



Vice Principal (Academic)

Recruitment pack
January 2026

About us

For over 120 years, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art has been at the forefront of dramatic arts training, educating generations of actors, directors, writers, producers and technical artists who shape theatre, film and television worldwide. From its historic home in central London, RADA continues to evolve, innovate and inspire.

This is an exciting moment to join us.

As part of its next phase of development, RADA has created the new role of Vice Principal (Academic) to strengthen academic leadership, coherence and strategic capacity across the portfolio.

Our vision foregrounds sustainability, inclusion and wellbeing, while holding excellence and innovation at the heart of its academic mission. RADA plays an essential role in the UK's £124 billion creative industries, contributing culturally and economically at national and international levels.

World-leading academic provision

With just 170 students, RADA is one of the smallest providers of vocational degrees in acting and technical stagecraft in the UK and is officially recognised as a world-leading conservatoire. RADA is formally recognised by the Office for Students, and its training is Gold-rated in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Academic quality and student experience are further reflected in external benchmarks: in 2025, RADA was the top-ranked National Student Survey performer among comparable institutions, and *The Hollywood Reporter* again named RADA the top-ranked UK drama school and fifth internationally.

Academic portfolio

RADA offers eight higher education courses, all validated by King's College London. Undergraduate provision includes BA (Hons) Acting and a specialist technical theatre pathway comprising a Foundation Degree in Technical Theatre and Stage Management with a BA (Hons) top-up year. Postgraduate provision includes MA Theatre Lab and MAs in Theatre Costume, Performance Lighting Design, Stage Management and Playwriting.

Training balances the developmental needs of individual students with the creative, technical and interpretative demands of professional practice in the UK and internationally. Public productions, exhibitions and industry-facing showcases are integral to the curriculum, supporting students' artistic, intellectual and personal growth and enabling graduates to emerge as highly skilled, culturally aware leaders in their fields.

Postgraduate development

RADA's postgraduate portfolio is expanding in response to evolving artistic practice and sector demand. Four new MA programmes have been validated, with first intakes beginning in 2025, strengthening academic coherence and opportunities for advanced professional training and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Equity and inclusion

Equity is central to RADA's academic mission and informs how training is designed, delivered and experienced across the Academy. RADA allocates places solely on talent, regardless of background or financial circumstance, with around 45% of undergraduates receiving financial support. Its access and participation programme aims to remove barriers for underrepresented groups. RADA's academy-wide anti-racism action plan underpins inclusive teaching and learning environments.

Wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing are strategic priorities. RADA provides an extensive Student Wellbeing Service, including counselling and specialist support, recognising the intensity of conservatoire training.

An integrated academic and enterprise model

RADA operates through a joined-up academic, commercial and philanthropic model that supports educational excellence and access. Alongside undergraduate and postgraduate provision, the Academy delivers Short Courses and professional training, and works through RADA Business to extend its expertise into wider professional and organisational contexts. Philanthropy and strategic partnerships support a holistic, mission-led approach to academic planning, ensuring curriculum development, faculty support, student experience and access are considered together.

Job description

Job title:	Vice Principal (Academic)
Reports to (title):	Principal and CEO
Responsible for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course leaders: BA Acting, MA Theatre Lab, MA Playwriting, Director of Technical Theatre Arts undergraduate and postgraduate; relevant practice-development and collaboration roles • Registrar • Industry Liaison Manager
Salary:	£90,000 per annum
Contract:	Full time, permanent
Location:	RADA, London
Benefits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 days annual leave plus statutory rising a day a year to 35 days; • interest free season ticket loan; • defined contribution pension via auto enrolment with Legal and General; • excellent professional development opportunities
Prime function of role:	<p>The Vice Principal (Academic) is the lead academic within RADA, a core member of the Group Executive team and a visible, trusted leader with the intellectual and institutional stature to engage credibly with RADA's academic community, staff teams, industry, alumni and trustees. The post holder will inspire and unite the academic and professional community around a shared vision, while working in close partnership with corporate and commercial functions to deliver organisational priorities.</p> <p>They will lead the evolution and transformation of RADA into an agile, industry connected academy, helping to future proof the RADA training offer across higher education programmes, access and participation, Short Courses and RADA Business so that our world-leading training anticipates and meets the needs of a rapidly changing performance, screen and entertainment industry.</p>

<p>Prime function of role continued:</p>	<p>They will set creative and academic direction; hold delegated senior responsibility for academic standards, assurance and governance; and champion a more market aware approach that honours our commitment to student centred learning and the traditions of a creative academic community while enabling pace, flexibility and innovation.</p> <p>Combining authority and empathy, the Vice Principal (Academic) will align structures, people and culture to deliver coherent, inclusive, research informed pedagogy; rigorous quality and strong graduate outcomes; and a distinctive public and industry facing portfolio.</p> <p>They will embed equitable and agile practice across the organisation, cultivating collaborative partnerships, modern curricula and evidence-led improvement to position RADA as an innovator and sector leader, combining steady evolution with decisive transformation, and ensuring that respect for heritage is matched by commitment to the future.</p>
<p>Key responsibilities:</p>	<p>Strategic and academic leadership</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead the development and delivery of a coherent and future facing academic strategy that ensures RADA's training programmes anticipate industry trends and deliver outstanding graduate outcomes across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (including new programme development) in line with RADA's strategic plan. 2. Lead curriculum innovation and continuous improvement, embedding research-informed, inclusive pedagogy. 3. Promote interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches across all departments and programmes. 4. Ensure academic standards and governance excellence, maintaining compliance and readiness for external quality assurance working closely with RADA's Registrar. 5. Working with the Registrar lead the development of student services, in line with the goals for student inclusion and success. 6. Shape the creative direction of training, ensuring creative and artistic ambition, pedagogically purposeful, industry relevant and representative of diverse voices. 7. Align resources and structures to strategic priorities, enabling agility, innovation and operational efficiency. 8. Act as a senior ambassador for RADA, building external relationships and representing RADA's ambitious academic and creative vision.

<p>Key responsibilities continued:</p>	<p>People and development</p> <p>9. Drive faculty development and performance, fostering reflective practice, collaboration, and professional growth through setting a clear vision for professional development that supports and challenges academic staff to grow as educators, artists and leaders.</p> <p>Equity and inclusion</p> <p>10. Champion equity and inclusion, embedding culturally competent teaching and ensuring equitable student outcomes in line with RADA’s institutional commitments.</p> <p>Industry engagement and employability</p> <p>11. Strengthen industry partnerships and employability pathways, positioning RADA graduates for sustainable careers in performance and related sectors.</p> <p>12. Oversee impactful industry-facing events, including exhibitions and showcases that connect students with professional networks.</p> <p>Developing research practice</p> <p>13. Develop and embed a coherent research strategy, linking research activity to teaching and learning and enhancing RADA’s reputation.</p> <p>14. Ensure effective governance and resource management for research, supporting ethical, inclusive, and financially sustainable practice.</p>
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Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	Level 6 Higher Education (or above) or equivalent professional standing in a relevant discipline.	SFHEA or higher Postgraduate qualification in one of the academic fields covered by RADA training.
Knowledge	Higher Education teaching and learning, research and contemporary practice. HE sector frameworks and regulation.	Recognised expertise in contemporary performance practices, theatre training or a closely related artistic field.
Skills / abilities / competencies	<p>Able to set and steward clear academic and creative direction.</p> <p>Highly effective communicator, able to engage and influence a wide range of internal and external audiences.</p> <p>Able to lead through influence and collaboration, responding to changing educational and industry contexts.</p> <p>Experience shaping academic priorities in ways that support financial sustainability.</p> <p>Competent in budget planning and resource allocation.</p> <p>Demonstrated ability to draw on evidence, insight and analysis to inform improvement and innovation.</p> <p>Skilled in promoting excellence within teams, amplifying the best work of staff and faculty.</p> <p>Excellence in managing competing priorities and developing clear priorities for self, teams and individuals.</p>	

	Essential	Desirable
Experience	<p>Academic change leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experience of leading organisational transformation while maintaining stability and trust. • evidence of shaping creative outputs aligned with educational objectives and industry relevance • evidence of leading initiatives that improved faculty performance or engagement, supported by measurable outcomes (e.g., staff development participation, teaching quality indicators). • track record in developing research culture and outputs, with tangible results (e.g., publications, funded projects, integration with teaching). <p>Cultural competency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of embedding inclusive practices that improved equity in student experience and outcomes (e.g., attainment gap reduction, diversity in curriculum). <p>Influencing and advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experience of building partnerships that enhanced employability or created new professional pathways (e.g., internships, graduate employment data). • experience acting as a senior ambassador, influencing external stakeholders and securing partnerships or funding (e.g., speaking engagements, collaborations, funding). <p>Collaborative leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of fostering cross-functional collaboration and building high-performing teams. <p>Resilience and adaptability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • able to manage complexity and ambiguity with sound judgment and composure. 	

How to Apply	Equity, diversity and inclusion
<p>Please send your application to hrapplications@rada.ac.uk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your CV (no more than two pages) • A structured supporting statement (no more than three pages) outlining your motivation to join RADA as Vice Principal (Academic) and addressing the person specification. <p>For each, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a specific example of what you did, (b) the measurable impact or outcome, and (c) how this experience prepares you to deliver similar results at RADA. <p>Closing date: midday Wednesday 4 February 2026</p> <p>Interview dates: w/c 9 February and w/c 16 February</p>	<p>We are very interested in hearing from Black, Asian, and Global Majority candidates as well as candidates who identify as D/deaf or disabled, who are under-represented at this level at RADA.</p> <p>We are taking positive action by guaranteeing progress directly to the second interview stage of the process, to any applicant who self-identifies as being from a Black, Asian or Global Majority background, and/or who self-identifies as D/deaf or disabled, and has professional experience in a leadership role, either at a Conservatoire, in Higher Education or in industry.</p> <p>If you require any support to be able to take part in the interview process, please let us know when you apply, and we will ensure our interview process is accessible for you.</p>




RADA



Construction and Scenic Art project

Registered Charity No. 312819
Patron: His Majesty King Charles III
President: David Harewood OBE
Vice President: Cynthia Erivo MBE

Images by Linda Carter, Helen Murray

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