



Professional Award in Benesh Movement Notation

Information Booklet

2021



Patron: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Contents

1 Introduction	2
2 Programme Outline	3
3 Module Descriptions.....	4
4 PABMN Part 1.....	5
MODULE PA501 <i>From Alphabet to Language</i>	5
MODULE PA502 <i>Solo and Duo</i>	5
MODULE PA503 <i>Multiple People</i>	6
5 PABMN Part 2.....	7
MODULE PA601 <i>The Supported Body</i>	7
MODULE PA602 <i>The Multi-Stave Score</i>	7
MODULE PA603 <i>Extending Theory and Practice</i>	8
6 Entry Requirements for PABMN Part 1.....	9
7 Entry Requirements for PABMN Part 2.....	10
8 Timetable of Study.....	11
9 Application Process.....	12
Application closing dates.....	12
10 Fees for 2020 Entry.....	13
Registration fee.....	13
Tuition fees.....	13
Fees table.....	14
Items not covered by tuition fees.....	14
11 Funding.....	15
Other funding organisations.....	15
12 Contact Information.....	16

1 Introduction

The Professional Award in Benesh Movement Notation (PABMN) 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
PABMN Programme Leader

2 Programme Outline

The Professional Award in Benesh Movement Notation is made up of two parts, as follows:

Part 1

Module PA501 *From Alphabet to Language*

Module PA502 *Solo and Duo*

Module PA503 *Multiple People*

Part 2

Module PA601 *The Supported Body*

Module PA602 *The Multi-Stave Score*

Module PA603 *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 involved 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 six 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 Award in Benesh Movement Notation.

PABMN is a professional qualification in two parts, of which Part 1 is as Level 5 and Part 2 at Level 6. Successful completion of PABMN Part 2 with distinction provides the key entry requirement for the Postgraduate Diploma in Benesh Movement Notation (PGDBMN).

Whilst we are sure that the majority of students will wish to study the whole programme, students may initially register for Part 1 only and then later for Part 2 if they wish. Full details of registration options can be found in the [PABMN Terms and Conditions](#).

3 Module Descriptions

In the following pages the content of each module is described. Note that they must be studied in numerical order, since each later module builds on those that precede it.

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. When you successfully complete Part 1 or Part 2, the marks you have gained for each of the individual modules will be used to calculate your overall average mark. Full details of the organisation and regulations of the programme will be provided in the PABMN 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 PABMN Part 1

MODULE PA501 *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 PA502 *Solo and Duo*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	Module PA501

This module develops the knowledge gained in Module PA501 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 PA501. 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 PA503 *Multiple People*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	Module PA501 Module PA502

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.

5 PABMN Part 2

MODULE PA601 *The Supported Body*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	Module PA501 Module PA502 Module PA503

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 PA602 *The Multi-Stave Score*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	Module PA501 Module PA502 Module PA503 Module PA601

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 PA502, 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 PA603 *Extending Theory and Practice*

Study hours	200
Tutorial hours	8
Prerequisite modules	Module PA501 Module PA502 Module PA503 Module PA601 Module PA602

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.

6 Entry Requirements for PABMN Part 1

Although you do not need any specific academic qualifications to embark upon PABMN Part 1, 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 PABMN 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 PABMN 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, FaceTime 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 photocopy of your work (not the original) for assessment.

7 Entry Requirements for PABMN Part 2

Students must normally have successfully completed PABMN Part 1 to be eligible for PABMN Part 2. Alternatively, they may provide evidence of an equivalent knowledge of BMN in the form of the following awards:

- Intermediate Solo, Partner and Groupwork (Royal Academy of Dance)
- Validated the *Première Année* of the *1er cycle* at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Music et de Danse de Paris, France

8 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.

2021 dates		
Semester 1 2021 4 January - 21 May	6 week break	Semester 2 2021 5 July - 19 November

9 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 electronically, or printed out and sent by post.

Your completed application form, reference form and registration fee should be returned to:

Benesh International
Royal Academy of Dance
36 Battersea Square
London
SW11 3RA

Or emailed 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 PABMN 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 for entry in 2021		
Application deadline	4 November 2020	5 May 2021
For start date	4 January 2021	5 July 2021

10 Fees for 2021 Entry

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. Similarly, if more than one semester passes between the study of each part, a new registration must be paid prior to commencing Part 2.

Tuition fees

Tuition fees cover all course materials, tutoring, access to the virtual learning environment (Moodle), the Benesh Student Forum held annual 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 instalment deadlines and payment methods.

Fees can be expected to rise each year in line with inflation.

The tuition fee payment structure is as follows:

Full programme **£6,600.** Students paying in full at the beginning of the programme are eligible for the discounted fee of £6,000. If paying in full, payment must be received one calendar month before the date on which studies commence.

Alternatively, students may pay in three instalments of £2,200. The instalments are due: one calendar month before the date on which studies commence; prior to 9th month of study (i.e. September for January start date; March for July start date); prior to the 18th month of study (i.e. January or July a year following start of study).

Part 1 and/or Part 2 **£3,300** for each part. If paying in full, payment must be received one calendar month before the date on which studies commence.

Alternatively, students may pay in two instalments of £1,650. The instalments are due: one calendar month before the date on which studies commence; prior to the 4th month of study (i.e. April for January start date; November for July start date).

Module PA501 **£1,250.** Payment must be made in full one calendar month before the date on which studies commence. Students who wish to

continue studies following module PA501, the remaining programme fees are due as below.

Remaining programme **£5,500**. Students paying in full at the beginning of PA502 (where they have completed PA501 and wish to continue their studies) are eligible for the discounted fee of £5,000. If paying in full, payment must be received one calendar month before the date on which studies of PA501 commence.

Alternatively, students may pay in two instalments of £2,750. The instalments are due prior to 9th month of study (i.e. September for January start date; March for July start date); prior to the 18th month of study (i.e. January or July a year following start of study). Note - the dates are calculated from the original module PA501 start of study date.

Fees table

2021 Fees	<i>Sterling £</i>
Registration / Extension (non-refundable)	80
Full programme	6,600
Full programme upfront	6,000
Full programme in 3 instalments	2,200
Part 1 / Part 2	3,300
Part 1 / Part 2 in 2 instalments	1,650
Module PA501	1,250
Remaining programme (PA502 onwards)	5,500
Remaining programme upfront	5,000
Remaining programme in 2 instalments	2,750
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 PABMN Part 1, students should purchase *Benesh Movement Notation for Ballet* by Monica Parker, available from [RAD Enterprises](#).

11 Funding

PABMN 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

12 Contact Information

Benesh International
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London
SW11 3RA

Email beneshinternational@rad.org.uk

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

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