



Royal Academy of Dramatic Art

Drugs and Alcohol Policy

Introduction

- 1 RADA has a commitment to enhancing the health and safety and well-being of both students and staff members and recognises the risks that may be caused by the misuse of alcohol, drugs and other substances.
- 2 This policy applies to all students, employees of RADA, as well as contractors and sub-contractors who undertake activities on behalf of RADA and any visitors to/customers on RADA's premises. This policy and its mandatory application will be communicated to all employees, contractors, sub-contractors, visitors/customers and interested parties.
- 3 Nothing in this policy is intended to be contractually binding upon RADA, and the provisions of the policy may be unilaterally varied by RADA following reasonable and appropriate consultation with the recognised trade union via the Staff Gateway, undertaken with a view to reaching agreement.
- 4 The taking of or dealing in 'recreational' or illegal drugs and substances is forbidden on RADA premises, as is being under the influence of non-prescribed drugs.
- 5 Consumption of alcohol or being under the influence of alcohol is forbidden during the teaching day, including when this extends into the evening. An exception may be made for staff attending RADA-related events, but in all cases staff are expected to behave responsibly and appropriately.
- 6 RADA in no way condones the misuse of drugs or alcohol. However, it will balance disciplinary action with appropriate support for students and staff who misuse drugs and alcohol. This will particularly apply to staff and students who have disclosed a dependency and who are seeking support for that dependency.
- 7 The policy aims to facilitate the early identification of such problems and to encourage students and staff to seek advice, help and assistance voluntarily before their studies are adversely affected or staff are unable to work. RADA will achieve these goals through educational, counselling and disciplinary approaches. Staff will provide guidance as to where professional assistance is available.

- 8 RADA recognises that alcohol and drugs will play a part in the lives of some people and will be sympathetic to problems arising from misuse of these substances whilst not condoning such misuse.

The Legal Context

- 9 The main legislation governing Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking includes:
- Health Act 2006
 - Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
 - Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006
 - Smoke-free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007
 - Smoke-free (Penalties and Discounted Amounts) Regulations 2007
 - Smoke-free (Vehicle Operators and Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007
 - Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2012
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- 10 The law regulating dangerous and otherwise harmful drugs is the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, which makes it clear that it is an offence for “the management of any premises to knowingly allow the possession, storage, sale, use or misuse of a controlled drug.”
- 11 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires RADA to do what is reasonable to protect the health, safety and welfare of staff, students and visitors. Drug and alcohol misuse can have an impact on the health and safety of an individual and also for others, for example students in shared accommodation or staff having to handle illegal substances and drug related items.
- 12 RADA has a responsibility to uphold the law. Students and staff who contravene the legislation outlined above, may be subject to disciplinary action by the institution and this may include reporting incidents to the Police.

Management

- 13 Where there is physical evidence of illegal substances having been used on RADA premises, RADA Senior Leadership will remove the evidence for safekeeping. RADA has a legal obligation to report all such cases to the Police and to hand over any evidence. If such evidence has been obtained following a student organised night, RADA may choose to suspend or cancel the event.
- 14 The Code of Conduct expects students to behave in a way which contributes positively to the atmosphere of the Academy, fosters good working relationships with other students and staff, and meets professional standards expected in the workplace. The misuse of alcohol and drugs directly contravenes the Code of Conduct.

- 15 A student or member of staff must not drink alcohol during working hours or present themselves for training or work having imbibed alcohol.
- 16 Likewise, a student or member of staff must not be under the influence of drugs or other stimulants during working hours. Students and Staff taking prescription drugs, where they may affect the use of machinery or working at height, must inform their supervisors and/or seek further information from a health professional.
- 17 The Code of Conduct applies whether a student is on RADA premises or elsewhere, such as a work placement or tour. If a student behaves in a way that contravenes the Code of Conduct, then this constitutes misconduct. It is RADA's policy to deal with minor offences of misconduct in an informal way, but it should be noted that a deliberate, repeated or serious case of misconduct may be dealt with under the terms of RADA's disciplinary policy, which in the most serious cases can lead to suspension or withdrawal from the course. RADA also has a Fitness to Train policy which can be used to address situations where students are in breach of the Code of Conduct but it is not necessarily appropriate to take disciplinary action. These two policies can be used in conjunction with one another.
- 18 RADA enables students to hold social events on the premises, (beyond the working day) However, excessive use of alcohol, the use of recreational drugs or abusive behaviour towards staff or other students still constitutes misconduct and will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action. No Alcohol can be brought into the academy and the RADA Bar can be pre-booked to serve alcohol for social events.
- 19 Being under the influence of alcohol or non-medicinal drugs during working hours at RADA constitutes a danger to yourself, to other students, staff and to the reputation of the Academy.
- 20 Employees must inform their line manager or HR department regarding any prescribed medication that may have an effect on their ability to carry out their work safely, and must follow any instructions subsequently given. The Organisation will undertake and regularly review risk assessments to identify and assess the risks associated with legal drug use. These assessments may include referral to Occupational Health.
- 21 Any employee suffering from drug or alcohol dependency should declare such dependency, and the Organisation will subsequently provide reasonable assistance, treating absences for treatment and/or rehabilitation as any other sickness absence. Failure to accept help or continue with treatment will render the employee liable to normal disciplinary procedures.

Help and Advice

- 22 RADA regards an individual's dependency on either drugs or alcohol as a health problem. If a student reports the matter to their Course Leader and agrees a programme of rehabilitation then RADA may allow reasonable absences for advice and/or treatment, providing the student keeps RADA informed of their progress and it is clear that they are attempting to resolve any difficulties they may have. Students must provide confirmation from RADA's counselling service, their GP or an external agency to confirm their attendance and progress. There will be no unnecessary disclosure of information and confidentiality will be respected.

- 23 For those wishing to discuss problems related to the use of drugs or alcohol and to seek further independent advice, they should speak to either the Head of Wellbeing. or alternatively, students can also be advised to seek medical help directly from their GP services, or if they prefer Gower Street Medical Practice or Ridgemont Medical Practice.
- 24 If a member of staff or student believes that someone has difficulty controlling their use of alcohol or drugs they should encourage them to seek support. If there is concern that a student or staff member is a danger to themselves or others it is recommended that a senior member of staff be informed, this could be a member of Senior Leadership team or HR.
- 25 Helpful contacts
- www.drinkaware.co.uk
 - Talk to Frank : <https://www.talktofrank.com/>
 - www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk has a meeting specifically for young people in London.

Staff Only

- Employee Assistance Programme
- 26 Staff will not provide direct advice on substance misuse but will provide guidance as to where professional assistance is available.

Education

- 27 RADA will endeavour to increase awareness and understanding of drug and alcohol related issues in a number of ways:
- providing publicity material to raise student awareness eg posters and leaflets
 - training relevant staff
 - inviting a Police Liaison Officer and/or a representative from appropriate drugs and alcohol support agencies point onto the premises to give talks as part of Welcome Week and student development events.

Conclusion

- 28 RADA has responsibilities to its students and staff and recognises the importance of providing a safe place to work and study
- 29 RADA will ensure that appropriate support and advice is available to students and staff but will also take disciplinary action, where illegal activities are taking place and particularly when they endanger the individual student or other members of the Academy

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May 2025: Updated to be RADA wide and not just student focused.