

# RADA Admissions Policy 2017-18

## Purpose

This policy sets out the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art's aims for the recruitment and admission of students on its **full-time higher education programmes**. It also describes the principles and processes by which RADA selects and admits students to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

## Responsibility

The Registry Manager (head of admissions) is responsible for the annual review and monitoring of this policy and that the principles are adhered to in implementing RADA's admissions procedures. This policy takes into account relevant legislation, such as the Data Protection Act 1998, Equality Act 2010, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Human Rights Act 1998 and Consumer Rights' Act 2015.

## Definitions

We use both 'prospective students' and 'applicants' in this document to refer to individuals who may or do apply to become students on RADA's programmes. You will also find that we use both 'programmes' and 'courses' within this document and other information to denote our higher education provision, such as the BA (Hons) Acting.

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## Recruitment and Admissions Aims

- 1 RADA offers world-leading vocational training for actors, stage managers, designers and technical theatre craft specialists. We enable learning that nurtures and extends the potential of our students, preparing them for tomorrow's industry. We want our graduates to be:
  - equipped with all the skills and techniques that will help them thrive in the theatre, film and recorded media industries
  - confident in exploring and using their creativity in their chosen field of work
  - adaptable and prepared to manage a portfolio career.
- 2 In admitting students to RADA we are looking for applicants with:
  - the talent, potential and the willingness to explore and realise the fullest extent of that potential;
  - intellectual and emotional capacity to meet the challenges of their programme and discipline;
  - the necessary fluency in the English language as described for each programme (see the admissions procedures at [www.rada.ac.uk/courses](http://www.rada.ac.uk/courses)).
- 3 To select appropriate prospective students, RADA will:
  - offer an appropriate admissions and interview procedure, fit for each programme;
  - audition or interview every candidate who applies (with the exception of the MA Theatre Lab, please see paragraph 20 below).
  - ensure that candidates understand the audition and interview process and what to expect.
  - make reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates attending for audition or interview and encourage them to disclose any impairments in advance so that adjustments can be offered.
- 4 We are committed to providing a transparent, fair, effective and professional service which meets the precepts of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education in relation to recruitment, selection and admissions.

## Responsibilities

- 5 A number of RADA departments work together in support of the recruitment process.
- 6 RADA's **Academic Board** approves the admissions policy and core principles associated with admission to the Academy.
- 7 **Student and Academic Services** is responsible for managing and administering RADA's admissions policy and procedures, for providing advice and support to academic staff and members of the audition/admissions panels, coordinating training and briefing about admissions and liaising with other departments within RADA to ensure that the information provided to prospective students is accurate.
- 8 The **Acting Auditions Panel** and **Technical Theatre Admissions Panel** are responsible, within each discipline, for the admissions and interview assessment

processes, how members of these Panels conduct themselves and for ensuring consistency, transparency and quality in their judgments about candidates. These panels take advice from staff within Student and Academic Services including on widening participation policy at RADA and ensuring that RADA's approach to equality and diversity is embedded within the admissions process. Each Panel has a chair who works closely with the Directors of Actor and Technical Training and relevant course directors or leaders. Please see paragraphs 13 to 16 for more information about the Audition/Admission Panels.

- 9 RADA higher education students are jointly registered with the **Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (CDD)** of which RADA is a founder member. Selection of potential students is undertaken by RADA on behalf of CDD. RADA also reports to **King's College London** as the validating university (RADA graduates receive King's degrees and diplomas).

### Information for prospective candidates

- 10 RADA is committed to providing accurate information for prospective students about its courses, which gives them a realistic perspective about the nature and demands of conservatoire-level training. We publish course information in our prospectus (available online and in print format) and admissions and entry information on the RADA website by course ([www.rada.ac.uk](http://www.rada.ac.uk)). We advise prospective students always to check the website for the most up-to-date information, including details about audition dates and venues. The **Marketing Department** at RADA is happy to receive feedback about published information. As a small institution, should a prospective student with a particular impairment request information in a different format, we will always do our best to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate them, for example by having someone speak in person or by telephone to a prospective student who is visually-impaired and cannot use the prospectus or website information.

### Entry requirements

- 11 RADA welcomes applications from prospective students who can demonstrate that they will benefit from their chosen course, and from the professional preparation that RADA provides its students. General entry requirements are set out in RADA's Academic Regulations, and are as follows:
- i. satisfy the entrance requirements of the Academy for the level and programme of study in Academic Regulations 2.2 to 2.8;
  - ii. have demonstrated to the Academy's satisfaction, taking into account individual circumstances, the intellectual maturity necessary to gain full advantage from the educational experience offered by the programme of study;
  - iii. have satisfied the Academy about any arrangements which are considered necessary if the student is under 18 years of age;
  - iv. satisfy the additional academic and non-academic criteria for the relevant programme;
  - v. have an appropriate visa, where applicable;
  - vi. comply with the registration procedure laid down by the Academy.

- 12 RADA also requires prospective students to show that their English language is at a level which allows them to complete their course successfully as outlined in each programme entry requirements. These can be found in the 'courses' pages of the RADA website: <https://www.rada.ac.uk/courses>.

### **Audition and Interview**

- 13 Admission to RADA is by audition (for acting programmes) or interview for technical theatre arts programmes. For our BA (Hons) in Acting, FdA/BA (Hons) Technical Theatre and Stage Management and PgD Theatre Costume, and Foundation Course in Acting all prospective students will be auditioned or interviewed.
- 14 For the MA Theatre Lab, Auditions Panel members will review each application to determine whether the prospective student has sufficient prior professional/practical experience to be a suitable candidate for the programme. All students meeting that requirement will then be offered an audition. The MA Theatre Lab admissions process also requires the completion of a written assignment to ensure you meet entry requirements at this level. This assignment is completed on the day of the audition over an allotted 30 minutes. The title will be given at that time. (Note: additional time is allocated to students who have disclosed a specific learning difficulty).

### **Audition and Admissions Panels**

- 15 The admissions process for RADA's acting and performance programmes is conducted by members of the **Acting Auditions Panel**. The terms of reference for this panel are as follows:
- i. The Chair of the Panel is appointed by the Director of RADA having taken advice from the Director of Actor Training, members of the RADA Council (governing body) and acting faculty members of Academic Board.
  - ii. The remaining members of the Panel are appointed by the Director, the Chair of the Auditions Panel and the Director of Actor Training.
  - iii. Panel members will be individuals with direct experience of RADA training, or identified as members of the profession with significant experience in one or more relevant areas including, but not limited to, acting, actor training, producing, casting or directing. Members of RADA's faculty will be included within the panel and the Director and Director of Actor Training are automatically members of the Panel.
  - iv. Panel Members may be invited to join to audition specific programmes such as the BA Acting, the Foundation Course in Acting and the MA Theatre Lab, or be appointed to participate in audition panels for all of these programmes.
  - v. Panel members will be invited to join RADA's Auditions Panel for a period of five years. They may be reappointed at the end of this term and RADA may choose to extend the period of appointment by up to a further two years, especially if this assists in managing the rotation of Panel members. Extension or reappointment is at the discretion of the Director, Chair of the Auditions Panel and Director of Actor Training.
  - vi. Panel members will be required to participate in relevant training and briefing sessions, including the use of the auditions mark scheme. New Panel members

who have not attended a recent training session will not be able to participate in audition panels.

- vii. Panel members new to RADA in their first period of service will be limited to participating in recall (second stage) auditions and must be accompanied by one of the Director, Director of Actor Training, Chair of the Auditions Panel or another experienced member appointed at the discretion of the Director.
  - viii. Panel members will be required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest in discharging their responsibilities or in relation to any particular applicants and remove themselves from that process where necessary.
- 16 Technical theatre admissions are conducted by the Technical Theatre Admissions Panel whose terms of reference are:
- i. The Chair of the Panel is the Director of Technical Training.
  - ii. All members of the technical theatre faculty are automatically members of the Technical Theatre Admissions Panel.
  - iii. Additional external members of the Panel may be drawn from relevant members of the profession with experience in one or more technical theatre disciplines and/or of technical theatre training. Such appointments are nominated by the Director of Technical Theatre and should be approved by him and the Director of RADA. These Panel members are able to serve for a period of five years in the first instance.
  - iv. All interviews should be chaired by either the Director of Technical Training or the Production Manager and include one other member of faculty and another member of the Technical Theatre Admissions Panel.
  - v. Panel members should be appropriately briefed and trained in the use of the marking scheme and will not be permitted to participate in a Panel without appropriate briefing and training.
  - vi. For the PgD Theatre Costume, the Panel will include the Head or Deputy Head of Theatre Costume.
  - vii. Panel members will be required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest in discharging their responsibilities or in relation to any particular applicants and remove themselves from that process where necessary.
  - viii. RADA includes third year BA Technical and Stage Management students on its admission panels for the FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management. Students will be able to participate in the process of interview and post-interview discussion. They will not be required to mark candidates, and will not determine the outcome of the interview and whether or not a candidate should be offered a place.

### **Application process**

- 17 The detailed processes for application for each programme are outlined on the RADA website at [www.rada.ac.uk/courses](http://www.rada.ac.uk/courses). Paragraphs 18 – 22 summarise the application

process for each programme.

- 18 **BA Acting applicants** go through a four-stage audition process, with the length and complexity of the audition process increasing at each stage. Preliminary and recall auditions include the delivery of short audition speeches. From the second, recall, round onwards the candidate will also have a short interview. The third stage is a three-hour session with workshops and at the fourth stage, there is an all-day process. Candidates are informed at each stage whether they will proceed to the next audition. Auditions are conducted by members of RADA's Auditions Panel which includes members of the acting faculty. The final decision is made by the Director, Chair of the Auditions Panel and Director of Actor Training. There are 14 places for male students and 14 places for female students on this programme annually.
- 19 **Technical Theatre applicants** attend an interview, which will include three panel members including two drawn from the technical theatre faculty. For the FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management, this will be supplemented by one BA Technical Theatre and Stage Management student (who does not assess interviews or determine the outcome of any interview). For the BA Technical Theatre and Stage Management, the interview will include a panellist not drawn from the faculty, who is usually an industry member. Prospective students may be asked to return for a second interview, usually in exceptional circumstances and in these circumstances, a different panel will be convened to interview the applicant. Prospective students may be asked to bring a portfolio of prior work and experience. RADA requires that PgD Theatre Costume applicants bring a portfolio to their interview.
- 20 **MA Theatre Lab.** This is the only course where not all applicants are auditioned. This is because the course is designed for students with more substantive prior experience as well as meeting the entry requirements for postgraduate study. Applications will be reviewed by members of the Audition Panel to determine whether the prospective student has communicated sufficient prior acting experience in a professional or amateur capacity and those candidates will be invited to audition. In cases where the application information is insufficient to determine prior experience, the Panel will favour auditioning an applicant. The audition takes a workshop approach and is conducted by the Head of MA Courses with designated staff from the Acting Auditions Panel. The MA Theatre Lab process also includes an unseen and timed 30-minute written assignment (additional time is allocated to students who have disclosed a specific learning difficulty). Prospective students are interviewed separately from the audition process, following the workshop.
- 21 **MA Text & Performance:** entry requirements are set in conjunction with Birkbeck, University of London.
- 22 **Foundation Course in Acting:** this is not an HE course. The audition process follows the same principles as for the BA (Hons) Acting, but with a two-stage process. Prospective students may indicate that they wish to apply for the Foundation Course alone or at the same time as the BA (Hons) Acting. Prospective students for both courses are seen at the first round and then those for whom the Foundation Course is a better option in the view of the panel will be directed towards a second recall workshop day. Students may also be directed to the Foundation Course in Acting after

the second round, recall stage of auditions for the BA Acting.

- 23 All prospective students are asked to provide a personal statement on the application form, which will be considered as part of the process.
- 24 Applications open in October for all courses. Closing dates for applications are listed on the RADA website. Prospective students should note that there may be alternative closing dates should they wish to audition or interview outside London. This information is held on the website on each course page.
- 25 Applications are submitted direct to RADA using the appropriate application form. These may be downloaded from RADA's website and may be submitted electronically or in hard copy by 23.59 on the deadline day. Applications received after the deadline will not normally be considered. RADA does not use the UCAS service for any admissions. Applicants may apply to other programmes and universities on the UCAS system as well as applying to RADA.
- 26 Applications will usually be processed quickly, especially for the BA (Hons) Acting, as there is a high volume and students must be allocated to auditions. At every stage of the process, prospective students will hear from the Admissions and Registry team about the status of their application. Owing to volume, we do not automatically confirm that applications have been received, but will respond to electronic requests for an acknowledgement and applicants will hear quickly about an audition date.
- 27 The other information we will send to prospective students is:
  - details about their audition or interview date and we aim to accommodate people based on their location (for example not scheduling someone from Aberdeen for an audition in London at 9.00 am).
  - Confirmation that a decision has been made and whether an applicant will progress through the process.
  - An offer letter or confirmation that the applicant has been unsuccessful and any conditions of offer.
  - Confirmation where an applicant may be placed on a waiting list and updates on the status of their position.
  - Once a place has been accepted, prospective students will receive information throughout the summer prior to entry in preparation for coming to RADA including their first 'Call to the Academy'.
- 28 Once an applicant has accepted an audition/interview date RADA will not usually agree to change that date, unless there are exceptional circumstances (for example a family bereavement).
- 29 Should a prospective student miss an audition or interview owing to unavoidable circumstances (such as significant and verifiable transport delays or ill health), we will endeavour to rearrange the audition/interview. This will depend upon the stage in the process. We encourage all prospective students to let us know in advance if for any reason they are not able to attend their audition or interview. We will not normally accept transport problems or illness as a basis for appealing a decision if you have not

notified us in advance of the audition/interview taking place.

- 30 Should RADA be required to cancel an audition or interview (for example owing to travel delays or illness), we will offer applicants a fresh date. If the replacement audition/interview is arranged in a different UK city to the original audition/interview, RADA will be sympathetic to requests for assistance with travel expenses, especially for lower-income applicants.

### **Disabled students**

- 31 RADA welcomes disabled students into its courses. Prospective students with a disability (for example dyslexia, a physical or sensory disability or mental health condition) are encouraged to disclose information which will help us in making reasonable adjustments ahead of any interview or audition. There is space on the application form to disclose any relevant information which will help RADA to make adjustments.

### **Application fees and fee waivers**

- 32 RADA charges an application fee for all courses. The admissions process is not automated, and may involve considerable individual contact with an individual applicant, especially where there are multiple processes or day-long auditions. Application fees are not refundable.
- 33 RADA offers a number of application fee waivers for UK applicants for the BA (Hons) Acting Course and Technical Theatre Courses. Application fee waivers are on a first come-first served basis for applicants who meet RADA's Widening Participation criteria stated on the Application fee waiver form. We will provide travel bursaries for low-income UK applicants reaching the final stages of the BA Acting Application Process and the interview stage of the Technical Theatre Courses.
- 34 In addition to the above, RADA offers Application fee waivers to applicants who have completed the RADA Foundation Course, RADA Youth Company and young people from a number of partner organisations. We offer an application fee waiver to all care leavers.

### **Offers**

- 35 Successful candidates will receive an offer usually by telephone, backed up by a formal letter. The offer will state the conditions on which it is made. In normal circumstances the only qualification upon which an offer will be conditional is an English language test result for international students. It is possible that RADA might make a conditional offer to prospective students joining the BA Technical Theatre and Stage Management completion programme. When an offer is made, the prospective student will receive a copy of RADA's Terms and Conditions for accepting a place at RADA. RADA's Terms and Conditions for 2018-19 will be published shortly on the website.



## Feedback

- 36 Owing to the volume of applicants (for the BA Acting, the current application:place rate is 121:1) and the nature of the process, RADA does not automatically provide feedback to all applicants. We strive to provide feedback to those not offered a place at the final round of an audition process for the BA Acting. For other courses it will be at the discretion of the course leader/director. Generally feedback will not be automatically supplied.

## Deferred applications

- 37 RADA does not usually permit prospective students to defer a place once an offer has been made. That said, RADA will consider requests for deferral on a case by case basis, but applicants should be aware that deferral will only usually be granted in exceptional circumstances.

## Appeals and complaints

- 38 If an applicant feels that they have grounds for an appeal or complaint on an application decision, RADA has a process in place to consider this. The process available to download from the RADA website ([www.rada.ac.uk/courses](http://www.rada.ac.uk/courses)).

## Criminal convictions

- 39 RADA will ask students at the point of offer if they have any relevant criminal convictions. Having a criminal record is not a bar to applicants training at RADA. It will depend upon the circumstances and background of the offence. RADA's BA (Hons) Acting and FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management courses require that students perform or work within a secondary school context, so we need to ensure that there is no reason why a school would not permit RADA students, although accompanied by staff, to be present in the school. RADA will not take into account, when dealing with existing students and selecting applicants for admission, criminal convictions which are deemed spent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 unless such convictions are deemed as 'exceptions' under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. We will process any information in line with the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama's policy on disclosure of criminal convictions, which will be published on the website during the 2017-18 academic year and before offers are made.

## Fraud and omitted details

- 40 RADA reserves the right to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an application which is found to have contained fraudulent information. RADA may also withdraw the offer of a place if an applicant has been found to have omitted key information from their application. Any enrolled student who is subsequently found to have been admitted on the basis of fraudulent information may have their studies terminated.

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