

DANCE *for* PD<sup>®</sup>

CLASSES | TRAINING | RESOURCES

A PROGRAM OF THE  
MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP

# Registered Teaching Assistant Training Guide

with information about courses, requirements, processes and qualification

## Thank you for your interest!

The Dance for PD® Registered Teaching Assistant (RTA) title is designed for trainees who are not trained as dance teachers, and who lack the qualifications to lead Dance for PD® classes on their own, but who nonetheless would like to work toward a level of recognized accreditation. The RTA program is designed for:

- People who would like to assist in Dance for PD® classes that are taught by a Dance Teacher or Certified Dance for PD® teacher
- People who would like to facilitate active group viewings of the Dance for PD® At Home DVD series in private settings or in facilities like continuing care facilities and nursing homes

The RTA program is not designed or promoted as a stepping-stone to Dance Teacher Certification.

### **Eligibility**

A candidate for the RTA qualification must have completed steps one through four of the EPE training course (basic application, online learning program, Introductory Training workshop & Continuing Professional Development) and have accrued at least 40 credits. For more information about our basic training program, please click [here](#).



## Process

### Step One: Basic application

Applicants complete an online application and are judged against eligibility criteria.



### Step Two: General knowledge assessment

Candidates complete an online assessment.



### Step Three: Core readings and assessment

Upon successful completion of the assessment, candidates engage in self-directed reading and complete a written assessment.



### Step Four: Assisting & reflective practice

Candidates complete self-reflective process based on their experiences while assisting in Dance for Parkinson's classes.



### Step Five: Final Interview

Candidates complete a final interview with a Dance for PD® assessor.

## Step One: Online application

The basic online application will ask candidates to provide the following information:

- Contact information
- Educational background
- Teaching background (if any)
- Any Dance for PD® assistant work
- Workshops and seminars completed (including Dance for PD®)
- Experience with community outreach/special populations in addition to Dance for PD® work
- Resume (attached)
- Statement of current Dance for PD® collaborators (dance studios, PD groups, healthcare facilities)
- Short essay of intent
- Three references (one from a Dance for PD® teacher, two from class participants)

This application, which will be hosted online, will be reviewed by Dance for PD® staff and approved or rejected.



Courtesy of People Dancing: photo by Rachel Cherry

## Step Two: General knowledge assessment

Once their application is approved, candidates will receive an access code for the remaining elements of the certification process, beginning with a general untimed online assessment, which integrates a variety of question formats including multiple choice, true/false, and essay.

### Assessment descriptor

The general assessment incorporates information, concepts and learning outcomes covered in the online and introductory training courses, as well as Continuing Professional Development. Specifically, assessment scoring depends on:

- General knowledge of Parkinson's manifestations and how they might present in a Dance for Parkinson's class
- Comprehensive understanding of pedagogic concepts and best practices
- Skills of observation and analysis relating to the class environment
- Comprehensive knowledge of Dance for PD® teaching practices and approaches
- Understanding of safety considerations
- Class planning skills
- Understanding of basic musical concepts and rhythms

## **Grading**

A score of 80% is required to pass. Candidates may retake the exam up to two times. Additional testing instructions are available on the exam portal.

## **Step Three: Core readings & assessment**

### **Process**

The second written exam tests comprehension of materials contained within the Dance for PD® Certification core reading packet, comprised of essays, articles and research papers related to dance and Parkinson's. Candidates will engage in a process of self-directed reading and study culminating in the second written assessment. Preparation for this exam can begin as soon as the Step Two is complete.

### **Learning outcomes**

Upon completion of the reading packet, candidates will be able to:

- 1: Identify key concepts and issues in research on dance and Parkinson's
- 2: Understand basic methodologies for scientific research in the field
- 3: Understand and appreciate different perspectives on Dance for Parkinson's practice
- 4: Understand both historical and current perspectives on the clinical dimensions of Parkinson's
- 5: Understand and reflect upon creative practice as it pertains to Dance for Parkinson's

### **Assessment descriptor**

The reading assessment will test a candidate's comprehension and absorption of the material and concepts contained within the Dance for PD® RTA packet. Candidates may refer to their packets during the assessment but may not use online search engines or other tools.

## **Grading**

A score of 80% is required to pass. Candidates may retake the exam up to two times. Additional testing instructions are available on the exam portal.

## **Step Four: Assisting & reflective practice**

### **Process**

The reflective practice component aims to provide candidates with observational and reflective skills to evaluate their own RTA practice. Reflective practice for the RTA qualification centers on journaling based on the RTA candidate's experience assisting in recognized Dance for Parkinson's classes or for those who are assisting in the engagement of Parkinson's participants in a group viewing of a Dance for PD® At Home DVD.

Candidates must complete journaling based on at least 10 hours of Dance for Parkinson's class participation. Journal entries will then be compiled and submitted for review through the RTA online course portal. Entries should comprise 5-10 pages, double-spaced. Candidates may focus their journaling on any area that they would like to address, including:

- Challenges or conflicts aroused by their class participation

- Critical thinking and analysis about the class
- Analyzing any new learning that class participation has stimulated
- Analyzing one's own strengths and weaknesses in relation to class participation

### **Assessment descriptor**

Journals will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. A pass grade will be given to those submissions whose content:

- Meets the required criteria relating to length
- Poses areas for analysis and discussion
- Represents clear observations and thoughtful analysis
- Relates to the candidate's specific interests, with reference to future practice

### **Step Five: Final interview**

RTA candidates will participate in a final 30-minute interview with an assessor. The interview will be used to:

- Raise any issues or concerns revealed during the journaling process
- Determine the candidate's future intentions as they related to the Dance for PD® program
- Explore questions relating to the RTA's current participation and practice



*Courtesy of Belconnen Arts Centre; photo by Jamila Toderas*

## RTA policies and guidelines

It is expected that the qualification process will take between two and six months. Coursework will be hosted on an online platform Schoology.com that houses readings, manages testing, allows for the download of templates and uploading of essays to a course dropbox.

### Fees

The RTA program has the following fees:

Application fee	\$50 (non-refundable)
Assessment fee	\$200
Qualification fee	\$200 (payable when process is completed)
<b>Total fee</b>	<b>\$450</b>
+Annual Professional Membership (\$45)	
+Reregistration every two years (\$25)	

Application fee is due upon approval of the application. Assessment fee must be paid before exams are taken.

### Continuing Professional Development & Renewal

RTAs must renew their registration every three years by completing at least 15 credits of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) every three-year cycle. A credit is equivalent to one hour of participation. Credits can roll over from year to year so long as 15 credits are completed every three years. Credits are reported through the CPD Activity Log linked to the Dance for PD® certification and RTA page. To encourage a range of CPD activities, there are credit limits to specific activities. Approved activities with are listed below. Next to each activity is listed the maximum number of credits that an RTA can earn from a specific activity—for example, RTAs can earn up to 5 credits for phone seminars, even if they participate in seven hours of seminars over two years.

Professional Development workshop presented by Dance for PD® or approved affiliate	20 credits
Dance for PD® phone seminars	5 credits
Participation in an online CPD program that supports the development of your practice	15 credits
Writing an article for publication or producing a film in an arts-related area	5 credits
Participating in a specialist arts learning group (i.e. Arts for Health)	8 credits
Taking part in a mentoring program as a mentor or mentee	10 credits
Participation in dance performance as a performer, choreographer or producer	10 credits
Attending a performance or exhibition	2 credits
Approved dance workshop, intensive or non-Dance for PD® teacher training	10 credits
Attendance at a Parkinson's-related conference or symposium	2 credits
Completion of additional Dance for PD® self-reflective work	5 credits

### **Benefits of being an RTA**

RTAs teachers will be able to use the language: Dance for PD® Registered Teaching Assistant, but will not be permitted to teach a Dance for PD® class by themselves. They may assist a class or facilitate an interactive viewing of the Dance for PD At Home DVD series for an individual or group. RTAs will also be listed on the website, and will receive access to special continuing education and networking opportunities.



For more information about training and certification, please email [admin@danceforpd.org](mailto:admin@danceforpd.org) or call 1-800-957-1046.