



Professional Certificate in Benesh Movement Notation

Information Booklet

**ROYAL
ACADEMY
OF DANCE**



Contents

1 introduction.....	2
2 Programme Outline	3
3 Module Descriptions.....	4
4 PCBMN.....	5
MODULE PCBMN1 <i>From Alphabet to Language</i>	5
MODULE PCBMN2 <i>Solo and Duo</i>	5
MODULE PCBMN3 <i>Multiple People</i>	6
MODULE PCBMN4 <i>The Supported Body</i>	7
MODULE PCBMN5 <i>The Multi-Stave Score</i>	7
MODULE PCBMN6 <i>Extending Theory and Practice</i>	8
5 Entry Requirements.....	9
6 Timetable of Study	11
7 Application Process	12
Application closing dates.....	12
8 Current fees.....	13
Registration fee.....	13
Tuition fees.....	13
Items not covered by tuition fees	14
Other funding organisations	15

1 Introduction

The Professional Certificate in Benesh Movement Notation (PCBMN) provides a thorough grounding in the principles and usage of the Benesh Movement Notation (BMN) for all those with an interest in the observation, analysis and recording of all forms of dance movement.

BMN is most widely used in the recording and restaging of dance works, in which context it has proved invaluable, both as a day-to-day tool in the rehearsal studio, and as a means of preserving our dance heritage. But the Benesh system is, and can be, much more than a means of recording theatre dance. It has been used successfully by anthropologists, by physiotherapists to analyse and record patient movement, and even in an ergonomic study of seating in an airport.

During the course of the programme, you will learn the fundamental principles and full sign vocabulary of the BMN system and how to apply these in various movement contexts. The focus of the programme is on reading and recording dance, so whether your interest is in ballet or Bharatanatyam, we hope to provide a stimulating and useful programme of study.

Kendra Johnson
PCBMN Programme Leader

2 Programme Outline

The Professional Certificate Award in Benesh Movement Notation is made up of six modules, as follows:

Module PCBMN1	From Alphabet to Language
Module PCBMN2	Solo and Duo
Module PCBMN3	Multiple People
Module PCBMN4	The Supported Body
Module PCBMN5	The Multi-Stave Score
Module PCBMN6	Extending Theory and Practice

The programme is delivered part-time by distance learning. Comprehensive study materials, accessed through a virtual learning environment (Moodle), will provide you with all the teaching, learning and organisational materials that you will need to complete each module successfully. A specialist personal tutor will be assigned to you for each module and will advise and support you throughout your studies. All students will also be eligible to attend the Benesh Student Forum, held annually in London.

Each module involves a minimum of 200 study hours spread over 20 weeks; completion of all six modules will therefore involve a minimum of 1200 study hours. Two modules are studied per year, enabling students to complete all six modules in three years. All students will receive a transcript confirming their achievement at the end of each module and, on successful completion of the programme, will be awarded the Professional Certificate Award in Benesh Movement Notation.

Successful completion of PCBMN with distinction provides the key entry requirement for the Professional Diploma in Benesh Movement Notation (PGDBMN).

3 Module Descriptions

Each module includes a Module Study Guide to guide you through your studies, plus all the materials required to complete the module. Self-assessment tasks are incorporated into the study material to enable you to test your own understanding of the theoretical concepts, as are practical tasks to send to your tutor for personal feedback. In addition, supplementary materials, such as video and audio files, support many of the modules.

At the end of each module there is a formal assessment, for which you will be awarded a mark out of 100. Full details of the organisation and regulations of the programme will be provided in the PCBMN Programme Handbook.

You will have access to ample tutorial help via e-mail, telephone and video conferencing. Your tutor will monitor your progress and support you throughout your studies. Benesh International also welcomes any students passing through London who wish to visit in person. Please contact beneshinternational@rad.org.uk in advance of your visit to ensure that there will be a member of staff present.

4 PCBMN

MODULE PCBMN1 *From Alphabet to Language*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	None

What is a notation system? What is contained in a BMN score? How does BMN compare to other notation systems? After considering these fundamental questions, this module will introduce you to the principles that underpin the Benesh Movement Notation system and its use and potential within different solo dance contexts.

You will develop key analytical and observational skills as you examine the changing relationships of limbs to body. Reading exercises will help you to consolidate your knowledge and introduce you to the process of 'lifting' the notation from the page and transforming it into fluent physical performance.

MODULE PCBMN2 *Solo and Duo*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	Module PCBMN1

This module develops the knowledge gained in Module PCBMN1 in two distinct directions.

Part 1: Getting into Detail

In the first part of this module you will be introduced to the theory used to record the more detailed nuances of positions and movements, including dynamic qualities. By the end of the first part of this module, you should have sufficient command of the system to be able to read and record detailed solo movement in a variety of styles and contexts.

Part 2: Contact and Relationship

The relationship of two or more people is an integral part of movement in many contexts. In the second part of this module, you will look at the notation of the floor pattern, direction faced and combined relationship of two people, as a development of the principles introduced in Module PCBMN1. The other major element explored in this part of this module is the analysis and recording of physical contact between two people, from simple hand holding to more complex grips.

MODULE PCBMN3 *Multiple People*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	Module PCVMN1 Module PCBMN2

By the end of this module you will have both gained a comprehensive grounding across all three main areas of BMN theory; namely solo-, partner- and group-work, and, as a result of tackling the recording of a dance piece in each of these three areas, be in possession of enhanced observation and analytical skills.

Part 1: Pattern and Formation

In the first part of this module you will approach the recording of multiple people in both static and travelling formations, initially focusing on formal straight, curved and circular patterns. You will also be introduced to BMN stage plans and will explore their potential as efficient and visual summaries of groups of people in motion.

Part 2: Recording Project

Within this section of the module you will have the opportunity to put all your newly- acquired theoretical knowledge into practice by recording i) a solo dance, ii) steps and dances performed by two dancers together, and iii) a group dance. You will be required to notate movement from written and filmed sources, which will give you the opportunity to consider the use of alternative media in the preservation and recording of dance.

MODULE PCBMN4 *The Supported Body*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	Module PCBMN1 Module PCBMN2 Module PCBMN3

Leaning against a wall, holding a ballet barre or lying on the floor are all ways in which the body may be supported. The majority of this module concerns the analysis and recording of floor work - specifically lying, sitting and kneeling - which features in so much of today's dance repertoire. You will also develop your analytical skills by looking at movement from different points of view, and learning how to make an appropriate choice of recording method.

MODULE PCBMN5 *The Multi-Stave Score*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	Module PCBMN1 Module PCBMN2 Module PCBMN3 Module PCBMN4

This module will allow you to develop both your theoretical knowledge and your recording skills in the areas of partner work and group work.

Part 1: Take Your Partners

Having established the principles of recording partner work in Module PCBMN2, this module goes on to apply these principles in different contexts, focussing particularly on the vocabulary of the formal balletic pas de deux.

Part 2: Organising the Masses

In this part of the module you will continue your investigation into group work theory. Specifically you will look at complex group work situations (including irregular formations), the identification of individuals within groups, the identification of group 'leaders' and how to lay out such information in a clear and concise format. Extracts from professional BMN scores will be used to illustrate group movement, and you will be given the opportunity to read critically and to consider the advantages and disadvantages of different recording methods

MODULE PCBMN6 ***Extending Theory and Practice***

Study hours 200

Tutorial hours 8

Prerequisite modules Module PCBMN1

Module PCBMN2

Module PCBMN3

Module PCBMN4

Module PCBMN5

This module will complete your knowledge of the BMN system by enabling you to explore the advanced recording tools and techniques used to record bodies and objects in all relationships and orientations - including bodies upside-down and one above another - as well as the finest details of foot and hand actions.

You will also tackle two advanced recording projects. The first, using video material as its source, will enable you to use a range of the advanced theory introduced in this module, whilst the second will allow you to gain experience of recording a group dance from live rehearsals.

5 Entry Requirements for PCBMN

Although you do not need any specific academic qualifications to embark upon PCBMN, the following skills, experience and attributes are vital.

a) English language skills

The programme is delivered and assessed in English and therefore a good comprehension of written English is essential. If you cannot easily assimilate large amounts of written English text, you will not gain full benefit from the course materials. If English is not your first language it is particularly important that you are aware of this.

It is the responsibility of the student to ascertain that they have sufficient competence in the English language to embark upon and complete the modules they wish to study. No language support is offered and insufficient language skills will not be considered a mitigating circumstance in any assessment.

Applicants whose first language is not English are encouraged to test their English language skills at either

- www.ielts.org

This is the website of the International English Language Testing System. In this system a score of 6.5 is recommended for prospective students of PCBMN modules.

or

- www.ets.org/toefl

This is the website of the Test of English as a Foreign Language system. In this system a score of 550 is recommended for prospective students of PCBMN modules.

Alternatively, we can provide a sample of the module materials for you to test your own comprehension before you submit your application. If you require this service, please email beneshinternational@rad.org.uk.

b) Movement knowledge and experience

The likelihood of completing each module successfully will be greatly enhanced if you have experience of dance (particularly of ballet), knowledge of its vocabulary and terminology, and an interest in analysing it. You should provide evidence for this on your application form. Such evidence may consist of your dance education and qualifications, and/or any paid or unpaid dance-related activity. Your interest in human movement and BMN will be discussed further with you after your application form has been received.

Note that, although there are occasional exceptions to the rule, if you have not yet reached the age of 18, it is unlikely that you will possess the necessary combination of knowledge, experience and potential analytical ability. If you are under the age of 18, it is therefore strongly recommended that you contact the Programme Leader to discuss this prior to submitting your application form and registration fee.

c) Attitude to study

Possessing and maintaining the right attitude towards your studies is the most important key to success on this part-time, distance-learning programme. Strong self-motivation and excellent time-management skills are required to complete each of the modules successfully. This will also be discussed with you further after your application form has been received (see [application process](#)) to enhance your chances of success in your studies

d) Computer access and skills

The most reliable and time-efficient form of communication between student and tutor is email, along with Skype, Zoom or similar. For this reason students must have access to, as well as the ability to use, a computer, reliable internet connection and their own email address. Access to and the ability to use a scanner and photocopier is also required. Note that at the end of each module you are required to submit a clear scan of your work (not the original) for assessment.

6 Timetable of Study

There are two possible starting points in the year: January and July. This enables students to study up to two modules per year with a six week break between each.

For each module, your commitment will be a minimum of 10 hours per week for 20 weeks.

Semester 1 normally runs from the beginning of January to the middle of May in any given year.

Semester 2 normally runs from the beginning of July to the middle of November in any given year.

Actual dates for your cohort will be provided upon registration.

7 Application Process

You are welcome to contact the Programme Leader for advice prior to applying for the programme. She will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Her contact details are listed in the [contact information](#) at the end of this booklet.

The application and reference forms can be found on the website. These may be completed and returned to beneshinternational@rad.org.uk

Once your application form and registration fee have been received, we will arrange for you to have a discussion with a PCBMN tutor. This discussion is designed to commence communication between you and your tutor and to provide you both with the opportunity to get to know one another. Among the topics that will be discussed are your motivation for wanting to study Benesh Movement Notation and what practical arrangements you will make to accommodate the required study time. Following this discussion, you will be notified whether your application has been successful.

Application closing dates

In all cases, the closing date for applications is two calendar months before your chosen start date.

Application closing dates		
Application deadline	1 November 2024	1 May 2025
For start date	2 January 2023	3 July 2025

8 Current Fees

Registration fee

A non-refundable registration fee must be submitted with the application form. This is ordinarily a one-off fee, but students who take a break of more than one semester between modules will be required to submit another registration fee.

Tuition fees

Tuition fees cover all course materials, tutoring, access to the virtual learning environment (Moodle), the Benesh Student Forum held annually at Benesh International in London (either in person or via remote access), Benesh International student membership and assessments.

Students will be invoiced in advance with full instructions regarding deadlines and payment methods.

Fees can be expected to rise each year in line with inflation. The tuition fee payment structure is as follows:

Fees table

Curent Fees	<i>Sterling£</i>
Registration / Extension (non-refundable)	100
Full programme	7,500
Full programme in 6 instalments (per module)	1,250
Re-sit	250

Items not covered by tuition fees

Stationery (notation paper, pencils, rulers, erasers etc.) must be provided by the student. For students attending the Benesh Student Forum, tuition fees do not cover the cost of travel, accommodation or subsistence.

In advance of the start of PCBMN, students should purchase Benesh Movement Notation for Ballet by Monica Parker, available from [RAD Enterprises](#).

9 Funding

PCBMN students are not eligible for direct government funding, but financial help may be available to professional dancers in the UK through [Dancers' Career Development](#), or in equivalent organisations in other countries.

Students who are resident in the UK may be able to obtain assistance from [Professional and Career Development Loans](#).

Other funding organisations

For EU students: Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)

USA and Canada: International Student Loan Programme (ISLP)

Educational Grants Advisory Service

10 Contact Information

Benesh International

Royal Academy of Dance
188 York Rd
London
SW11 3JZ

Email beneshinternational@rad.org.uk

<https://www.royalacademyofdance.org/benesh-international-benesh-movement-notation/>

PCBMN Programme Leader and Tutor

Kendra Johnson

kjohnson@rad.org.uk

Benesh International Lead Officer

James Groom

jgroom@rad.org.uk

+44 (0)207 326 8031

Head of Benesh International

Melanie Simpkin

msimpkin@rad.org.uk