

DANCE *for* PD[®]

CLASSES | TRAINING | RESOURCES

A PROGRAM OF THE
MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP

Registered Teaching Assistant Training Guide

with information about courses, requirements, processes and qualification

Educational & Professional Enrichment Program (EPE)

Overview

We believe that people with Parkinson's deserve to be supported by knowledgeable and experienced individuals who are passionate about contributing to an enriching community. The Dance for PD® Educational & Professional Enrichment course is designed for people without a dance teaching background who want a comprehensive overview of Dance for PD® approaches and Best Practices for their own enrichment rather than because they would like to lead a dance class.

Eligibility

The Dance for PD® Educational and Professional Enrichment course is designed to respond to the needs and interests of three sets of constituents:

- The therapist, caregiver, person with Parkinson's, allied health worker or medical professional who would like to learn more about the Dance for PD® program but has no interest in lead teaching an actual class
- The recreational dancer, therapist, program coordinator or movement practitioner who would like to assist in a class or facilitate an individual or group's active viewing of the Dance for PD® At Home video series
- The individuals wishing to be trained assistants in Dance for PD® classes

Aims

Through training, EPE candidates will gain:

- Understanding of the role of dance and dance teaching in the lives of people with Parkinson's
- Familiarity with methods and approaches used in teaching and learning practice
- The ability to support Dance for Parkinson's programs through advocacy, planning, administrative support and in-class assistance
- Knowledge of the background and objectives of Dance for Parkinson's classes
- Knowledge of safety issues related to Dance for Parkinson's classes

EPE Options

EPE candidates may engage with the Educational & Professional Enrichment course in the following ways:

1. Take the online training course with or without assessment
2. Take a Dance for PD® or affiliated introductory workshop
3. Assisting in or provide support in a Dance for Parkinson's program after initial training
4. Complete the Dance for PD® Registered Teaching Assistant qualification

Process

EPE training is open-ended. Participants may begin and end their participation with the online course. Others may decide to continue with the in-person workshop. For those wishing to assess and qualify their experience through the **Dance for PD® Registered Teaching Assistant (RTA)** qualification, all five steps of the process must be completed.

Step One: Basic application

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



Step Two: Online learning program

An initial learning course, completed online, introduce Dance for PD® and familiarize trainees with foundational and important knowledge.



Step Three: Introductory Training Workshop

Upon successful completion of the assessment, trainees participate in a multi-day **Introductory Training workshop**, which takes place in person around the globe as well as online via Zoom.



Step Four: Online assessment

This online assessment addresses topics covered in Steps Two and Three and allows trainees to evaluate their learning process. A score of at least 70% is required for passing.



Step Five: Continuing Professional Development

Trainees can assist in a Dance for Parkinson's setting in a number of different ways: in-class assistance, providing administrative support etc. and can continue to deepen skills by engaging in Professional Development opportunities in-person or online.

Step Six: Registered Teaching Assistant

Some trainees may choose to advance to the four-step process of qualifying their experience as a teaching assistant.



Credit system

Successful completion of each step in the training process results in the earning of credits. One credit is the equivalent of approximately one hour of training or engagement. Trainees may accrue credits as follows:

Successful completion of online course	5 credits
Successful completion of enrichment seminar, volunteer training or at least 10 hours of assisting in an active Dance for Parkinson's program	10 credits
Successful completion of in-person introductory workshop	20 credits
Successful completion and score of at least 70% on the online assessment	5 credits

Once accrued, credits are one of the qualifying elements needed to apply for the Dance for PD® Registered Teaching Assistant. In order to apply for the RTA qualification, **40 credits** must be accrued. Additional continuing education credits are listed under the RTA Continuing Professional Development requirements.

Step One: Basic application

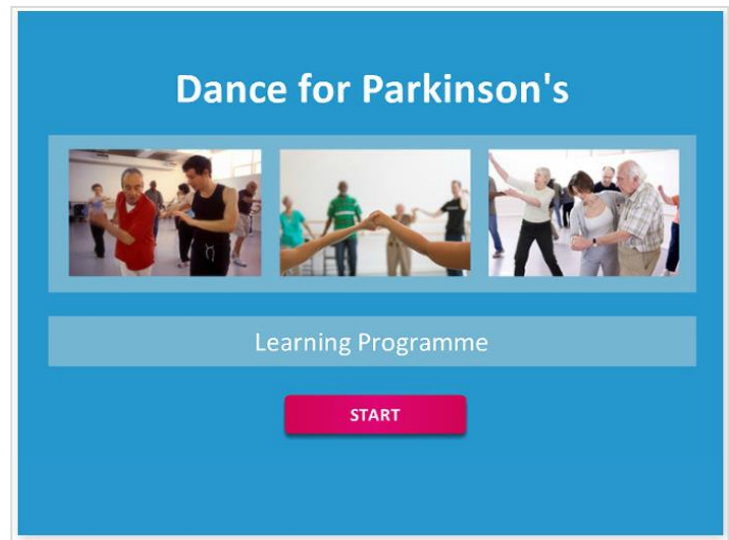
To begin the Educational & Professional Enrichment course, applicants will be asked to complete an **online questionnaire and application**. Once the basic application is approved for eligibility, trainees will be invited to move forward with the online training program.

Step Two: Online learning program

The online learning course consists of eight modules and is designed as a self-directed, self-timed course that encourages self-reflection and provides foundational and important knowledge necessary to complete the full Dance Teacher course. The course takes 10-12 hours to complete.

Learning Outcomes

- 1: Develop an understanding of the context in which Dance for Parkinson's classes take place
- 2: Develop an understanding of the objectives, principles and values of Dance for Parkinson's classes
- 3: Learn how to explain confidently and clearly the benefits of dance for people with Parkinson's



- 4: Have a basic understanding of Parkinson's and the effects it has on participants' function
- 5: Learn ways to support class activities in ways that minimize risk to the participants
- 6: Develop an understanding of providing support within the learning environment
- 7: Develop an understanding of inclusive teaching and learning processes
- 8: Understand the range of dance activities suitable for people with Parkinson's disease
- 9: Understand the needs of group participants

Timeline and requirements

The online learning course can be started and completed at any time. EPE trainees who are interested in applying for the RTA qualification are required to take the EPE final assessment, and a grade of 75% will be considered passing. The assessment can be completed once the trainee indicates that he or she has completed the first four modules of the course.

The online course requires a computer but minimal technical skills. It is expected that the course and assessment will take between 8-20 hours.

Fees

The online course costs US \$85 (£65), \$75 (£55) for members of Dance for PD® or members of People Dancing: the foundation for community dance. The final assessment is included in the online course fee.

Step Three: Introductory Training Workshop

Our introductory training workshops are the foundation of our Educational & Professional Enrichment course, and the first step in a process to develop a deeper understanding of assisting in a Dance for Parkinson's setting.

Once the online learning program has been successfully completed, trainees are invited to register for an introductory training workshop of their choice. Workshops are offered in training hubs around the world as well as online via Zoom. Information about upcoming workshops is available



Courtesy of People Dancing; photo by Rachel Cherry

“This workshop was completely satisfying, both on personal and professional levels. I thoroughly enjoyed each day's activities ... I feel uplifted and inspired by all I witnessed”
—Workshop Participant

on our [website](#).

Content

Most Introductory Training workshops involve 16 hours—spread over two days for an in-person workshop and up to four days for an online workshop—and consist of intensive experiential and practical sessions in the studio or via Zoom. Trainees cover training modules focusing on core philosophies and methods, issues related to working with people with Parkinson's, safety considerations, integration of music as well as a seminar on administrative Best Practices and considerations. Workshops also include a teaching practicum that provides trainees an opportunity to hone their skills of exercise development and presentation. All trainees will participate in an actual Dance for PD® class, work directly with Dance for PD® founders or approved Dance for PD® certified instructor trainers, and engage in interactive learning sessions with teachers from a diverse selection of communities and backgrounds.

Training Modules

The workshop is structured around the following eight training modules:

- Module 1: Core principles
- Module 2: What to Expect
- Module 3: Safety
- Module 4: Teaching Techniques
- Module 5: Class Design and Structure
- Module 6: Exercise Design
- Module 7: Adaptations/Translations
- Module 8: 12 Keys to Success

Sample schedule

Our workshops provide an immersive, interactive experience leveraging a variety of formats and educational approaches. Here's an example of a typical two-day in-person workshop:

Day 1

- 09:00** Introduction of attendees
- 09:15** Introduction: Why Dance for PD®?
- 10:00** Parkinson's Overview
- 11:00** Anatomy of a Class: structure, content and methodology
- 01:00** Lunch
- 02:00** Anatomy of a Class: structure, content and methodology



- 04:30** Balance and freezing workshop
- 05:30** Film excerpts: *Why Dance for PD®* and *Capturing Grace*

Day 2

- 09:00** Teaching Practicum
- 01:00** Lunch
- 02:00** Dance for PD® community class
- 03:15** Discussion
- 04:15** Administrative and logistical considerations
- 05:00** Wrap up and next steps

Learning Outcomes

- 1: Understand the preferred techniques and styles of dance in a Dance for Parkinson's context
- 2: Understand the application of movement structures and principles to support the teaching of a movement class for people with Parkinson's
- 3: Understand creative approaches to introducing dance to enrich physical and artistic understanding and increase accessibility
- 4: Understand the role of music to support movement for people with Parkinson's
- 5: Understand and support safe practice, including risk assessment and safe in-class assisting techniques
- 6: Understand the use of improvisation as a teaching and learning strategy
- 7: Understand Parkinson's-relevant movement planning concepts related to balance and locomotion
- 8: Understand the role of class management, communication, and presentation skills
- 9: Understand the basic administrative tasks and considerations required to establish a successful community program for people with Parkinson's
- 10: Understand and recognize strategies for accident prevention and incident management
- 11: Understand and adjust boundaries of own role in different situations
- 12: Understand importance of social interaction within the class setting

Fees

Tuition for training workshops ranges from \$199-\$399 and includes downloadable training materials and a complimentary one-year Dance for PD® Professional Membership. Depending on the location and training host, tuition may also include a Dance for PD® digital media bundle. Media bundles, which provide comprehensive video and audio resources, are available as an add-on purchase at all training locations.

"I learned more than I could have ever imagined and I love to dance more than I ever imagined. I have already utilized some of your ideas into my treatment approaches with my patients and they have worked GREAT!"

—L.D., DPT

Training organizations

Global partnership arrangements mean that we recognize training courses administered by our partner organizations and honor credits accrued through the courses offered by:

Mark Morris Dance Group/Dance for PD®
Dancing with Parkinson's Canada
People Dancing/Dance for Parkinson's Partnership UK
English National Ballet
Dance for Parkinson's Australia
Balettakademien Stockholm
Dance Base Edinburgh
Canada's National Ballet School/Sharing Dance for People with Parkinson's
Inspirees Institute, China
Dance for Parkinson's South Africa
Dancers' Career Development Center, Seoul



B A L E T T A K A D E M I E N
STOCKHOLM

Step Four: Online Assessment

The Dance for Parkinson's online assessment should be completed as soon as the trainee has completed both the prerequisite online learning program and the live, interactive training workshop. In order to be eligible for the RTA program, EPE trainees will be required to take the final assessment and receive a passing grade of at least 70%. Trainees who do not earn a passing grade will be asked to take the assessment a second time. Trainees should make every effort to complete the assessment within two weeks of completing a workshop. The assessment can be bundled with the online course and paid together for a discount, or it can be purchased separately.

Step Five: Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Fieldwork

EPE trainees who complete an Introductory Training workshop may choose to put their knowledge into practice :

1. Assisting in a local Dance for Parkinson's class
2. Providing administrative support to a local Dance for Parkinson's class
3. Being an advocate or ambassador for a local Dance for Parkinson's program

EPE trainees may not teach or lead classes.

Professional Membership

Our **Professional Membership** will provide Dance Teachers with comprehensive online resources as well as access to the online community group. These resources will allow teaching artists to deepen their knowledge by connecting with a virtual interactive community of affiliated teachers doing similar work.

As a Professional Member, teachers have access to our many resources, including:

- Access to teaching community online Ryver forum
- Invitations and access to online Professional Development opportunities with guest presenters
- Program newsletters and research updates
- Access to online library of articles, 300+ recorded classes, music resources and an audio-video archive
- Advanced notification for workshops and master classes

Advanced Training workshops

For those trainees wishing to complete the RTA qualification, additional professional development is not required until the RTA qualification term has begun. However, professional development is always recommended and may be achieved by participating in an advanced training workshop or by joining monthly online Continuing Professional Development workshops. These workshops provide trainees with an opportunity to hone their skills, supplement their knowledge, connect with other teachers, and continue to integrate best practices—all with the perspective that comes with working in the community for a period of time. There are no waiting requirements for advanced training workshops, but the professional development experience is much more meaningful when trainees have been assisting in an actual Dance for Parkinson's class for at least six months.

Learning Outcomes

- 1: Understand the specific needs and challenges of class participants and teachers in their own communities
- 2: Recognize areas where their support may be constructive
- 3: Reinforce recognition of safe and effective practice
- 4: Understand proper classroom management and curriculum methods that maximize involvement and participation
- 5: Develop and manage basic administrative tasks and establish effective partnerships
- 6: Refine understanding and ability to adjust boundaries of own role in different situations

Step Six: Qualification through the Dance for PD® Registered Teaching Assistant

The Registered Teaching Assistant (RTA) title is designed for trainees who are not trained as dance teachers, and who may not have 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 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.

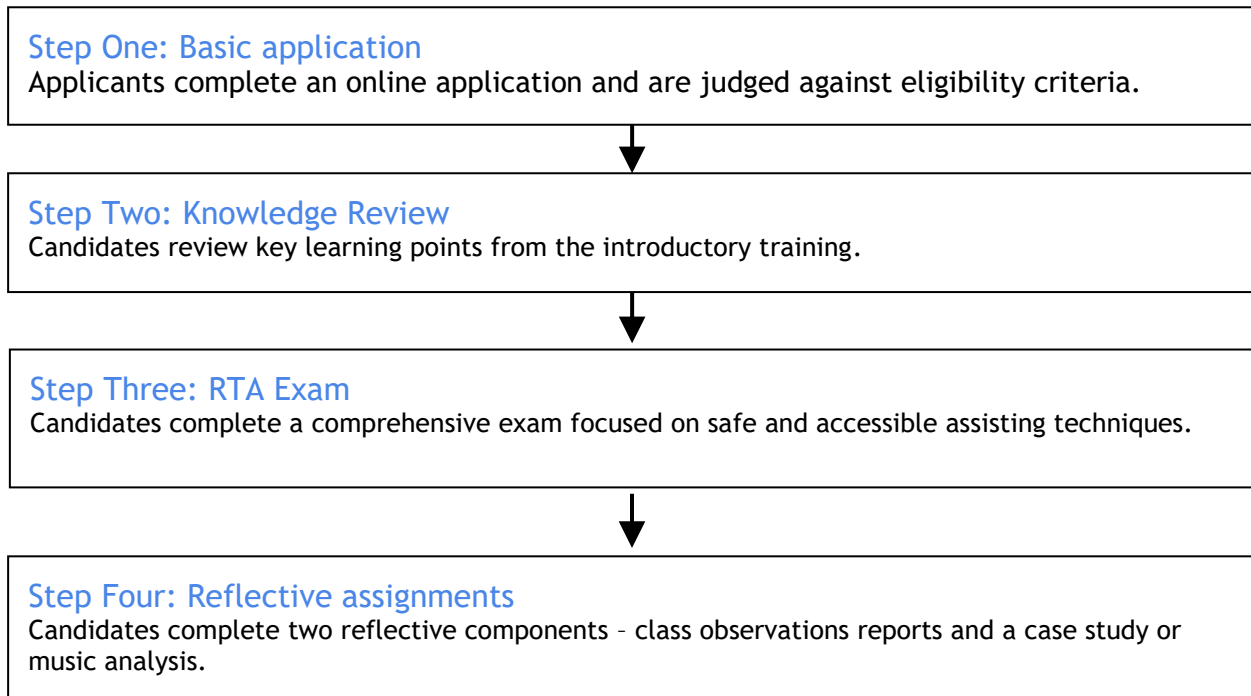


Dance for PD® Registered Teaching Assistant

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 & online assessment) and have assisted in a Dance for PD or adaptive dance class for at least 10 hours or completed at least 10 hours of Continuing Professional Development through Dance for PD.

Process



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
- Two references (one from a Dance for PD® teacher or program manager)



Courtesy of People Dancing: photo by Rachel Cherry

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

Step Two: Review

RTA candidates will review specific material covered in the introductory training process to help them prepare for the online exam. The review will focus on:

- Basic information about the issues and challenges people living with Parkinson's may face
- Information about safety protocols in a Dance for PD class
- Basic information about the structure of a typical Dance for PD class

Step Three: RTA exam

A general untimed online assessment integrates a variety of question formats including multiple choice, true/false, and essay to help determine a candidate's knowledge of safe and inclusive assisting practice.

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
- Knowledge of Dance for PD® teaching practices and approaches
- Skills of observation and analysis relating to the class environment
- Understanding of safety considerations
- Understanding the principles of providing inclusive, sensitive support

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: Reflective responses

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 analyzing the dynamics of existing Dance for Parkinson's classes while providing additional responses based on one case study and four Dance for PD-specific scenarios. The reflective process may highlight:

- Challenges or conflicts aroused by their observations
- Critical thinking and analysis about the class
- Analyzing any new learning that class observation has stimulated
- Analyzing one's own strengths and weaknesses in relation to observing the dynamics of the class

Assessment descriptor

Reflective work will be assessed on a satisfactory/no credit basis. A satisfactory 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



Courtesy of Belconnen Arts Centre: photo by Jarmila Toderas

RTA policies and guidelines

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

Fees

The RTA program has the following fees:

Application fee	\$50 (non-refundable)
Assessment fee	\$150
Qualification fee	\$200 (payable when process is completed)
Total fee	\$400
+Annual Professional Membership	\$60
+Reregistration every five years	\$35

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 completing a brief requalification application, submitting one letter of endorsement from a lead teacher or staff member who supervises the RTA, and successfully completing at least 10 credit hours 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 10 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 self-reflective work, even if they participate in seven hours of that work over three years.

Professional Development workshop presented by Dance for PD® or approved affiliate	20 credits
Dance for PD® online Continuing Professional Development workshops	20 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 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 or call 1-800-957-1046.