

IAB Physical Contact Policy

Responsibility for the Policy:	Director of Administration
Relevant to:	All Students and Staff
Approved by:	Academic Strategy Team
Date Introduced:	August 2014, Updated July 2018, September 2021
Next Review Date:	September 2023

Relevant Documents:**Related Policies and Documents:**

IAB Fitness to Study Policy
IAB Health and Safety
Policy

Context:

We strive to offer teaching that is individual, professional and thus “hands-on”. It is appropriate for a teaching member of the Institute to manually and physically position a student to explain a point of instruction or to demonstrate an individual flaw in their technique.

Touch, as a means of correction and direction, is a successful method of teaching in a number of practical based disciplines. It is used to produce a quicker result than another teaching method would.

Lecture staff (tutors) will treat any physical contact with due sensitivity in a professional and unambiguous manner.

The IAB recognises that such physical contact is a potentially complex area and fully acknowledges its responsibilities for safeguarding students and tutors and in protection of each individual’s welfare.

The Principles of Physical Contact

The IAB recognises and will use appropriate physical contact between students and lecturers in class, as this is essential to training and continued development of technique.

Tutors may use their hands, and occasionally a foot or knee, to illustrate a concept to a student or to adjust parts of a student's body.

Dance, acrobatic and singing posture often requires an adjustment the rib cage and/or the buttock area simultaneously.

In Ballet it is sometimes necessary to touch the inner thigh to demonstrate turn out.

In pas de deux classes, lecturers work directly with students to demonstrate how to safely lift and support a dancer.

In all programmes students should expect tutors to demonstrate positions and movements by moving parts of their own and/or the students' bodies, and/or by moving students in relation to each other.

The IAB's Obligations of Physical Contact

- Contact by the tutor is made with particular awareness of the needs of each individual to assist the student in correcting placement/position.
- Tutors will treat any physical contact with due sensitivity and care.
- Contact will be unambiguous and eye contact used to monitor how the student is responding to the contact.
- Contact will not involve force or the use of any instrument.
- Tutors will be mindful of location and avoid situations where they are isolated with a student.
- A student has the right to immediately stop a particular contact if it makes them feel uncomfortable in any way.
- Tutors and students should feel free to report any concerns to the Director of Administration.

When rehearsing Scenes of an Intimate Nature:

The Performer/s and Director, or Tutor, will:

- Discuss and agree to times when intimate content will be scheduled for rehearsal/ performance, allowing sufficient time for an unhurried process;
- Ensure there are always three people present (i.e. a Third Party additional to a Performer and a Director/ Tutor) to keep the work in the professional realm;
- Not require Performer/s to be in any state of undress for rehearsals, except in the case of technical and dress rehearsals for stage;
- Ensure a closed room/set will apply; outside observation by external parties will be prohibited.

When rehearsing or performing Intimate Scenes, consideration might also be given to ensuring:

- Performer/s are afforded adequate personal space backstage;
- Provision of a masked area for quick changes (stage) with the logistics of the change agreed with the Performer;
- Any state of undress is only from stage entrance to exit, at other times Performer/s are appropriately covered;
- Boundaries should be established around areas of concern, including an agreed strategy to halt the action where necessary (eg. 'time out');
- Performers agree to areas of physical touch and agree on the blocking of the scene to ensure consent is given at each step;
- A Performer does not independently override agreed choreography — a new proposal should be discussed with the other Performer/s and agreed upon before incorporation.

Ongoing Safety and Duty of Care

When creating performances that involve intimacy, states of undress, sexual or violent content, the IAB recognises its responsibility to duty of care for all participants in the process and will provide general support, information, and further resources on request.