

RADA

RADA Admissions Policy 2021-22 entry

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 Deputy Registrar (Admissions and Student Services) 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 2018, 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 Entry Requirements at 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. The **Access and Participation** department are responsible for advising on matters concerning equality, diversity and inclusion in the conduct of RADA's admissions process.
- 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. 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 15 and 16

for more information about the Audition/Admission Panels.

- 9 RADA reports to King's College London as its validating university.

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, admissions and entry information on the RADA website by course (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 **Communications & 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. be 18 years of age on 31 August in the year that they start their programme of study;
 - 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 on the relevant course pages of the RADA website: 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 or Chairs of the Panel are 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 members of the Panel are appointed by the Director, the Chair(s) 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(s) 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 and Equality training. 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(s) of the Auditions Panel or another experienced member appointed at the discretion of the Chair of the Auditions Panel.
 - 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 and the Director of RADA are automatically members of the Technical Theatre Admissions Panel.
 - iii. Additional external members of the Panel are 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 them 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 will be required to participate in relevant training and briefing sessions, including the use of the marking scheme and equality training. New panel members who have not attended a recent training session will not be able to participate in interview panels.
- 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.

Application process

- 17 The detailed processes for application for each programme are outlined on the RADA website at 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 and an unaccompanied song. 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 Chair of the Auditions Panel and Director of Actor Training. There are usually 14 places for male students and 14 places for female students on this programme annually. Please note, we specify the gender of students to indicate that RADA seeks to balance its cohort, and to communicate that we do not favour one gender over another in numbers. We recognise that students on application and attendance may prefer not to be identified in binary terms.

*Changes due to Covid-19

We take the government's guidance on social distancing very seriously and our priority is the health and wellbeing of RADA staff and applicants. While our intention is that the final full day workshop stage will take place in-person at RADA, we recognise that this may not be possible and, if not, an alternative workshop day will take place via Zoom or other suitable platform.

- 19 **Technical Theatre applicants** attend an interview, which will include three panel members including two drawn from the technical theatre faculty. For the BA Technical Theatre and Stage Management, the interview will include a panellist not drawn from the faculty, who may be 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 FdA TTSM students will be required to complete an application form for consideration for the BA TTSM and will be required to attend an interview. 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.

***Changes due to Covid-19**

We take the government's guidance on social distancing very seriously and our priority is the health and wellbeing of RADA staff and applicants. While our intention is that the audition workshop will take place in-person at RADA, we recognise that this may not be possible and, if not, an alternative admissions process will be implemented (see the detailed process document for this programme for more information) .

- 21 **MA Text & Performance:** entry requirements are set in conjunction with Birkbeck, University of London.
- 22 All prospective students are asked to provide a personal statement on the application form, which will be considered as part of the process.
- 23 Applications open in October for all undergraduate courses and the PgDip in Theatre Costume. Closing dates for applications are listed on the RADA website. This information is held on the website on each course page.
- 24 Applications are submitted direct to RADA using the appropriate application form. 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.
- 25 At every stage of the process, prospective students will hear from the Admissions team about the status of their application. Owing to volume, we are unable to confirm receipt of an application until the form and payment has been processed.
- 26 The other information we will send to prospective students is:
 - Details about how to submit their video audition or a notification of their audition workshop/interview date
 - 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'.
- 27 Once an applicant has accepted an audition workshop/interview date RADA will not usually agree to change that date, unless there are exceptional circumstances and only once.
- 28 Should a prospective student miss an audition workshop or interview owing to unavoidable circumstances, we will endeavour to rearrange the workshop/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 workshop/interview taking place.

- 21 Should RADA be required to cancel an audition workshop or interview (for example owing to weather conditions, travel disruptions, illness, we will offer applicants a fresh date. We will normally only offer one opportunity to change an audition/interview date.

Disabled students

- 22 RADA welcomes disabled students into its courses. Prospective students with a disability or impairment (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

- 23 RADA charges an application fee for the BA Acting and MA Theatre Lab 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.
- 24 RADA also may choose to offer free applications for undergraduate programmes to candidates who meet certain requirements. These requirements will be published with application information on the RADA website. They include candidates who have completed the RADA Foundation Course in Acting, Youth Company or other partnerships. We will provide travel bursaries for low-income UK applicants reaching the final stage of the BA Acting application process.

Offers

- 25 Successful candidates will receive an offer usually by email from the Deputy Registrar (Admissions and Student Services). 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 (e.g. successful completion of a previous course of study). 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 can be found at https://www.rada.ac.uk/documents/404/RADA_Terms_and_conditions_2021-22.pdf.

Feedback

- 26 Owing to the volume of applicants (for the BA Acting, the usual 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 supplied.

Deferred applications

- 27 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

- 28 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 is available to download from the RADA website:
https://www.rada.ac.uk/documents/396/RADA_Admissions_Appeals_and_Complaints_2021-22.pdf.

Criminal convictions

- 29 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. For 2021-22 entry, RADA will process any information in line with its Disclosure of Criminal Convictions Policy for Applicants and Students (Appendix 14 to the Regulations and Policies).

Fraud and omitted details

- 30 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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