

Self-Evaluation Report – Bachelor's Programme in Dance, 180 credits

Subject area: Dance

Date of adoption for the self-assessment report: 2025-12-18

Head of Subject/Vice-Rector for Research: Chrysa Parkinson

Student participation has taken place in the following ways: A student representative has read and been offered the opportunity to make changes and additions to the final version of the report.

Contact persons: Zoë Poluch (Head of BA Dance) and Ann-Christine Persson (Educational Administration Department)

Purpose and instructions

Educational evaluations are part of the quality system of Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH). The purpose of the evaluations is to generate regular and systematic knowledge needed to ensure and develop the quality of the university's educations. An educational evaluation consists of four steps: start-up, self-evaluation, external review and measures. All educations at first cycle, second cycle and third cycle leading to a degree must be evaluated. Educations will be evaluated on a six-year cycle, meaning that each education will be evaluated every six years. All educations will be assessed against criteria based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). Each education evaluated will be assessed against all criteria.

The student representative should be offered a place in the work on the self-evaluation report, for example by being part of the working group or by being given the opportunity to read the draft self-evaluation report and provide comments.

The Head of Subject shall approve the self-evaluation report and the overview of qualitative targets after presentation by the responsible Administrative Officer.

The Template for self-evaluation report is part of the Guidelines for educational evaluations and is mandatory to use.

- The report shall be descriptive and, where appropriate, analytical and valiative, and, where relevant, illustrated with examples. Strengths and areas for development should also be identified. See endnote.
- The report should be based on current conditions and planned developments.
- Together, the different parts of the report should provide a comprehensive picture of the education, without links to additional information.
- The criteria are numbered. It is therefore possible to refer between different criteria.
- The report should not exceed 20-30 pages, including 'template text'. The number of pages per criterion may vary depending on the education to which the self-evaluation relates.
- "Template text" and criteria may not be removed, except those that apply specifically to third cycle studies when the self-evaluation is for first cycle or second cycle courses. New subheadings may be added.
- Mandatory appendices to the self-evaluation report are the general study plan (third cycle), the programme syllabus (first cycle and second cycle) and the overview of qualitative targets.

Summary

- Summary of the strengths and development areas identified in the self-assessment.

The Bachelor's Programme in Dance at SKH has transitioned over the past decade from a conservatory model preparing dancers for freelance and company work to a flexible, student-centered program shaped by internationalism, conceptual practice, and expanding cultural perspectives. Under Kristine Slettevold (2010–2020), the program adopted a workshop-based structure with rotating international guest teachers, integrating theory and practice and shifting instruction into English to reflect a more global freelance dance landscape. The curriculum was reorganized around three pillars – Dance Practice, Choreography, and Performative Practice – with added components such as Subject Specialization, Degree Project, and cross-departmental electives.

Since 2020, director Zoë Poluch has advanced a critical rethinking of contemporary dance's dominant Euro-American frameworks, aiming to broaden the program's relevance and cultivate "dancing-citizens" attentive to social justice, positionality, and decolonial and Indigenous perspectives. The program title will change in 2025 from Dance Performance to simply Dance, signalling a move beyond performer-centric training.

Severe budget cuts and reduced permanent staff threaten the program's continuity and quality. Historically built on daily training and extensive workshops, the program now struggles to maintain sufficient teacher-led hours, consistent technique training, and long-term guest engagement. Despite these constraints, efforts continue to diversify faculty, expand culturally relevant pedagogies, strengthen peer-to-peer learning, emphasize student wellbeing, accommodate neurodiversity, and engender a reflective study culture.

Teaching modes include daily training, conceptually oriented workshops, mentoring, supervision, and structured peer-to-peer pedagogy, alongside cross-departmental collaborations. Challenges include ensuring continuity amid high teacher turnover, balancing student autonomy with consistent presence, and navigating tensions between diverse pedagogical cultures.

Future priorities include securing a stable core faculty, recalibrating learning outcomes, formalizing onboarding/offboarding practices, increasing funding, deepening teacher collaboration, and sustaining decolonial, reparative, and multimodal approaches to dance education within the program's evolving curricular and institutional constraints.

Although self-evaluations are only asked to account for a six-year period, this self-evaluation includes historic insights (2010-2025) that situate the current program's trajectory in relation to prior and ongoing changes in its student body, the artistic field, and SKH.

Introduction

About the programme

Describe the ambition/idea/purpose of the programme.

Under Kristine Slettevold's directorship between 2010-2020, the 3-year Bachelor program in Dance Performance saw a shift in the BA's aesthetic paradigm, from a conservatory model geared towards the formation of dancers for employment in companies into a model turned towards the rising freelance, independent dance scene with guest artists as teachers, promoting versatility, adaptability and flexibility in the students' approach to their artform. This entailed a workshop model of learning with a high rotation of international guest teachers for one to two-week periods, and an evolution of choreographic processes that began with solos in the first year, repertory in the second, and a newly commissioned production in the third year. The shift to courses including theory and practice was an attempt to integrate theory into the subjects and a response to an increasingly discursive professional field where freelance dancers engage in creation processes conceptually and creatively. Slettevold's arrival also marked the shift from Swedish to English, following a similar shift (funded by Konstnärsnämnden) in the local independent scene in Stockholm opening towards more internationality and raising questions regarding the place of Swedish language in the local field. Slettevold revised the curriculum and proposed an education organised around three main perspectives: Dance, Practice and Theory, Choreography, Practice and Theory, and Performative Practice and Theory. The dance courses concentrated on an understanding of the body and its capacity (with an emphasis on modern and contemporary dance, ballet, improvisation and somatic work); the performative practice and theory courses focused on performing skills understanding concepts of performativity; and the choreography courses paid attention to the creative process of making dances as well as expanded notions of choreography. In addition to these 3 pillar courses throughout most of the 3 years, there are courses Subject Specialization (where the student formulates an individual study into one of the three above perspectives), Degree Project and Workshop (where the student attends to transmission and pedagogy). The most recent addition is an Elective course selected from simultaneous offerings across Subject Areas at SKH, taken by students in all Subject Areas at the same time. Since 2020, the BA is directed by Zoë Poluch, who is currently amidst changing the content and ambition of the program, but has refrained from restructuring the courses, three-year progression, and program syllabus. Poluch's contributions include more rigorous analysis of the conditions of contemporary dance – historical, geopolitical, cultural, economic and aesthetic – and a critical view towards the centrality of North American and European experimental concert dance forms in the definition and practice of what constitutes "contemporary" dance. The program has been marketed toward aspiring professional dancers working in experimental regimes of spectacle and representation and currently aims to open to other roles and contexts wherein the

knowledge and capacities of the dancer may be influential and relevant. Hence, the recent change of the program's title in Fall 2025 from "Bachelor Programme in Dance Performance" to "Bachelor Programme in Dance".

In 2023-2025 Poluch co-conceived and participated in an Erasmus project entitled Diversity in European Dance Higher Education (DDE), a collaboration between SKH Dance, La Manufacture in Switzerland, and P.A.R.T.S. in Brussels that included observation, analysis, and suggestions for improvement of the Bachelor's educations at each institution.¹ This process galvanized Poluch's desire to make changes to the Bachelor Programme in Dance at SKH and many of the insights from that project are included in this report.

Deliberate attention has thus been paid in recent years to diversifying the dance cultures and techniques offered in the program, and with it an increased emphasis on students' own orientation skills: how their own practices and reflections support navigation within a variety of methods, styles, and approaches to dance, choreography, and performance. The "buffet" experience some students report, of being confronted with a range of dance and teaching cultures, raises questions about the identity of the program: for whom it is meant and for what kinds of careers students are being prepared. As the education reflects the shifting terrain of the broader professional landscape, the program's aspiration at present is to expand the possibilities and assumptions in response to those questions: at student recruitment, during the education, and concerning where in society graduates might apply their acquired skills and knowledge. As a result, the program demands of students a great deal of open-mindedness, flexibility, experimentation, self-reflection, and responsibility for perspective formation, setting it apart from most typical conservatory-style training.

Approaching non-Western and non-dominant dance practices and knowledges should be done with care and humility: it is not a matter of enlarging the Western repertoire, but of getting to know its limits, attempting to vividly understand that there are other valid ways of being, thinking, and dancing. Diversity of approaches is not only about including more but also about making conditions for these experiences, knowledge, and worldviews to be properly welcomed, engaged with, and given a chance to change the institution. Meanwhile, some ethics and practices from postmodern dance and movement research that have shaped the education may afford the inclusion of other forms within an approach of continuation and modification rather than destructive innovation. These include norm-criticality, questioning dance forms from within practice, encounters between dance techniques and styles of heterogenous origins, democratic principles in creative process, and establishing the experience of movement as a way of knowing (as in experiential anatomy and somatics).

There have been different configurations of permanent staff working with the BA. There was formerly a dance theory teacher employed half-time, two dance practice

¹ Diversity in European Higher Dance Education: Dancing With. A report on Three European Dance Higher Education Institutions

teachers employed half-time and a head of program. Currently there is one teacher employed half-time and the head of program. There has always been a large roster of guest teachers. This means that the head of program has a curatorial role, determining the aesthetics, cultures, ethics, and pedagogies that students encounter through the invited guests. In the past those guests came mostly from outside of Sweden, representing the continental European contemporary concert dance scene. In more recent years – as influenced by the pandemic, budget constraints, ecological concerns, and deliberate investment in the local scene – more guest teachers are based in Sweden and Stockholm; with the additional aim of representing a wider range of techniques, cultures, styles, and methods of dance, performance, choreography, and their discourses.

The program is struggling to maintain diverse and consistent training in the face of diminishing budget and personnel. In the past five years, the annual dispensable budget for the program has decreased drastically, to 33% in 2026 of the 2022 budget:

2022:	1 367 000 (SEK)
2023:	983 133
2024:	954 951
2025:	700 000
2026:	495 334

In short, it is no longer possible to deliver the program as described in the following pages. There is neither the full-time faculty nor the budget to hire qualified guest teachers to uphold the schedule. The quality and ambition of this program is under threat.

The program has historically been based on a core schedule of two blocks of 90-minute dance training in the mornings and a 3.5-hour workshop block in the afternoons, Monday through Friday, with exceptions for example during performance periods, Subject Specialization, and Degree Project. While in recent years the core schedule has included more time for integration, reflection, and transitions, within the current budget, a full core schedule is no longer feasible. What results is a stark reduction of teacher-led training hours. If the current curricular structure is to continue, the budget must be increased. Otherwise, the course plans and descriptions should be overhauled to reflect a different education.

Organisation of the education and key figures

Language of instruction: English

Main field of study: Dance

Admission: 18-20 (number of students admitted per round)

Eligibility: General entry requirement for studies at the first cycle (with an exemption from Swedish 1, 2, 3 and English 6) or the equivalent.

Specific entry requirement: -

Selection: Selection to the programme takes place through selection tests.

	Course and credits	Course and credits	Course and credits	Course and credits
Semester 1	Dance, Practice and Theory 1a, 15 credits	Performative Practice and Theory 1a, 7,5 credits1	Choreography, Practice and Theory 1a, 7,5 credits	
Semester 2	Dance, Practice and Theory 1b, 15 credits	Performative Practice and Theory 1b, 7,5 credits	Choreography, Practice and Theory 1b, 7,5 credits	
Semester 3	Dance, Practice and Theory 2a, 7,5 credits	Elective course, 7,5 credits	Performative Practice and Theory 2a, 7,5 credits	Choreography, Practice and Theory 2a, 7,5 credits
Semester 4	Dance, Practice and Theory 2b, 7,5 credits	Performative Practice and Theory 2b, 7,5 credits	Choreography, Practice and Theory 2b, 7,5 credits	Subject Specific Specialization, 7,5 credits
Semester 5	Dance, Practice and Theory 3a, 7,5 credits	Method, 7,5, credits	Independent Project (Degree Project) – Dance, Degree of Bachelor, 15 credits	
Semester 6	Dance, Practice and Theory 3b, 7,5 credits	Performative Practice and Theory 3, 15 credits	Workshop, 7,5 hp	

Key figures *

	2024	2022	2020
First cycle and second cycle			
Number of applicants and students admitted (including proportion of women and men, legal gender)	182 (18) 161 (16) women 21 (2) men	171 (20) 156 (17) women 15 (3) men	99 (20) 82 (16) women 15 (4) men
Number of full-year students (full-time equivalents)	20,91 HST	19,85 HST	17,24 HST
Number of full-time equivalents (FTEs)	20,63 HPR	18,33 HPR	14,5 HPR
Number of degrees	-	7	11

* Data are taken from existing systems and the annual reports.

Commentary

The BA admits students every second year. The number of admitted students is usually 18 and fluctuates depending on how many Erasmus exchange students travel in or out. It is unusual for a student to take a leave of absence, though this has happened once in the past three years when a student took a leave of two years and joined the next cohort in their second year. In the current program model, full-time study is the only way to complete the program, posing an obstacle for students who need to work alongside their studies for financial reasons or do not otherwise have the energetic resources to thrive in such an intensive program. This generally narrows the program's reach to those who can receive support of Swedish study loans (CSN), those within a certain class bracket, and students whose families can support them financially. Poluch continues to advocate for SKH scholarships for First Cycle students from outside the EU (which is currently uncommon).

Self-assessment

- 1. the education fulfils the requirements of the Higher Education Act and of the degree descriptions in the ordinances related to the Act, i.e. the intended learning outcomes correspond to the qualitative targets and they are examined in a legally secure manner**

Describe, analyse and valuate, preferably with examples. Relate to the completed overview of qualitative targets.

Description

This section will present the content of the courses in each term, the relationship of their Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) to Qualitative Targets (QTs), with some examples of exam forms and their relation to course content. The majority of QTs are addressed more than once during the program. QTs concerning "Knowledge and understanding" of the subject area are especially represented given the

program's focus on basic training. Meanwhile, QTs concerning the artform's role in society and judgement of ethical issues are fulfilled the least in the current Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). This is informative for Poluch's current ambition to increase the program's sociopolitical engagement and relevance, and her question of if that goal can be met through refinement and curation within the current structure, or if her vision is so divergent that it demands a broader reformulation of the Program Syllabus.

Unless otherwise specified, all courses consist of a mix of workshops, seminars, lectures, formats of peer-to-peer exchange and creative processes. All courses are accompanied by a list of study materials that, among other mediums such as audio or visual, requires between 20-94 pages of reading per course with a total of 140-245 pages per semester. An ongoing project of SKH Dance since 2020 has been to expand the authors represented in the study materials – considering a diversity of genders, ethnicities, and global perspectives – and this program has spearheaded this effort. Each semester offers encounters with teacher-artists who focus on different approaches to the study materials, offering a palette of ways of reading, writing and discussing.

The program's ILOs and examination models underline positionality and collaboration, while the QTs speak in terms of one's own work and others' work. The qualitative targets therefore do not reflect the essentially collaborative ethos of working with dance and choreography. The ways that this program works with developing students' knowledge of own and others' work is deeply relational – thus there are surplus learning opportunities through collaboration that are not named by the QTs yet are foundational to the art form itself and professional preparedness within it.

Terms One and Two

Dance, Practice and Theory 1a + 1b (30 credits), Performative Practice and Theory 1a + 1b (15 credits) and Choreography, Practice and Theory 1a + 1b (15 credits)

The first year is conceived as a foundational year that introduces the three continuous and cumulative perspectives of the BA program: dance, performance, and choreography. The student encounters movement and dance practices that support the development of awareness of their own body and the other bodies in the room, focussing on finding range, specificity, and articulation through movement. They are introduced to the concept of practice and explore, with varying degrees of facilitation, the development of their own practice both alone and with others. In the second term, the students are introduced to practical anatomy. In *Performative Practice and Choreography* during term one, the students encounter teaching artists who give workshops that culminate in a 3-4 weeklong process of making a performance together with Bachelor students in sound and light design studying at the Performing Arts subject area. The resulting pieces are shown in theatres on campus. During term two, the students undertake a 4–5-week independent study in dance history that results in a solo performance. This study is conceived as an opportunity for student-led learning and peer-to-peer teaching. Each student introduces the audience to a piece of dance history –

focused on a practice, perspective, dance piece, dancemaker, event, movement material or overall movement/moment in history – performed and presented in a way that includes citation and contextual information. The assignment is an invitation for the students to dive into canonized and formalized “official” dance histories, to explore counter-archival dances that may be obscured from official dance histories, and/or to mine their own subjective dance history for material.

The program enters easily into collaborations that offer students encounters with local dance initiatives and audiences. See section 4 for more detail.

The ILOs of Dance PT 1a + 1b address QTs 1, 2 and 6.

The ILOs of Performative PT 1a + 1b address QTs 1, 2, 3, 12 and 18.

The ILOs of Choreography PT 1a + 1b address QTs 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 and 11.

Terms Three and Four

Dance, Practice and Theory 2a + 2b (15 credits), Performative Practice and Theory 2a + 2b (15 credits) and Choreography Practice and Theory 2a + 2b (15 credits), Elective course (7.5 credits) and Subject Specialization, 7.5 (credits)

In the second year, the three perspectives continue. In *Dance, Practice and Theory*, encounters with varied movement and dance practices and styles continue, with added emphasis on synthesis of and reflection upon their relations and differences. In *Choreography, Practice and Theory* during term three, the student is exposed to current choreographic processes and contexts through workshops with professionals in the field reflecting on the artist's role, interdisciplinarity, and collaboration. There has been recent emphasis on workshop content addressing contemporary dance's relationship to coloniality, canon formation, and epistemological injustice. The cohorts who graduated in 2023 and 2025 attended much of a freestanding course called *Canon and Visibility: Hacking the Hegemony* which offered an introduction to the formation of canons in performing arts from a Global South perspective, developing a critical awareness about the spectrum of visibility in dance, choreography and performing arts as a way of questioning hegemonic traditions, criteria, and principles. All cohorts since 2020 have encountered decolonial thinking, first through Amanda Piña's artistic practice and later, for all cohorts since 2022, workshops with returning guest teacher Fabi Barba. Workshops pertaining to consent frameworks have been offered by returning guest teacher Eroca Nicols. In *Performative Practice and Theory*, the student analyses and physically implements how performativity relates to existing choreographic and performance works, an informal preparation for subsequent repertory work during term 4 where an expanded notion of repertory (reconstruction, remake) culminates in a show run of 10 performances offering experience in serial performing. The addition of the SKH-wide Elective course to the curriculum in 2021 has formalized the possibility for students to study content and learn side-by-side with students from other subject areas, contributing to interdisciplinary thinking and facilitating collaborations inside and outside of the institution. See section 4 for more detail.

The ILOs of Dance PT 2a + 2b address QTs 1-6, 12 and 14.

The ILOs of Performative PT 2a + 2b address QTs 1-6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 18.

The ILOs of Choreography PT 2a + 2b address QTs 1-4, 6, 8, 12, 14-17.

The ILOs of Elective course address QTs 11 and 18.

The ILOs of Subject Specialization address QTs 1, 3, 4, 6, 9-12, 14 and 18.

Terms Five and Six

Dance, Practice and Theory 3a + 3b (15 credits), Method, (7.5 credits),
Independent Project (Degree Project) (15 credits), Performative Practice and
Theory 3 (15 credits) and Workshop (7.5 credits)

In the third year, dance and performance perspectives continue as courses, while choreographic principles are met and exercised in the *Degree Project* and *Method* courses. In *Dance, Practice and Theory*, the student further investigates their own dance practice by way of putting it into critical dialogue with the materials presented in the course during the first half of the year, and in the second term by developing their ability to articulate their practice and share it with others with awareness of its evolution throughout the whole education. In *Degree Project*, the student embarks on an artistic process departing from an independently formulated question, problem, or desire for further learning. The student devises an experimental process and exploration of methods specific to their formulated interest in dance, dancing, dance making, or dance performance. The student deepens their own artistic work and their ability to critically reflect on their own and others' artistic approaches. The course consists of independent study, individual supervision, mid-process group feedback sessions, and presentation of final projects for an audience, respondent, and examiner. In parallel with *Degree Project*, the *Method* course familiarizes the student with various methods of creating and researching within dance that will enable the student to formulate and work with their own artistic interests, ideas, and concerns. The course consists of workshops in artistic methods including creative and experimental processes, structures for practice, and approaches to artistic research. The student deepens their ability to pursue their own artistic work and reflect on it through the notion of method as it unfolds in varied exemplary studio practices and practice-based discourses. In the final term, *Performative Practice and Theory* reappears and manifests as a final production where the student deepens their understanding of the creative and collaborative work involved in performing the work of other authors (guest choreographers selected by the head of program), thereby also developing their knowledge of staging and production processes. This final year of study includes optional field study where the student familiarizes themselves with current professional working models and conditions in dance, performance, choreography, and other fields that they have encountered during the studies. In *Workshop*, the student improves their understanding of experimental and exploratory artistic processes. By using the workshop as a format and method, the student advances their ability to unfold their own interests in and through practice by formulating and developing their own workshop idea and sharing it with the other BA students as participants. See section 4 for more details.

The ILOs of Dance PT 3a + 3b address QTs 1-6, 9-10, and 18.

The ILOs of Performative PT 3 address QTs 1, 3-5, 8, 10-11 and 13. The ILOs of Method address QTs 1, 3, and 8.

The ILOs of Workshop address QTs 1-3, 6, 8-14, and 16.

The ILOs of Independent Degree project address QTs 1, 3-6 and 8-19.

Examination Forms

Examination formats have customarily been communicated maximum three weeks before the exam date. This was an informal decision made by previous teachers to discourage students from spending too much time on preparation. Now, with student learning differences and neurodivergence in mind, the examination formats are communicated at the beginning of the semester and students are encouraged to use the allocated time in the schedule for preparation. The communication is made orally and uploaded into Canvas, the digital platform centralizing communication, study materials, course plans and assignments.

Examinations used to take place at the end of each course, coinciding with the end of each term. In recent years, exam dates have been staggered from midterm to end of term, giving students time to focus on and prepare for one exam at a time.

Examinations include a practical, written and oral assignment, often including reflection on and through each other's presentations. As there are written, practical and oral components to all course examinations, effort is made to connect these assignments to each other to underline the examination's potential as an opportunity for synthesis of the student's own learning.

As the categories/perspectives of performative practice, choreography and dance are often inseparable, or their boundaries in the learning process are experienced as ambiguous, exams are periodically combined, for example Dance and Performative Practice or Choreography and Performative Practice.

Examinations throughout the education include a mix of individual and group assignments, so students can reflect and be assessed individually while also emphasizing the importance of collaboration in dance. Some exam formats are designed to involve the entire cohort or smaller groups, while others are completely oriented towards independent work.

Examinations are structured and proposed as a continuation of study and exchange, using the ILOs as a guide for structure and content of exams and centering the students' own work within them. The first term is an important moment for establishing a study culture where exams are treated as an opportunity to take stock of, reflect upon, and integrate the learning throughout the term, when students enter the program with a diversity of prior experience in examinations.

Analysis

The program is in a transition based on conceptual, epistemic, and curricular concerns addressing the Eurocentric legacy of the program and broadening diversity of both students and staff. This shift is manifested through positionality, decoloniality, and intersectionality, leading to a reconsideration of teaching content, personnel, and methods. Regarding personnel, there arises a question

about the consequences of never having this knowledge and competence in-house, as it is always brought by guest teachers. The standard duration of workshops has been normalized at one week. This is generally too short for qualitative and enriching encounters for both students and guests.

To address this sense of short exposure to varied content, in recent years as facilitated by an increase in local guest teachers, guests teaching morning class come once a week over a period of five to six weeks rather than once for five days in a row. There is an attempt made for guests teaching theory and practice workshops to return throughout the education or stay on longer, as facilitated by collaborations with other programs at SKH or beyond SKH. To this end, Poluch has also made it habitual that the guest choreographer who works with students in their final year has a workshop with them in their first year.

The increase in student-led time in the program partly due to budget constraints leaves some students feeling under-supported by the guidance of teachers providing exposure to existing experience and knowledge, clear frameworks for study, and physical training based in years of expertise.

Valuation

Based on the current course structure as inherited from Slettevold and combined with Poluch's increased inclusion of global perspectives, decolonial thought, and work to balance variety with consistency, how the course plans are currently curated and fulfilled is of high quality. The following focal points are recommended for continued work:

- Challenge the habit of one-week encounters with artist teachers. Align the duration and rhythm of an encounter with its content and purpose.
- Recalibrate the ILOs to the content and QTs in order to make the Program Syllabus a more functional tool for course leaders and students, supporting the shifting content and foci of the courses, ideally by fall 2027 for the next intake. For this task the head of program will need support.
- Increase funds for the program to support continuity both by recruiting permanent staff and continuing to invite quality guest teachers.

2. that the teaching supports students' learning

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Description

In the program, students' learning is supported in individual and collective ways. Both students and teachers are made responsible for awareness of and response to students' specific learning styles, needs, and preferences. The ethos of the program encourages students' voices, and the plane of interactions with teachers and head of program is often in service of bringing student voices to light.

There is flexibility from the head of program to work closely with neurodivergent students so that they can move through such a demanding program. Increased attention to teachers' onboarding regarding the specificity of the cohort and where they are in their current learning trajectories helps the teaching support the students' learning. Within the course plans and examination forms, students' own self-reflection on how they learn as individuals in relation to a range of pedagogical styles and approaches (what works for them, what challenges them and how) supports their own learning, by way of making them actively engaged in interpretation and understanding of different pedagogical methodologies in a range of possibilities rather than passive consumers or receivers of a program-wide orthodoxy. There are also structured opportunities for reflection and dialogue on how peers learn, aiming to emphasize relationality in the learning situation. While the research project Diversity in Higher European Dance Education (DDE) talks about the importance of intercultural skills for pedagogy, Nyama McCarthy Brown writes in terms of 'culturally relevant teaching' (a term coined by Gloria Ladson-Billings). She makes the distinction between expanding the curriculum (i.e. including other, non-dominant perspectives) and culturally relevant teaching, which relates to and valorises the cultures of the students. "Culturally relevant teaching embraces a teaching method that relates to students' communication style and tone, learning style, and cultural beliefs." Currently, because of its relatively small scale and biannual intake, a significant amount of content can be decided in relation to the cohort.

In autumn 2024, Poluch proposed a collective agreement to the new cohort, to engender awareness of and responsibility for the common study environment. In 2025, at the beginning of the term, it was collaboratively refined and signed by the cohort. At the beginning of workshop periods, it is used to remind ourselves of our ethics/values of learning/study culture and to make explicit requests (as individuals or adding to someone else's to form a group request) to facilitate implementation. We ask what we need to show up to a generative learning situation and write those needs in the form of requests on a big paper. Offboarding has not yet happened in a formalized and repeatable way though the need for such a moment is noted.

The following section will address four specific and repeated modes of teaching that students encounter.

Workshops and Continuous daily training

The program is built on a schedule framework of continuous daily training in the mornings and workshops in the afternoons. Through the course content described in Section 1, invited guest artist teachers and SKH staff are engaged directly in supporting students' development in dancing, performative practices, choreographic and creative processes, and the grounding of these within their geopolitical contexts. Students are invited to raise questions, voice concerns, and share reflections often in both training and workshop settings, providing a generally consistent student-centered learning environment.

Consistency of training is important for physical continuity, and with an expanding repertoire of techniques and approaches being offered in the education, recurring

physical practices that can buttress and support an increasing diversity of dance forms through basic maintenance of ergonomic health has, in the proven experience of recent years, been relevant. These have come through Karin Jameson's Klein Technique™ classes and Daniel Sjökvist's mobility training.

Mentoring and Supervision

The head of program meets with each student for one mandatory conversation per semester and is nearly always available for more. The head of program is in close contact with the trajectory of each student, and when they are not a suitable person to accompany this trajectory tries to find alternative mentors (which is increasingly challenging given budget conditions). This regular contact means that some decisions of programming teachers, seeking out expertise in SKH that correspond with the student's curiosity, and supporting learning activities outside of SKH are directly facilitated by this accompaniment.

In all semesters except for the 3rd there are moments when students are appointed a supervisor for individual work and in several instances participate in group supervision. In the past, students have had a budget for supervision hours in both *Subject Specialization* and *Degree Project*, and the student has been supported in choosing their supervisor and formulating an invitation specifying how they would like to work. Due to current budget limitations, inviting external supervisors is no longer possible.

Peer-to-Peer

Knowledge gained by peer-to-peer relations is an increasingly vital element of the program. Through direct conversations and presentation of the program as a collaborative effort, the notion of fellow students as a learning resource is becoming more a motor of the program.

In the initial weeks of school, students are led through various methods of sharing their personal dance and embodied cultures, archives, and genealogies. In the 1st year, the students have a workshop in feedback methods (thus far in the DAS arts and Liz Lerman methods facilitated by staff member Tove Salmgren). Moments in the education when peer-to-peer work is in focus include: the collaboration with sound and light students in the 1st year, *Subject Specialization* where they can decide to work together in 2nd year, and during *Degree Project* and *Workshop* courses in the 3rd year where they are encouraged to work in groups. Throughout the three years, in consistent interdependent studio practice and reading time, students are encouraged to use peer-to-peer pedagogical methods.

This peer-to-peer relationship is formalized as a learning resource in certain exam tasks. For example, during the second year, in the *Choreography* and *Performative Practice* exams, the students write texts and make performative proposals in pairs. Oral examination includes responding to peers' work and is seen as a preparation for *Degree Project* where the formality of oral "defence" comes into play. In *Workshop* course in 3rd year, the students lead each other as workshop participants. There is, at least once per year, a moment to critically reflect upon each other's work. The inclusion of peer feedback in examination processes expresses trust in

and reinforces the integrity of students' investment in their own learning and in those of their peers. Trust and responsibility are primary aspects of centering the student in the process of self-development.

Occasionally the BA students have combined studies with MA students in New Performative Practices or Choreography, and/or opportunities for MA students to lead BA training or workshops when the MA student's practice is relevant to the course. In addition, BA students can participate in MA student projects during *Subject Specialization*. Contact between BA and MA students is thus another way that peer-to-peer learning manifests in the education.

Contact with other subject areas

As mentioned, in the 1st year students participate in a 4-week study module with the BA students in sound and light at the Performing Arts Subject Area. This is an early and intensive encounter with the other campus and a very different study and production culture. In the 2nd year, all students attend an Elective course, an opportunity to study a 7.5 credit, 5-week course at another Subject Area. Sometimes, during *Subject Specialization*, students join the framework of a student project at another subject area to engage in their own specialization. In recent years students have had morning dance classes and training combined with student groups in other subject areas, such as Mime Acting and Dance Pedagogy.

Throughout their education, select Research Seminars curated weekly by the Research Center are intermittently a required part of a course. Students are treated as artist researchers in this context and are invited to participate in the conversation. While they might have a more peripheral role in this educational scenario, it serves as an opportunity to practice relating to other forms of transmission and interaction. It also fulfils SKH's overall interest in contact between 1st and 3rd cycle study. BA Dance students are almost always scheduled (as the only BA cohort at SKH to do so) to attend the annual Research Week presented by the Research Center. On occasion they also attend other conferences and symposia.

Analysis

There is an unresolved relationship to continuity, ranging from a few regular teachers appearing during all 3 years to teachers who appear once during the 3 years. In an educational experience lacking continuity, the presence of onboarding and offboarding has become crucial, whereby teachers receive relevant information regarding where the students are in their program, what they are coming from and going to. Workshops are given more onboarding attention while daily training with certain teachers continues without these supports.

Increasing economic precarity in the university at large has contributed to a reconsideration of how resources are used, leading not only to fewer international guests but also more sharing of guest teachers between programs. This marks a transition from international guest teachers on heavy rotation (as much as one new workshop teacher per week in 2019) to fewer teachers for longer periods, with more developed procedures of onboarding and offboarding emerging. This

essentially requires an entirely new block structure for the BA (formerly dance training in the mornings and afternoons for workshops in the adjacent courses), to allow for more time with teachers to support contextualization, attention to positionality, the creation of safer spaces for difference to emerge and develop, and a study culture that cares for student/teacher wellbeing by offering time for transitions, reflection, and integration.

For teaching to support students' learning, students need to be present. There is an ongoing challenge in how much autonomy students are given to weave their own path, making singular and idiosyncratic connections. There sometimes emerges a tension between those in the student community that are always present and can feel a burden of carrying the learning and relationship to teachers and content, and those with more absences. Previous students have expressed a contradictory double-expectation, not always easy to calibrate, of both being asked to be present no matter what and being encouraged to practice self-care.

Valuation

The program is committed to supporting students' learning and has many clearly articulated methods to do so. Further needs for support include:

- A designated informal faculty: a roster of teachers for daily training to whom the program commits for a cohort of three years. This could create more continuity for and commitment from students, help the teachers follow students' progress, and create employment security for guests.
- More structured peer-to-peer learning. The *Diversity in Higher European Dance Education* (DDE) course *Dancing across Difference* underscores both teachers' and students' learning and developing of relational pedagogies to support and manifest lateral learning. For the next cohort, we have been more specific about how to facilitate this skill acquisition.
- An additional teacher associated with the program to focus more deeply on individual students' trajectories, giving guidance and offering relations to relevant professional trajectories would permit a deeper focus with more after school success on the individual student's education plan.
- Formalize offboarding processes/rituals for closure with teachers, including teacher to student feedback time, for which it would be necessary to prolong the duration of encounter.
- Communicate clearly about attendance expectations already at auditions.
- Formalize and make transparent how the content is responsive (culturally relevant) to the specific cohort of students.
- Continue to maintain pillars in the training for continuity and physical support to meet a diverse range of movement demands.

3. the content and form of the teaching are based on artistic and/or scientific grounds and proven experience

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Description

Through the following pedagogical approaches that have been seen as effective in varied educational practices, the content and form of the teaching is based on proven experience:

Integration

The education supports students' integration of learning through continuous emphasis on students' own sense-making, through own practice development, interdependent practice time, and periodic "making connections" classes where they synthesize and discuss what they have encountered through different artist teachers. Through consistent opportunities to create and perform alone and together in assignments like the light and sound collaborations, dance history solos, *Subject Specialization*, *Degree Project*, guest artist creations, and almost all examination assignments, (not to mention the student-organized "Open Stage" with other subject areas), the subjects of dance, performance, and choreography are continually grounded and synthesized in creative practice. In *Workshop*, the students also explore facilitating participatory formats, sustaining creative practice and its dissemination beyond the stage. Learning is further integrated through written, and oral, and performed assignments each term. The program works through multi-modal and student-centered learning, both of which are increasingly promoted in educational sciences and policy as leading to deepened integration of learned content.

Positionality

As the education increasingly insists on its responsibility to position itself with attention towards power distribution in respect of varied dance histories, traditions, and geographical locations, Poluch's curation of teachers seeks to offer learning opportunities in a plurality of dance practices. As the program articulates itself as offering a study of contemporary dance that is critical of the what the "contemporary" has implied and excluded, invitations to guest teachers are issued with this in mind. All teachers are asked to write (or say when they meet the students if oral transmission is preferred) a few words that situate how their work relates to knowledge traditions, geographic centres, and artistic contexts. By making explicit teachers' own backgrounds and pedagogies, students can orient themselves in relation to the work and situate the contents of their learning in a "mental map" of plural potential positions and relations. This enriches students' understanding of their own unique dance histories and ongoing education as belonging to a complex experiential and experimental interweaving of trajectories

and power meeting and parting, developing through specific interactions between practices with specific lineages.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Culturally relevant pedagogy, as discussed by Nyama McCarthy-Brown, is an approach that deeply integrates students lived experiences into the curriculum, particularly in a field like dance. This pedagogical style is rooted in understanding that students are not blank slates but rather bring their own unique embodied histories into the classroom, and that a truly relevant education involves empowering students to become culturally competent and aware of social contexts. It requires teachers to get to know the individual students, their cultural practices, and their unique identities rather than making assumptions based on group membership. Following this approach, students' own dance histories and training influence course content and curricular choices and are explicitly invited into focus in individually formulated projects and reflections throughout the education.

Reparations

Considering the breadth of dance practices, techniques, and forms one might study, and since it is not possible within a three-year education to study everything (especially not with any depth of practice and embodiment through repetition), the specific lens of "reparation" is increasingly adopted when making curricular and curatorial choices to consider focus on dance forms that enact epistemic and aesthetic resistance and reparation by undoing the modern colonial divide that has erased or sidelined certain dance archives. In response to several decades and centuries of concert dance in Europe and northern Europe dominated by single-author, anthropocentric, and extractivist logics, the curation of teaching content looks toward communal and collective, non-anthropocentric, (re)generative and ecologically entangled practices. This work is ongoing and in balance with asking what in the education can be maintained from "dominant" lineages and why (for example: experiential anatomy and mobility, for how they might support and sustain versatile movement practices). Citation is encouraged by teachers and students throughout the education, underlining awareness of from where a practice is coming and where it is going.

Dance-based learning modalities

The education is multi-modal and works through diverse pedagogical methods, a proven strategy to reach different types of learners and reinforce learned contents through different ways of sharing, modelling, reflecting, and revisiting. There are teacher-led and student-led practices. Students practice call and response, theme and variation, moving in unison, and individual interpretation. The mirror is a tool that is used and not – deliberately covered for more interoceptive practices and used for visibility in imitation-based forms. Students create and share with one another. Students experience the circle as a common front and change fronts throughout the room. Students work in large groups, as an entire class, in small groups, in pairs, and alone. Students practice honing and combining different senses through listening and sounding, working in silence or with music,

foregrounding vision or working with closed eyes, and working with touch and contact. Doing a practice and reflecting on or languaging the experience through discussion in partners and/or groups is common protocol in dance studios, integrating experience in a “whole brain” fashion.

Analysis

Due to the extremely small faculty, the responsibility for maintaining these approaches and best practices sits with head of program, who then has an increased workload in onboarding and offboarding teachers.

During the DDE research, teachers with roots in the Global South gave voice to the feeling of a dominant culture of speed and efficiency, mixed with a culture of self-care, with a lot of importance given to listening to students’ feelings and opinions - which creates difficulties for pedagogies that demand strong collective participation or an all-in approach. When such approaches were proposed, these teachers mentioned being met with resistance, dismissal, or low student turnout. Relations between teachers and student groups lead to a series of pressing questions: How to honour different pedagogical cultures and approaches while creating a shared sense of respect? What can be done to facilitate such encounters from the side of heads of program, teachers, and students? How can all find and exercise their share of engagement and responsibility? Where to draw the line between opening to a diversity of approaches and deciding if a pedagogical approach is simply not suited for the program?

Teachers lack spaces to meet and exchange through shared practice and reflection. To create a strong study culture of listening, lateral learning, and good communication for students, teachers need to practice it themselves among peers. Dance Subject Area faculty often request more practice exchange among teachers.

Valuation

To uphold that the teaching is based in proven experience and maintain responsibility to students’ and teachers’ specificities, the program should:

- Formalize teacher feedback systems (beyond course evaluations), to be included in students’ offboarding time.
- Whenever conflict arises, take the time to hear all sides and implement a long- and short-term way to live or resolve it
- Consider setting up, in dialogue with the whole SKH community, a simple document sharing the institution’s core values while equipping teachers to develop them further in the frame of each course together with the students.
- Head of Dance Subject Area should implement time for practice-based lateral competence development among teachers.

4. that the education is useful for the students/doctoral students and their future careers

Describe, analyse and valueate, preferably with examples.

Description

In the last 15 years of graduates, many are now working in independent communities throughout western Europe. Some stay in Stockholm, and many continue to have a relationship with Stockholm but move back to the city they come from or had a relationship to before starting the program.

Many recent graduates of the program have reported that the program taught them far more than about dance; they learnt about society, politics, and art's relationship to these.

Career Diversification

Within the current evolution of the BA, Poluch is working to prepare students for careers that are not limited to performing in the work of other choreographers or creating their own works for stages. In what other contexts might dance knowledge manifest its relevance? Perhaps with or for different populations or age groups; in communal, educational, environmental, healthcare, or therapeutic settings. Certain paths may require continued training or specialization. The intent is that the Bachelor program allows students to imagine not only becoming a performer, thus diversifying the future careers for which the education can be useful and meaningful. The professional field is in a process of change due to increasingly precarious conditions in the freelance independent dance scene. How this effects the process of professionalization is still unfolding, but it deepens the relevance of diversified career potentials.

Entrepreneurship

In their 3rd year, the students do two week-long workshops with experienced and active arts managers and producers in the field: one with a guest teacher and one with Karin Hauptmann, the producer employed at SKH Dance. In these two weeks, they discuss all that surrounds and supports artistic work: formulation of individual motivations, career development, grant writing, local and international resources for funding, organizing collaborations within an artistic team and/or with external partners. They unfold the various steps and elements of planning, managing and evaluating arts projects. They study the practical and organizational complexity of leadership and group dynamics. They are introduced to various contexts, spaces, and structures for creating, producing and performing dance works in Stockholm, in Sweden, and somewhat in the wider surroundings of Scandinavia and Europe.

Encountering the Field

The program enters easily into collaborations that offer students encounters with local dance initiatives and audiences. Students continually have contact with a diverse selection of professional artists through teaching activities, supervision,

Research Center lectures and the SKH Dance public lecture series. The program collaborates regularly with other art institutions in Stockholm to situate learning activities in the public environment of the institution (Moderna Dans Teatern, Dansens hus, My Wild Flag, Italian Culture consulate, Accelerator, The Royal Technical University, Vitlycke, Höjden, Cullberg). By the time they have completed the program, students have had face time with important artists, contexts/platforms and funders in the local scene of Stockholm.

Students are encouraged to pursue a *Field Studies* where they reach out to a desirable context or artist to work alongside for a week or two. This is not mandatory but often an appreciated moment to practice the confidence to reach out. There is increasing attention towards dance's role in society and how the competence and expertise gained in the program can find a home in adjacent contexts to independent concert dance performance. BA students in dance regularly go on Erasmus exchange as the program also regularly accepts students from other learning institutions. This movement gives students insight into other contexts of learning and trajectories in which to activate that learning.

Writing Practices

Students continuously experiment with various written forms: from established formats in the performing arts such as project descriptions, process documentation, or program notes; to poetic, speculative, fictive, or otherwise invented formats from within studio practice; to academic and formally cited nonfiction essays. Writing tasks include exam assignments asking for reflections on processes and/or study materials; the writing of artist statements, applications, and publicity texts; and invitations to find methods and forms of writing that are close to their way of working in, for example, degree projects. These various prompts encourage the student to develop specific language for specific professional tasks.

Inviting the public/Being seen

Performance moments occur during the entire education, with the form of invitation ranging from an internal SKH community to the general public. In the 1st year, the collaboration with sound and light students and dance history solos are made public. In 2nd year, repertory materializes in a 2-week period of performing 10 times. This usually takes place in the theatre at school, however, in 2026 it will take place at MDT. Showings of the *Subject Specialization* course are also another opportunity for sharing with a public. In 3rd year, both *Degree Project* and a creative process with a guest artist resulting in a new production are open to the public. There is support for students who want to take these independent investigations (*Subject Specialization* and *Degree Project*) offstage and into other contexts with other publics as well as an openness for students who would rather articulate an independent study than do a final group production.

Analysis

The original dance scene this education was directed to is shrinking following drastic cuts in public art funding. On the one hand it calls for resistance and insistence of the value of that scene. On the other hand, it is an opening to think

about education beyond it. What kind of dance scene do we in the education want to build? How can it be a porous dance scene that interacts fluidly with the world, and not something that becomes an ivory tower, a bubble? Is our dance scene elitist or is it built to hold the encounter of difference? If we consider the coexistence of multiple Europes (imperial Europe, the people's Europe), what is our relation to both those Europes? How can we actively decide on how we build those relations through our art practices?

Dancing Citizen

In line with the DDE research, the BA proposes that the student always learns to become a dancing-citizen; one that is positioned, plural and embodied, committed to social justice. The practice of dance offers radical possibilities for transformation. This radical transformation should involve a deep questioning of the cultural prerogatives and philosophical grounds of Western culture and its reliance on building hierarchical structures sustained by continuous forms of domination. After a limited, three-year education, what should students know? While not searching for definite answers and formulas, it is crucial to develop practices – that include the whole SKH community – of questioning what this education is for. Such a practice is necessary to avoid reproducing default patterns of thought and practice in pedagogy, arts, and higher education.

Valuation

- Expand the breadth of “the field” presented during the education: Foster relationships to contexts where dance encounters less conventional audiences or participants: (children, youth, activists, amateurs, in social work, therapeutic settings, ecosomatics ...).
- Pursue and implement relationship to a site/context that hosts and vitalizes learning activities off-campus.
- Underline the prevalence of lifelong learning in dance: many dancers will continue their education during their entire careers, either in the form of daily training or by complementing their formal education with additional expertise.

5. that those working in the education have up-to-date subject and higher education pedagogical/subject didactic skills

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Description

The current head of program, Zoë Poluch, has had, and continues to a lesser degree have, a career as a dancer and choreographer active in Europe and North America. Her artistic practice has taken shape in different rooms and put into motion different mediums, always known for her deeply critical eye on the ‘contemporary’

dance scene and based on a long term and practice-based interest in the politics of moving and sensing. She has done her own artistic research projects and contributed to the artistic research of others (notably Eleanor Bauer and Cara Tolmie), been a guest teacher at BA programs in Dance at TeaK/Helsinki, La Manufacture/Lausanne and P.A.R.T.S./Brussels, and worked on admissions groups for 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle educations. In addition, she has been very active in SKH's process of broadened recruitment by way of analysing school-wide study materials, supporting the organization, and implementation of the series *Lectures and Conversations about Racism and Resistance*. This work has manifested most notably in her participation and completion of the Erasmus-funded project *Diversity in European Dance Higher Education* (DDE).

Her vast experience and the contacts made through it, plus a respect towards continuity in respect of inviting guest teachers previously allied with the program, inform the choices of guest teachers who comprise much of the content. To match the emerging ambition of the direction of the BA (positioning, grounding, etc.), there is an ongoing refining of which teacher artists meet these new criteria. This means letting go of some teacher artists who have stayed on teaching in the program because of habit and history.

Poluch stays up to date with the field and active teachers within it by taking classes in studios and professional training contexts herself, responding to proposals from interested teachers and suggestions from students or faculty, and collaborating with other SKH programs and subject areas or local dance organizations (such as Danscentrum, Dansalliansen and Cullberg) to invite guest teachers. The program seeks a balance of local invitations (Sweden based artists and Nordic artists) and international invitations to optimize resources of traveling teachers, leading to intra- and inter-institutional collaborations that influence and define what is considered "up to date" in the field. Poluch does not have any decision-making authority regarding permanent staff at SKH Dance.

The head of program is responsible for selecting teachers and evaluating their artistic experience and methods for an estimated 60 percent of the curriculum. There have been various informal efforts to involve staff invested in the BA to share this work. The form and content of the individual aspects of each course (workshops, classes, seminars) is assured by the artist-teachers who bring up to date skills from their active engagement in the field at large. Those skills often unfold in ways specified through elaborate dialogue with curricular demands, idiosyncratic student needs, and their own artistic and pedagogical methods as teachers. At times an invited teaching artist may have up-to-date knowledge of the field, but they may not have innovative and experimental pedagogical practices. Inviting this type of profile contributes to students' learning through seeing form's relation to content. Dialogue between students and invited teachers is essential and hopefully helps develop new pedagogical skills and forms for all involved. The BA courses have traditionally been primarily staffed by external teaching artists that bring the skills and experience needed for specific parts of the program and courses. Among SKH Dance's permanent employees, two assistant professors have

most of their hours designated to the BA. It is also possible to exchange hours from a teacher employed at another subject, such as Dance Pedagogy or Performing Arts. PhD students at SKH Dance also regularly engage the BA students via classes, workshops, performances, examinations, and seminars.

Analysis

Up-to-date subject and higher education pedagogical skills in the context of a BA program in dance are not straight forward to specify, given the breadth of the dance field. Expanding the expertise present in the program necessitates issuing responsible invitations to and providing hospitality to support guests who are unfamiliar or uncomfortable in the institutional milieu. This is in process to various degrees of formalization.

The teachers invited to the program are active and contributing to the development of the field as dancers, pedagogues, choreographers, performers, producers, and researchers. Higher education pedagogy in the context of a research-based university and a program that generally positions itself, however critically, toward “contemporary” dance, means understanding the pedagogical situation as experimental, respectful, challenging, and curious.

Valuation

The program is strong in coordinating collaborations in and out of the institution to ensure that relevant artist teachers with up-to-date skills reach the students. Given current and anticipated budget restrictions, there is a need to become even more intelligent about sharing teachers with other programs, combining cohorts, and using the other staff at SKH Dance who have not traditionally been very active in teaching the BA program.

The resources of teaching hours available to the program within SKH Dance are modest and seldom allow for responsibilities of course leadership to be taken on by another employee than the head of program. This is a particular challenge when there are two BA cohorts studying, making the head of program regularly responsible for up to 6 courses and examinations per semester. There has been a positive dialogue with the PhD students that has led to them taking on examination and supervision tasks. More faculty at SKH Dance would help balance and distribute in-house responsibilities.

The head of program is critical of the hegemonic tendency of being solely responsible for curation of a largely guest-teacher driven curriculum. While Poluch schedules teachers in collaboration with other local organizations and takes staff and students’ recommendations for teachers seriously, she maintains a desire for more co-leadership and thinking together specifically in decision-making processes informing the program’s content and culture.

6. students/doctoral students can exert influence over the planning, implementation and follow-up of the education

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples

Description

The main ways in which the students have direct influence on the program are course evaluations and exit interviews, and dialogue with the head of program. There is close dialogue – in both individual and group formats – between students and head of program, wherein individual and collective concerns can be voiced and addressed. Students have class meetings in their schedule once per month which the head of program attends every other time, and each student meets the head of program individually at least twice a year. The timeline of course evaluations means that it takes up to two years between course feedback and implemented change.

Students have indirect influence through their active engagement in classes, peer-to-peer exchanges and formalized learning moments, and how they approach independent working processes. The way the program syllabus weaves between group work and independent work means that the students can directly influence their own studies with continuous time for developing and reflecting upon their own practice. SKH's recent emphasis on student-centered learning has revealed that the BA in Dance is full of exemplary practice in this arena.

Planning

Most evaluations and exit interviews ask for concrete suggestions of artists and content that students think would support or transform the program. In the 3rd year, answering ILO 2 they are asked to demonstrate the specificity of their own dance practice and its development throughout the education. This is a critical moment of summary and framing where the head of program and staff connected to the program gain insight into the cohort's longer-term trajectory. For certain public facing events, where showings of student work occur, there is an increasing effort to encourage students to engage in planning and organization, always supported by a producer.

Implementation

Sometimes, depending on financial and temporal resources, it is possible for the head of program to respond quickly to student requests for a teaching artist to return or be invited during their course of study. Unsurprisingly, the teaching and learning during the BA require active participation. In such a fixed group, with limited variation in group composition offered by Erasmus student exchanges, each student's presence, knowledge, actions, and desires become material and are increasingly – as lateral learning is a relatively new pillar of the program – central to the program as it unfolds. Students' capacities and curiosities directly influence the implementation of the program, a return that is presumably higher for those

who invest more in the group and their respective knowledges. The students have one-on-one meetings with the head of program each semester to discuss how the semester is unfolding, regarding independent pursuits, their role in the group, and any difficulties they are experiencing. This is also an opportunity for the head of program to express their understanding of how the student's work, skills, and presence are contributing to the program itself, and to the artistic dialogue of the teacher artists they are meeting. Students have been able to have some influence in choosing supervisors for work in courses such as *Subject Specialization* and *Degree Project* practicing evaluating what knowledge and expertise is required for their specific needs.

Analysis

The curriculum is planned in advance, which limits the amount of influence students can have on scheduling, especially in the first two semesters. Being responsive to the students' requests to adjust the demands for attendance to accommodate professional activities is challenging though Poluch insists that it brings richness to the program and allows students to maintain and nourish relevant and meaningful working relations and contexts.

Valuation

- Continue to elaborate on ways for the students to exert influence over planning and implementation (co-curation of the program).
- Formalize the process of approval for students who participate in projects parallel with school as to ensure that they are both fulfilling their obligations as full-time students and integrating their outside experiences into the educational experience they have committed to.
- Devise spaces for co-creation of the curriculum with students, creating a sense of co-ownership of the school and its program. One possibility could be to have one week per term curated by students, but the method of selection amongst a group of 18 remains to be elaborated.
- Find ways of celebrating the dance archives brought by each student during the whole three years, not only at the beginning of the program to get to know each other. This might imply a slower pedagogy, where the emphasis is not on the acquisition of any given knowledge, but on letting students and their dance archives find relations and responses to the proposed frameworks.
- Develop intergenerational learning opportunities with advanced students and alumni supporting new students.
- Have more empty time in the weekly schedule to address immediate group needs when they arise.

7. that a study environment that is accessible and appropriate for all students/doctors students exists

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Description

While “all” may be impossible, that the study environment is accessible and appropriate for a broad range of students is central to the program’s current ongoing transformations. Creating a program that can reach and host a diverse population of dance students has been a primary concern in recent years. In a series of staff workshops when Kristine Slettevold was Head of Dance, the staff developed various protocols and best practices for hosting more diverse staff and students and evaluating course literature. After the *Lectures and Conversations about Racism and Resistance* series hosted by SKH Dance from 2019-2022 ended, several all-staff days were coordinated for competence development workshops around themes of Discrimination, Conflict Awareness, and Consent. In 2022-2023, Eleanor Bauer led a focus group with members of the local Stockholm Street Dance community (report attached), to discuss how SKH Dance could better serve street dancers, either by developing a new program in street dance, adjusting the current program to better accommodate street dancers, or through other collaborations and initiatives. This resulted in some collaborations with Gatuverket including workshops at SKH and a series of street dance and discourse encounters called “Conversations.” In 2023-2025, Zoë Poluch, Chrysa Parkinson, and periodically other members of SKH Dance participated in an Erasmus funded project called *Diversity in European Higher Dance Education*, in collaboration with La Manufacture in Switzerland and Performing Arts Research and Training Studios in Belgium (report attached). This project included a rigorous evaluation of the Bachelor Program in Dance at each of the participating schools. The outcomes of this project included a course designed for teachers’ competence development that informed a two-day workshop with Aminata Cairo in 2025 for all staff of Dance and Dance Pedagogy, and a course designed for students that is being integrated into the first year of the Bachelor program in Dance and will pilot in Autumn 2026.

Poluch notes that course syllabi are legal documents which entail a slow bureaucratic process to have them changed (and translated to Swedish). When she arrived in 2020, Kristine Slettevold and Anna Grip had just changed the whole curriculum, so Poluch decided to work within it. As the years pass, questions evolve, and contexts change, there is a growing desire to take time and revisit the whole curriculum structure.

Hosting Diversity

For Poluch, at SKH and in much of the Swedish contemporary dance field, incapacity or lack of knowledge and skills to host diversity is central. While efforts have started to challenge the pervasive norms of whiteness, there remain other gaps

in access to the program, not least in relation to indigenous and differently abled students. While a curriculum should not be about fulfilling individual preferences, Poluch does note how with an increasingly heterogeneous student population there can be a tendency to have to create more individual study pathways.

Healthy working environment

Students feel supported by the administrative and teaching staff, as well as the head of program and of subject area. This support often comes with a high cost for those that provide it. To host the complexity of interactions among people coming from different backgrounds and situations, a work of accompanying personal processes and collective reflections is central. To accompany students, one needs time, formation, resources, and support. If the central work of accompanying students through the tumultuous years of studies is piled up with a large variety of other tasks, it may well lead to burnout.

Regarding their physical and mental health, students feel a lack of support. The health center, linked to the institution, seems to accommodate relatively little flexibility. Students point out that access to health care is difficult, slow, and expensive. Without support from the school, some have trouble finding health practitioners or doctors that understand the kind of education they are going through. In specific cases, as in one example of minority-related stress, finding a way of supporting the person in question is far from evident. Finally, the long winters bring an extra challenge in terms of fatigue and motivation for all involved and the institution seems to work through it without acknowledging it.

Canvas

The main medium for the students and the head of program to communicate is through the online tool Canvas. Poluch has tried to reduce emails and concentrate the majority of information via Canvas. But not every student is able to use it easily and so there is an awareness of these obstacles without a solution in sight.

The building and the institution: access and barriers

The BA in dance, and SKH in general, is often described as somewhat disconnected from the city. Internally, despite many subject areas working under the same umbrella of SKH, a sense of disconnection is also felt. The same applies somewhat to the different levels of education, BA, MA, and PhD. All these disconnections can create a sense of fragmentation and bubble, heightened by the exclusiveness of the building, inaccessible for those that are not current students. Recent developments and efforts towards more inter- and intra-institutional collaborations is slowly thawing these barriers.

Analysis

There is a majority of cis female applicants to the program, so diversity in recruitment remains a challenge, pointing to the need for wider outreach for prospective students. Additionally, the question of ableism remains underexplored. Addressing the absence of differently-abled bodies in the program would ask for a deeper questioning of what contemporary dance encompasses and excludes, which

is introduced by certain texts in the Courses' Study Materials, yet remains unaddressed by the standard recruitment process, ILOs, QTs, or any other official language upholding the program's norms.

DDE gave voice to guest teacher(s) who observed that the communication towards the student body lacks directness, particularly in issues such as racism, and suggested that it may be a result of an institution grappling with social justice issues while lacking BIPOC leadership, leading to lack of knowledge regarding norms of whiteness. The legal exclusion of race as a discriminatory category in Sweden creates even more difficulty in speaking about racism, if compared to cultures or countries where race is acknowledged as a category. Misogyny and homophobia, for example, have a much more developed discourse in Sweden and are therefore easier to bring up.

Student's different educational backgrounds and culture have an impact on how much freedom one takes regarding attendance policy and overall work ethics. Dealing with absences related to injury and mental health remains complicated at times. From the side of teachers and heads of program, the absences are felt and questions remain on how to address it. Initially, both Slettevold and Poluch thought that students join the program because they want to follow it, and therefore if they are not there it is because they can't be. But absences can also become problematic for the learning environment, affect teachers, and lead learning gaps that makeup assignments cannot fill.

Valuation

- Implement the DDE course for teachers and other competence development for hosting diversity into staff meetings and professional development days.
- Hire an onsite psychologist and physical therapist possessing intercultural skills relevant in an increasingly diverse institution.
- Re-hire an ombudsman or external advisor. Formalize and clarify the role to serve diverse student groups.
- Create and share a network of health practitioners that are trusted, available, sensitive to the particulars of a dance education and the precarity of student life.
- Hold orientation sessions on how to navigate the health system in Stockholm/Sweden.
- Evaluate whether later morning starts during the darkest period of winter has better accommodated the challenges students move through.

8. continuous monitoring and development of the education, supported by course evaluations and, for doctoral students, individual study plans

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Description

SKH has been reforming its evaluation systems in recent years. Having tried a few different platforms and formats, the current status is as follows: Every course has a standard online evaluation form. The head of program formulates the questions in relation to the ILOs and content. To improve answer frequency, the evaluations are currently completed during scheduled class time, rather than as extracurricular/homework time.

In the absence of an external ombudsman, an anonymous evaluation form has been created for feedback from students or teachers regarding specific or individual issues that might not feel possible to address directly with the head of program or subject area. As for teacher feedback to the institution, we have developed an online anonymous form that every teacher receives after the completion of their teaching period.

We currently lack a systemized protocol for teachers to evaluate and offer feedback to students. While guest teachers are much appreciated, many students point out a lack of thorough discussion and individualized feedback with them. The head of program is currently working on developing a student feedback form which would be included in the teachers' offboarding time, administered in proportion to their total teaching time.

We currently also lack a specific protocol for students to evaluate teachers, beyond the course evaluations which are based on standardized questions and do not name individual teachers unless a student volunteers teacher-specific feedback in the free-form text fields.

Based on our original finding at the top of this evaluation: there is a dissonance between the formal administrative categories and the ethos of the field and its practices. We do not find this evaluation nor the standard course evaluations capable of capturing, assessing, or valuing the labours of personal, interpersonal, collaborative, ethical, affective, social and emotional intelligences through which dance works and develops.

Analysis

As described in previous sections, contact and dialogue between students and head of program affords continuous monitoring and development of the education in qualitative and engaged ways that exceed course evaluations. As a great share of this work is yet to be systematized or formalized, it risks falling between chairs or out of practice in Poluch's absence.

Meanwhile, dance-based education develops not through monitoring but through practice, encounters with different skills and ways of doing, and cultures of

collective study where we get to excite and inspire each other to go a little beyond our comfort zones. In this sense it interests us to think how, in addition to formalized evaluation structures, we might set up conditions for continuous development of education. We desire to study together in spaces where nobody is monitoring anyone's progress, but we are all collectively engaged in progress. We would like more peer-to-peer opportunities as colleagues to dive into what sort of ethics, methods, practices, and values we constitute together, that we build an education from and for, consciously and unknowingly until we get together and find out where the catalytic frictions or surprise affinities lead us. Previous students have communicated desire for moments of horizontality with teachers and staff as well. We would like to learn together.

Valuation

This education has made incredible progress in recent years, some of which has yet to be integrated into official structures that guarantee valence for the tools and methods developing. In this light, head of program should receive the necessary support to:

- Formalize and implement feedback forms, methods, and systems for students, teachers, and the education overall that can be carried out by future staff and heads of program. These should be formulated to value individual needs and priorities, constructive feedback and intimate critique, and shared responsibility for the field's progress through engagement, rather than in quantitative reporting measures.
- Include time in offboarding in program design for completion of these vectors of evaluation in addition to course evaluations.
- Rewrite the course plans and syllabi as needed to reflect a changed and changing education geared toward change.
- Put time in the schedule that is not a course to be evaluated, but an opportunity for common study under the umbrella of shared practice among teachers and students together, perhaps at the start or end of each term or year.

9. applies only to third cycle studies:

- doctoral students have access to an active research environment with adequate subject depth, breadth and scope
- doctoral students have the opportunity to collaborate with national and international researchers and with the surrounding community

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Not applicable.

10. Other

Any descriptions, analyses and values regarding, for example, internationalisation, widening participation, sustainable development and gender equality.

Information relating to this matter is presented in other sections of the report.

Mandatory annexes

Curriculum (first cycle and second studies)

Overview of qualitative targets