensive repertoire knowledge in classical and contemporary dance
- knowledge of dance history, dance theory and music theory
- basic knowledge of dance medicine.

Beyond the professionally oriented key qualifications, students develop basic skills that contribute significantly to their personality development and enable them to engage with body, mind and soul in their later professional activities:

- development of an artistic personality
- training and strengthening of the physical and psychological conditions that are relevant to demanding and challenging situations
- personal initiative and creativity
- self-reflection and critical thinking
- ability to work in a team.

3.3 Integration of a professional and an educational model

The Ballet Academy trains students to become professional stage dancers and at the same time strives for their education as young persons and artists. In light of these educational goals, our pedagogical approach aims to favourably harmonise a subject-specific and performance-oriented professional model with a comprehensive educational model.

Depending on the type and objectives of each subject and on the students' specific needs of in the learning process, we commit ourselves to finding meaningful solutions with regard to contents and methods, and identifying an optimal balance in the pedagogical tension between product and process, performance and person, artistic qualification and personality development.

Integration of a professional and an educational model

elaborated on Smith-Autard (2002)

Professional model	Educational model
Focus on:	Focus on:
Product / Performance / Qualification	Process / Person / Personality development
Objectifiable goals and outcomes (e.g. high-quality dance performances)	Motivation, creativity, individuality, subjectivity of the experience, self-esteem
Stilistically defined dance techniques as the main content	Personal, social, learning skills
Content-focused, teacher-led approach	Learner-centred approach
Transmission of knowledge and skills	Problem-solving approach in teaching
Teacher as expert	Teacher as coach/guide/counsellor
Learners as apprentices	Learners as active agents in their own learning process

3.4 Teaching formats

Teaching at the Ballet Academy takes place in the following forms:

- practical group lessons based on given models
- (small) group lessons with creative, self-developed parts from the students
- reciprocal assessment of students (peer learning)
- inter-group events and workshops
- group lessons as seminars
- one-to-one classes and feedback
- students' autonomous study.

Complementary forms of teaching are:

- blended learning with use of digital media, such as video resources
- practical consolidation lessons
- elective courses in various practical and theoretical disciplines.

3.5 Teaching strategies for dance classes

Teaching at the Ballet Academy is based on the following practical strategies to promote dance skills, artistic skills, self-esteem, effectiveness and positive self-image (Mainwaring & Krasnow, 2010):

Explaining the process and the goals of the class

- Within the framework of the plans developed by and with the teachers, students are encouraged to set age-appropriate, realistic and time-targeted goals for themselves.
- Students' individual differences are acknowledged and the development of individual potential is fostered in order to strengthen the self-esteem of each participant within the community.
- A professional working environment is created which is characterized by enriching experiences and mutual recognition.

Discussing various influences that impact students' progress

- Teachers embody the positive qualities of a mentor and act as role models.
- Students receive constructive criticism so that they can develop their own skills and individual understanding of movement principles.
- A motivating and positively challenging learning atmosphere is created, in which empowering experiences are made possible.
- Students are encouraged to focus both on their peak performance and on the process that leads to it, thus reducing a negative feeling of competition and promoting active participation and interaction in the group.
- Students are assisted in exploring personal metacognitive strategies and learning styles, reflecting on the effectiveness of their own approach and working methods, and discussing various aspects of the topic "How do I learn?"

Defining the structure and the content of the class

- By building domain-specific knowledge and providing further background information, the creation of solid foundations is ensured.
- Opportunities are offered to acquire knowledge and skills in various ways – including somatic-analytical strategies and a variety of contextual approaches both in theory and practice.
- In-depth knowledge on nutrition and body conditioning is offered, in order to support students in developing and maintaining a healthy body image.
- Safe and health-promoting practices are established, which are based on reliable scientific knowledge and medical and/or empirical evidence regarding e.g. body alignment and prevention or treatment of injuries.

3.6 The significance of feedback and evaluation

Feedback and evaluation play a key role in the development of teaching at the Ballet Academy:

- The objectives of all courses in the young ballet and bachelor's degree programs are constantly being better defined and are made transparent to the students.
- There is room for constructive feedback from the teacher. Reflection, self-observation and self-evaluation by the students are actively and positively supported.
- Evaluation and examination criteria must be clearly formulated and communicated in order to make the feedback process constructive, transparent and pedagogically comprehensible.
- The Ballet Academy is committed to the further development and implementation of evaluation methods for quality assurance and seeks advice from the University's Quality Management Unit.

3.7 Guidelines for physical contact

Teaching the art form of dance is a physical activity, and a certain amount of physical contact between students and teachers is an essential, necessary and unavoidable part of the training. The teachers of the Ballet Academy are aware of their responsibility in the use of physical contact and are actively committed to the protection and well-being of the dance students and the teachers themselves.

The following guidelines stand for the sense of responsibility of the Ballet Academy:

- Physical contact is always used with the teachers' full awareness of the individual needs of each student, with the prior oral consent of the students themselves and exclusively to correct posture or placement, or to help them develop somatic awareness.
- All teachers perform physical contact with care and empathy. As far as possible, the teachers make the corrections on their own body.
- Physical contact is always used without violence or the use of any instruments.
- Teachers avoid working alone with a student or all situations where they are isolated. Classes take place exclusively in the ballet studios and workrooms of the Ballet Academy.
- Teachers, dance accompanists, and students are requested to immediately report to the management of the Ballet Academy or other complaint offices of the HMTM any anomalies as well as violations of the above-mentioned guidelines in the form of abuse of power and discrimination.
- For mutual security and thorough understanding, it is recommended that a form concerning the guidelines for physical contact specific to dance be handed over to parents of underage students and that this form be signed in duplicate by parents or adult students and teachers, confirming that they have taken note of the guidelines.

4. Structure of the educational pathway and content of the educational areas

In order to realize the goals mentioned in 3.2, the Ballet Academy has developed a training model based on interconnected areas leading to an integral training. Aspects such as technique, careful use of the body as an instrument, creativity, performance, theoretical awareness, interdisciplinary links and reflection are found in varying degrees transversally in all subjects and courses.

4.1 Structure of the educational pathway

In order to meet the physical demands of academic dance training even during the sensitive physical developmental phase, training at a young age is especially important for providing a solid foundation. At the Ballet Academy, dance training can begin from the age of eight and usually lasts ten to eleven years.

The training is divided into three main sections, namely the Preliminary and Basic Level (8-12 years), Intermediate Level (13-16 years) and the Bachelor Degree (from 15-16 years). The intensity and scope of the training depends on the age and ability of the students. It is important to strive for and ensure a balanced distribution of the daily or weekly workload for the students.

The students of the Junior Study Course and the Bachelor Study Course are divided into the following age groups:

Structure of the educational pathway at the Ballet Academy		
JUNIOR STUDY COURSE		
<i>Level</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Weekly hrs.*</i>
Preliminary Level	8-9	4-5
Basic Level I	10	5-8
Basic Level II	11	8-10
Basic Level III	12	8-10
Intermediate Level I	13	ab 13
Intermediate Level II	14	ab 13
Intermediate Level III	15	ab 13
BACHELOR STUDY COURSE		
<i>Level</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Weekly hrs.</i>
Bachelor I	from 15-16	33/33,5
Bachelor II	--	34,5/34
Bachelor III	--	29

** slight variations are possible*

4.2 Dance technique

Dance technique is a general term. Nowadays one can find a wide range of techniques and philosophies connected to each of them. It goes without saying that a sophisticated dance technique is one of the central foundations of a professional dance training and therefore has a high status at the Ballet Academy. Technical skills are understood to result in a successful combination of aesthetic lines and forms, dynamics, coordination, learned body experiences and reflection processes. The following basic techniques are taught: classical ballet, contemporary dance and character dance.

Classical dance instruction (including en point technique, repertoire work, pas de deux) and character dance are based on the worldwide established Vaganova method, a system developed in the 20th century with a predetermined curriculum distributed over 8-10 years, which serves to provide professional training in classical dance for children and young people. It is the endeavor of the Ballet Academy to pass on the classical ballet tradition, while at the same time allowing students to engage with diverse facets and impulses of classical stage dance, thus showing them developments in classical dance from the 19th century to the present. In this program, contemporary dance is characterized by release techniques, partner work and improvisation. Its process-oriented approach is an indispensable prerequisite for later work as a professional dancer. In this context, a wide range of different aesthetic approaches is taught. Specific dance techniques of modern dance and other dance forms are offered in intensive workshops.

The different techniques taught at the Ballet Academy can and should complement and influence each other. The aim is to achieve a broad overview and sound knowledge of several specific areas. In addition, the dance training program is supplemented by intensive workshops with renowned international guests, during which students quickly learn to get involved in different approaches to dance, to be confronted with unfamiliar movement material and to embrace these with an artistic confidence

4.3 Health

The body is the instrument of the dancer. Every day during the training period and later in professional life, the body is driven to peak performance. The choreographies become more and more demanding, the dance styles and techniques more and more diverse. Since dancers see themselves primarily as artists and only secondarily as high-performance athletes, the care of their own body is unfortunately often neglected and pain is often tolerated or negligently ignored. Here it is especially important to give the dancers insight into the functioning of their own body and to develop personal responsibility for themselves. Whether prevention before or therapy after a dance injury, the Ballet Academy strives for a dance education that respects the body of the dancer in order to maintain and protect the health of the students in the best possible way. It is well known that the dancer's life is shorter than the life after an active dance career. With the acquisition of a sense of self-responsibility it is possible to have after the performing career a high quality of life in all areas, without having to sacrifice joints or psyche.

The technique of classical ballet was developed at a time when biomechanical and kinesiological principles of movement were not sufficiently understood. In the meantime, however, science has published well-founded and recognized contributions to the advancement of stage dancers and high-performance athletes and is now beginning to positively and sustainably influence the education and training of dancers worldwide. The transfer of research results to dance educators and the application of relevant findings in education are essential goals for the immediate present as well as for the future. Therefore, the Ballet Academy strives to continuously train its teachers so that they can integrate scientific findings into their teaching. In addition, close contact and exchange with regional sports physicians and physiotherapists is pursued.

A qualified dance physician supports the students with his/her weekly consultation and enables a detailed body screening beginning from the entrance examination as well as during the entire professional training. In the curriculum, especially in the subject 'dance-specific body training', various somatic training techniques (including Pilates, fasciae and theraband training, breathing and relaxation techniques, functional training) are taught in a targeted and individualized manner and round off the professional, holistic professional training as a stage dancer at the Ballet Academy.

4.4 Creativity

The act of dancing is basically a creative process and is deeply rooted in human nature. Creativity can be understood and recognized at different levels: in the course of their careers, dancers do not only create works of art as performers, but are engaged throughout their lives in a laborious, never-ending process. In all different forms of dance, be it classical ballet or character dance or contemporary works, students deal with aesthetics and beauty. The Ballet Academy tries to offer rich experiences to encourage and strengthen their individual skills. Since dancers today are not only required as choreographic tools or interpreters, but also as choreographically thinking co-creators in the artistic process, a further emphasis is placed on the development of creativity in addition to the daily technical training. Therefore, there should be a balance in the learning activities between the externally controlled development of abilities, skills and knowledge, and the self-directed development of ideas and actions. Especially in contemporary dance classes, creative processes are an integral part of the curriculum and are taught in the form of exemplary workshops within the different level groups of the Ballet Academy (here e.g. contact improvisation, creative dance, improvisation, composition, and basic choreography).

4.5 Stage experience

It is a central task of the Ballet Academy to ensure that students acquire sufficient stage practice during their training. Students must also learn to cope with stage fright and special emotional states: stress, competition and pressure to perform are part of the profession. Through these challenges students can grow and become artists. For this reason, the Ballet Academy holds various performances each year on the most renowned stages of Munich. For instance, with the dancers of the Bavarian Junior Ballet Munich, students perform in the spring and winter matinee of the Heinz-Bosl-Stiftung at the Bavarian State Opera; every year, different cooperations and events take place on the premises of the University, and series of performances such as *“Ballet Academy en scène”* are given in the Prinzregententheater. In addition, the prospective dancers participate in interdisciplinary events at the University, as well as in special events of the independent scene and Munich’s wide-ranging cultural landscape.

In addition to the challenge of presenting themselves on stage in a piece of the classical repertoire, special emphasis is placed on the students presenting themselves in various dance styles during the same performance. The difficulty of changing dance styles within a short period of time is part of a future-oriented education and part of the everyday life of professional dancers. As a supplementary training program, the Ballet Academy also invites guest choreographers to work with the students and create new pieces specifically for the Ballet Academy. In addition to understanding unfamiliar movement material and learning new vocabulary, individual exploration is carried out in one’s own movement language, in improvisational skills and artistic expression.

4.6 Theory

In the university sector, dance studies represent today a core aspect of theater studies or dramaturgy and are part of the compulsory curriculum of state ballet and dance academies. Even in the professional world of stage dancers, there is presently hardly a doubt as to whether general education and theoretical knowledge should be part of their craft, since these are just as much a prerequisite for professional choreographers and dance directors as sophisticated dance technique or stage experience. The knowledge of different stylistic possibilities in choreography and musical composition as well as the ability to think structurally, analytically and creatively are today fixed components of an interdisciplinary way of working in which boundaries between the single arts have become increasingly blurred and often irrelevant.

The Ballet Academy is therefore committed to preparing its students for the dance profession in the best possible way, connecting sound theoretical knowledge with practical dance technique skills. Based on this assumption, the Ballet Academy increasingly advocates that theory and practice permeate and stimulate each other – whether through workshops developed by two or more teachers that combine theoretical and practical approaches relating to a given content, or through large-scale interdisciplinary cooperations and theatrical productions in both areas.

Further, in the curriculum there is a content-related condensation of the specialist knowledge in the disciplines of dance history, music theory and dance medicine as well as in the Bachelor’s project. The aim is to train students in their analytical and structural thinking and ultimately to enable them to apply the acquired knowledge in practice. Dance history and music theory illuminate aesthetic and socio-cultural discourses and promote a deepening of central aspects such as movement analysis and rhythmic, harmony and form theory. In this perspective, the subject of applied dance medicine achieves a direct transition from theory to practice. Not only does this subject provide relevant specialist knowledge with a special focus on nutrition, functional as well as dance-specific anatomy, but it also gives students practical “tools of the trade”. This with regard to the practical application and evaluation of the acquired knowledge in the real training, rehearsal and performance practices of the stage dancer. Here, too, there is no longer a separation of theory and practice: these two areas are understood as a whole and together define the professionalism of the artist.

4.7 Interdisciplinary cooperation

Dance speaks a global language. It builds bridges to numerous artistic and cultural fields and offers space for interdisciplinary dialogue. Successful cooperations can lead to aesthetic awakenings, stimulating analyses and surprising interpretations. At the Ballet Academy a special focus is placed on artistic collaboration with music, the visual arts and media.

For all forms of dance expression, music naturally plays an essential role. Consequently, musicality and in particular the development of a sense of rhythm are fundamental components of dance training and a prerequisite for the dancing profession. An effective synergy between the dance teachers and the accompanists at the piano is strived for in order to provide the students with a musical analysis and an understanding of rhythmic processes involved in a dance work. The VOLTA Ensemble, consisting of selected music students of the HMTM was created especially for the performances of the Ballet Academy to give young dancers the opportunity to perform on stage with live music.

Further cooperations have been established with the Youth Orchestra of the Bavarian State Orchestra ATTACCA, the Munich Radio Orchestra and the German Aerospace Center. Furthermore, cooperations with new forms and media of artistic expression (such as new media, ICT, graphic, light and sound design or video editing) are up-to-date and promising. These can enrich the students' professional perspectives and offer them the opportunity to work with artists from other disciplines, thus broadening their cultural horizon.

4.8 Reflection and knowledge transfer

Due to the increasing emphasis given in general education to the active involvement of students, self-regulation and reflection skills are becoming more and more important in today's dance education, too. The Ballet Academy strives for an open and mutually respectful culture of communication with students, encouraging them to express and reflect their views in class. The aim is to create an educational environment in which the exchange of experiences promotes individual understanding and in which students' views are considered as a crucial part of the learning process.

Thus, dance as an art form draws nearer to an Enlightenment philosophy while retaining its traditional forms and structures, which are crucial for professional training. Such a reflective approach aims to reinforce individual students in recognising their humanity as evolving specialists in an artistic field. Moreover, the practice of reflection during the training years seems all the more important as students are also preparing for a possible future pedagogical practice rather than exclusively working on their artistic development.

5. Quality assurance and quality development

5.1 Quality as a cross-organisational characteristic

The learning process and the overall development of all Bachelor and Junior Study Course students is the focus of our quality efforts. These not only concern standardised procedures for quality assurance, but above all the ongoing process of quality development through lively communication, mutual understanding, successful cooperation and in-depth reflection by all people involved. The focus is on systematically recognising, considering and promoting the development of the Ballet Academy as a learning organisation. The further advancement of such a 'culture of quality' throughout our institution depends on the improvement of the quality of the infrastructure and the internal organisational processes as well as on quality-oriented management and communication. These shared values support all members of the University in their daily work.

Thanks to the diverse socio-cultural backgrounds at the Ballet Academy, we encounter a rich and heterogeneous composition of teaching personalities with a wealth of experience as well as challenges to successful communication within a group of people with different viewpoints. We value open and consensual exchange against the background of contrasting views and visions. The constructive and trusting cooperation of the Ballet Academy's team of teachers with the management committee, the piano accompanists, the administration staff and the students is the basis for the continuous development of quality standards. On a collegial level, we create for all University members an open atmosphere through a sense of responsibility, appreciative interaction and respect for individual strengths. Regular individual, group and team meetings as well as discussions about particular cases ensure the high quality of our work. Further, we set high standards for further professional development in technical and interdisciplinary topics. We expect a voluntary commitment to the continuous and future-oriented expansion of our competencies.

5.2 Course evaluation

Since 2018, a systematic course evaluation has been carried out at the Ballet Academy every summer semester as a paper-pencil survey. Bachelor students receive a questionnaire for all courses for which they have registered. The course evaluation is part of the quality assurance system that is currently being developed and is a prerequisite for the system accreditation sought by the HMTM. On the one hand, lecturers receive feedback on their courses, and on the other hand, it is possible to determine how students assess specific aspects of their teaching. The evaluation can be conducted in German and English. Responsibilities for the evaluation of the teaching lie with the Dean of Studies and the Quality Management Office.

The surveys are all sent to the Quality Management Officer and are evaluated here in cooperation with the Dean of Studies. The data is handled confidentially. Data protection regulations are observed. After the evaluation period, teachers receive a report on their course if a minimum number of participants has been reached (at least four questionnaires must have been completed). A general evaluation with aggregated data, which does not allow conclusions to be drawn about individual persons (teachers as well as students), is forwarded to the committees that are to continue working with the results. The University management receives reports on request. General evaluations are also published in the teaching reports for the academic year.

5.3 Child protection concept

We pay special attention to the issue of child welfare and the protection of underage students. An optimal, individual balance between high performance requirements and healthy personality development is ensured by constant supervision and appropriate pedagogical, child-oriented and childcare skills of the teaching staff. We strive to promptly perceive possible problems or violations in the everyday life of children at the Academy and to enable all those involved to address sensitive issues proactively and openly.

A cooperative partnership with the parents is in the foreground; we examine in detail suggestions and wishes of the parents, looking for possibilities of implementation. We maintain a regular information exchange with all parents through parents' evenings, meetings, one-on-one conversations about the performance and developmental status of their children, and information sharing e-mails. If necessary, we arrange decision-making meetings at short notice.

6. Special situations and complaint procedures

6.1 Dealing with special situations

When dealing with problematic cases, it is primarily important for us to achieve insight and awareness among all those involved, thus promoting self-reflection, sensitisation and positive motivation. For the process of problem and conflict resolution, it is essential to care for a healthy and open communication between all parties involved – young students, their parents, bachelor students, teachers, piano accompanists and administration staff.

The staff pays attention to expectations, suggestions and complaints on the part of children, parents, other colleagues and external specialists. All those involved are encouraged to express their opinions and wishes. The colleagues of the Ballet Academy carefully examine what can/should be changed or implemented.

It is important to find a consensus-oriented solution to criticism, conflicts, complaints or suggestions for improvement. Regular dialogue between all those involved is an important factor in identifying and addressing emerging issues early on.

6.2 Contact persons and complaint bodies

Depending on the intensity and nature of the individual case, the following contact persons in charge for advice and complaints apply (in case of doubt, it is recommended that those affected first contact the student tutors and liaison persons, who will then agree with them on further steps to be taken):

Student tutors (student body of the Ballet Academy)

Student tutors can be students within the Ballet Academy as well as older students of other courses. These are available for students of the Ballet Academy:

- as a contact person in general
- for general questions about studying at the HMTM (also for prospective students)
- for students at the beginning of their studies, to provide them with information and help
- as an intermediary between the students and the Ballet Academy or the entire university (e.g. in terms of forwarding suggestions or problems – also anonymously – to the management of the Ballet Academy or to other relevant committees)
- for the organisation of internal actions of the students.

Liaison person

Students can choose a trusted teacher or a piano accompanist to discuss specific needs or problems and look for possible coping strategies or solutions. The liaison person is allowed by the student to mediate on his/her behalf in further communications, meetings or discussions. Confidential information is subject to confidentiality and, if applicable, to the obligation of secrecy, unless there is a legal obligation to disclose it.

Dance physician

In case of physical stress or psychosomatic symptoms, the dance physician at the Ballet Academy is available. Taking care of the physical and psychological well-being of each student is of central importance. In this respect, the medical and physiotherapeutic care is to be further expanded.

Board of the Ballet Academy

The board of directors consists of the head of the institute (chair), his/her deputy and two further members. According to the bylaws of the HMTM (§ 17), the members of the Board are appointed by the University management. The chairperson or his/her deputy acts on behalf of the board of directors and represents it externally. The governing body decides on all fundamental matters of the Ballet Academy, represents it without prejudice to the rights of the University management vis-à-vis the organs of the

university and ensures that the Academy can fulfil its duties properly. The Board of Directors is the highest authority within the Ballet Academy for resolving disputes and complaints.

The functions of the governing body include:

- advice for students, teachers and staff of the Ballet Academy
- internal and external communication of goals and visions for the Ballet Academy, agreed upon with the entire teaching staff
- organisation of further education and training measures
- organisational issues, financial planning and budget.

Parents' Council (for the Junior Study Course students)

The parents of the Junior Study Course students are regarded as important cooperation partners in the educational work of the Ballet Academy. To promote optimal cooperation, a parents' council is elected once a year. The parents' council should consist of at least two persons and two deputies. The meetings of the parents' council take place at least twice a year. Extraordinary meetings can also be convened for important topics. Tasks of the parents' council are:

- representation of the parents of the young students
- organisations of parent meetings
- participation in parents' evenings together with the management committee
- contacts with individual parents as well as with the board of directors or individual teachers for specific problematic cases and complaint procedures
- meetings with the Board of the Ballet Academy (at least once per semester).

The parents' council also has an advisory function, e.g. for further development of initiatives, spatial and material equipment, teaching times, planning of events, etc.

The Ballet Academy must provide the Parents' Council with appropriate information so that it can exercise its advisory and mediating function.

Practical advice on how to deal with problematic issues affecting young students:

In the case of expected critical discussions with the parents, it is advisable to involve a liaison person in order to be able to access the information of a third person, if necessary. Professionalism must be maintained in all discussions. The conversation partner is to be taken seriously – regardless of the topic and the intensity of feelings/needs on all sides. Constructive cooperation for the well-being of the child is the main focus in relation to young students. It is important to clarify the mutual points of view and to work towards a consensus.

Women's Representative and Commissioner for Gender Equality

The women's representative of the HMTM and her deputies are available to students and teachers for confidential discussions and advice. Employees of the administration can contact the Commissioner for Equal Opportunities. All commissioners inform, advise and support (discreetly and anonymously) in concrete cases of sexual harassment (also among students and regardless of gender), discrimination or assaults of any kind.

Dean of Studies

The Dean of Studies is the contact person for students, particularly in the case of problems relating to their course of studies or in light of perceived shortcomings in the quality of teaching. It is also the responsibility of the Dean of Studies to hold any necessary discussions with the relevant teaching colleagues and to clarify the respective concerns. The Dean of Studies maintains contact with the student council in order to be timely informed about problems that are being perceived by students in their study programs.

He/she is available for teachers who wish to discuss topics concerning the implementation of their courses. If necessary, the Dean of Studies will speak with the head of the respective institute or department to ensure that the courses offered comply with the study regulations and that students are adequately supervised.

The Dean of Studies is responsible for the evaluation of teaching, including student assessments. It is responsible for the organisation of quality assurance processes in the area of teaching evaluation. It is responsible for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of these processes and works closely with

the Quality Management Office. If the evaluation reveals quality problems in individual courses, an evaluation meeting is held with the respective teacher.

The Dean of Studies also plays a central role in the planning and implementation of professional development initiatives for teachers. Here, the Dean of Studies has a special opportunity to draw conclusions from the feedback from students and teachers as well as from the evaluation results and to make substantial recommendations so that the quality and diversity of teaching at the HMTM can continue to improve.

Student representatives (at University level)

The members of the student council of the HMTM represent the interests and concerns of all students in the two most important committees of the university, the senate and the university council, as well as in other committees such as the library or scholarship awarding committees. They try to eliminate possible communication problems between the different university groups and strive to create the most pleasant atmosphere for studying. The student representatives work together with the student tutors to help new and especially foreign students familiarise with the University. They work closely with the Study Grant Commission in order to make the best possible use of the funds.

University management

The University management consists of the president of the HMTM, the vice president* and the chancellor of the University. In matters of great urgency and importance, the University management is the highest instance that can be addressed.

External ombudsman offices

Sometimes it can be helpful to seek advice outside the university structures. For this reason, the University has set up external ombudsman offices for those affected by abuse of power, sexual harassment or violence: The Munich Women's Emergency Hotline is available for a free anonymous initial psychological consultation. Antje Brandes offers a free initial legal consultation. The costs for an initial consultation are covered by the HMTM.

6.3 Complaints procedures

The complaint procedure is based on the guidelines against abuse of power, discrimination, sexual harassment and violence at the HMTM. The following information and regulations are taken from this document in summary form.

6.3.1 Simple complaint

The simple complaint, i.e. complaints that can be resolved informally, can be brought to the contact persons named in 6.2. The procedure is as follows:

- Making an appointment for a confidential initial consultation with the student tutors or liaison persons of the Ballet Academy, in which the topic will be discussed. If necessary, information is also provided on rights, procedures and options for action, and reference is made to the formal complaints procedure in accordance with these guidelines (see 6.3.2 below).
- In the initial consultation, a further course of action is jointly determined.
- If necessary, a meeting is to be scheduled with all those involved, including the relevant contact persons.
- Depending on the case, the Ballet Academy's Board, the Dean of Studies or the University management may be contacted.
- If necessary, professional mediators from outside the University can also be called in to agree on a procedure acceptable to all parties involved.

The contact person involved is responsible for arranging and implementing the necessary meetings, participants and further procedures as quickly as possible. This also applies to a formal complaints procedure (see 6.3.2), if the gravity of the matter requires it. Anonymity wishes and protection needs of the persons concerned must be guaranteed.

6.3.2 Official complaint

A simple complaint could be transferred to the formal complaint procedure where it is deemed necessary. The procedure in these cases is as follows:

- The person concerned or the contact persons named by the person concerned shall immediately inform the Ballet Academy's Board, the Dean of Studies and the University management.
- The formal complaint must be filed in writing and must contain the following information:
 - description, place and date of the incident
 - persons involved
 - witnesses and evidence (if available)
 - information on measures already taken
 - informed persons.

The University management will inform the Women's Officer in the case of students and teachers affected, and the Equal Opportunities Officer in the case of employees in administration affected by the complaint. The University management or the body charged with carrying out the procedure by the University management will examine the facts of its own motion. The requisite enquiries will be made and information obtained which document the essential procedural steps.

The University management will decide on the basis of the results of the procedures on further measures and possible sanctions, as detailed in the following:

In the case of an employee against whom allegations have been made:

- Holding a formal official meeting
- Verbal or written warning
- Written caution
- Termination with or without notice
- Filing of a criminal charge (in the case of a sex crime only after consultation with the person affected)

In the case of a civil servant against whom allegations have been made:

- Holding a formal official meeting
- Instigation of a disciplinary procedure and imposition of disciplinary measures which can include reprimands, fines, reduction in salary, redeployment or dismissal from service
- Filing of a criminal charge (in the case of a sex crime only after consultation with the person affected)

In the case of a student against whom allegations have been made:

- Verbal or written warning
- Ban on entering University premises
- Exmatriculation
- Filing of a criminal charge (in the case of a sex crime only after consultation with the person affected)

In the case of third parties against whom allegations have been made:

- Ban on entering University premises
- Filing of a criminal charge (in the case of a sex crime only after consultation with the person affected)

The HMTM is committed to ensure the quality of teaching and the living environment of the University with all available means.

7. Closing words

This pedagogical concept was developed during the academic year 2019/2020 on the basis of a series of workshops with the teaching staff of the Ballet Academy and written by David Russo, Anna Beke, Simone Geiger, Isabelle Severs and the Director of the Ballet Academy Prof. Jan Broeckx under the coordination of the Dean of Studies of the University, Prof. Dr. Andrea Sangiorgio.

It was recently discussed again with the teachers of the Ballet Academy, reviewed by the students' representatives, the parents' council of the young students, the administration of the Ballet Academy, the working group "Respect!" and the Quality management department, and finally approved by the University management of the HMTM.

The present document is to be critically revised every third year, wherever necessary amended and further developed to take into account new, emerging views, topics or work priorities.

8. Literature

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Important documents of the HMTM

- Mission Statement and Concept of Quality of HMTM
- Goals agreement between HMTM und the Ministry of Science and Art of the Bavarian State
- Report of the Holzheid-Commission 2019 / Statement of HMTM President
- Guidelines against the abuse of power, discrimination, sexual harassment and violence
- Module handbook und Examination Regulations of the Bachelor Study Course “Dance”