

Royal Academy of Dramatic Art Academic Regulations 2019-20

Appendix 6: Early Release Policy and Procedures

What is early release?

In some cases a student may receive an offer of employment when they are nearing the end of their course but before they have completed all the assessments required to receive an award. While a student is free to leave RADA at any point without receiving an award, in many cases the student may wish to take up the offer of employment while still receiving a degree. RADA recognises that an offer of employment within a competitive industry is an important step for its students' career development, but must balance this against the formal assessment requirements set out in its Academic Regulations. In these cases the early release policy will be applied.

Early release allows for the suspension of RADA's Academic Regulations relating to assessment in the situation described above. The policy is designed to allow students to miss their final assessment at RADA while still completing the required number of assessment to receive an award. In this case, instead of being assessed in the usual manner at RADA, the student will be assessed in their employment. The result of this assessment will be substituted for the result that the student would have received had they remained at RADA. This will enable RADA to determine whether the work the student is undertaking is of a suitable level to allow the student to complete their course.

Early release in this context is defined such that a student being given this opportunity will have fewer than the normal five or six assessment points (depending on course).

What happens when a student requests early release?

- 1 The initial request must be made to the Course Director/Leader, who, in consultation with the Director, will consider each case on its own merits. The request must be supported by written confirmation from the employer giving details of the employment and an explanation of why the role is the continuation of the student's education. It must contain an offer of paid employment, not merely the promise of such employment. A decision will be made based on two criteria:
 - a. Whether the job is at an appropriate level for a graduating student.
 - b. Whether the student has achieved a sufficient standard in their studies to enter employment within the industry.
- 2 Requests should be made as soon as the student is aware that an offer of employment may be made. A request is unlikely to be granted if a student has already been assigned a role on a show at RADA.
- 3 If the Course Director rejects the application for early release the student may appeal the decision by writing to the Director who will consider the case based on information from the student, staff and the potential employer. The Director's decision in the matter is final.
- 4 If early release is agreed then RADA will contact the employer in writing to confirm arrangements to allow the student to be assessed and complete their degree.
- 5 There are three criteria that must be met to enable the student complete their assessment:
 - a. The employer must allow RADA tutors access at a mutually convenient time to observe the student in the work place.

- b. The employer must confirm that the student is meeting the demands of the employment by completing a RADA assessment form providing structured written feedback (but not numerical marks) by an agreed date to meet RADA's assessment processes.
 - c. RADA tutor(s) will complete the same form providing written feedback and numerical marks.
- 6 The student will be assessed on the basis of these reports at the appropriate assessment point in the RADA term. The result will be subject to moderation by the Course Director (or other member of staff/ Director where the Course Director has completed the assessment of the student), and will be presented for consideration at the appropriate King's assessment board.
 - 7 These terms are a condition of RADA's Academic Regulations for the award of degrees to ensure that quality standards are met and are not negotiable under any circumstances. If the employer does not agree to these terms then it will not be possible to agree to early release.
 - 8 The student must not sign any contract of employment until the employer has confirmed that they agree to RADA's terms, and RADA has written to the student confirming that they have agreed to early release. If the student signs a contract and the employer subsequently refuses to agree with RADA's conditions for early release then the student will not be eligible for their degree and RADA will not be held liable.

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