

# RADA

Royal Academy of Dramatic Art



Candidate brief for the position of

## RADA Principal

August 2021

# Contents

Introduction	1
Purpose, values and strategic commitment	2
The Role	6
The Person	7
How to Apply	8



# Introduction

For over a century RADA has been offering dramatic arts training in acting and theatre production. When it was established, it was as an academy founded by the industry for the industry, and ever since then, our mission and identity have been determined by our strong links with the performing arts industries as they change, develop and innovate. We have trained many of the world's most celebrated actors, directors, stage managers, designers and technical stagecraft specialists and we are proud to have built a reputation as a world-leading centre of excellence.

RADA is now seeking a Principal to lead the Academy forward in a world where the performing arts are underfunded yet needed more than ever and where society and culture are the site both of radical change and of dissent and division. We are looking for someone who will renew RADA, building on our celebrated past and leading us into new relationships with the creative industries and with society. Creativity is what defines and drives all our teachers and all our students, and our new Principal will harness, energise and celebrate that creativity, whilst also bringing their own creative vision of what an Academy can and should be in the 21st century.

The exceptional standard of our training is globally recognised; we have long been at the forefront of developments in actor and technical training across theatre, film, TV and radio and we continue to innovate and adapt; we are committed to creating an academy which is authentically diverse, truly inclusive and creatively challenging; we believe that our students should become engaged citizens as well as remarkable creatives.

However, we know that we need to renew ourselves – and we know also that such a renewal needs to be led by someone exceptional with vision and with the passion and energy to implement that vision.

**“RADA and its MA Theatre Lab have given me far more than I expected and have opened a new chapter of my life. I am very proud to say that I am a part of RADA”**

**Dash You, MA Theatre Lab 2018**



# Purpose, values and strategic commitment

**“RADA is a community that undoubtedly encourages its students, from all walks of life, to believe that they can be whatever they want to be. Whether it be an actor, stage manager, designer or director, the sky is our limit”**

**Bethany Lockett, FdA in Technical Theatre & Stage Management 2019**

## Purpose and mission

RADA believes in the power of the dramatic arts to inspire transformation and growth in individuals and in our society. RADA delivers world-leading training in the dramatic arts by cultivating exceptional talent in a community dedicated to curiosity, rigour, creativity and craft.

## Values

We are inclusive, rigorous, committed to our craft, collaborative and transformative.

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity

We value equity, inclusion, and dignity for all. We recognise that our differences make us stronger and contribute to our excellence. We respect and seek out inclusion of differences, realising we can learn from each other. We believe we must take action when we observe or learn of practices that undermine these values. RADA is committed to embedding anti-racism in the Academy, through our curriculum, pedagogy, policy and practice. To support this critical work we are shortly appointing a Director of Equity to the Senior Leadership Team.



## Strategic Commitment

Our strategy is to deliver the highest standard of training, evolving as the training and industry landscape shifts to new distribution models and technologies and capitalising on RADA's proven expertise.

Our 2019-24 strategic commitments and objectives (as set in late 2019 but currently under review in the light of the pandemic) are set out below.

### Training

We provide transformational training for exceptional talent, aiming to exceed the expectations of our students and the performing arts industry. We are committed to supporting, developing and attracting outstanding teachers and ensuring our programmes and curricula continue to excel in shaping the disciplines of actor and technical production training.

### Students and graduates

We focus on delivering an exceptional student experience that creates resilient professionals. We aim to attract the most talented, diverse students and support them while at RADA, ensuring they have a strong voice in the RADA community and a lifelong engagement with RADA and its values.

### People

We want to provide conditions for everyone to achieve their full potential. We are committed to modernising the way the Academy is run to support and enable our staff and students to do their best work.

### Operations and estate

We must have the right facilities, equipment, systems and operational processes to sustain learning, teaching, performance and decision-making – all fully fit for purpose in the 2020s and beyond.

**“My three years at RADA undoubtedly set an invaluable foundation for my last few years as an actor, and I am excited for whoever chooses RADA as the drama school for them”**

**Patsy Ferran, BA (Hons) in Acting, 2014**

### Sustainability

We are working towards enduring financial viability – a challenge for any higher education provider (HEP) in our sector, but particularly for RADA where the costs of providing our bespoke training inevitably exceed, by some way, the direct income received from student fees and government support.

We are committed to growing fundraising revenue, increasing the contributions from our income generating streams, in particular RADA Business, and promoting, protecting and nurturing RADA's brand and reputation.

We have just launched Stage Critical, our £3.2 million fundraising campaign to help RADA recover, rebuild and support our students.

### Leadership

RADA's current senior leadership team is managing the day to day running of the Academy until the conclusion of the search process for a new Principal. Further decisions on management and leadership structures will take place after the appointment of and with the full involvement of the new Principal.

## Context

In recent years RADA has improved its financial stability significantly, become an Higher Education Provider (HEP) in its own right (with high ratings from both regulators and students), completed detailed reviews of its acting and technical training courses and launched a capital project to enhance RADA's estate (currently on hold due to Covid-19).

In line with all HEPs, RADA has faced considerable challenges during the last year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. There has been an impact on student numbers due to social distancing requirements, with a reduced intake in autumn 2020. This reflected the pressures on space and the teaching resources needed to support the new ways training is being delivered, to accommodate social distancing and online tuition, where practicable. Inevitably, RADA's finances have been stretched considerably, with a significant reduction in commercial income from RADA Business, particularly at the start of lockdown, and the absence of fundraising events which usually generate an important income stream for the Academy. As we progress out of lockdown we have a new team leading RADA Business which is making significant progress in restoring

revenue and profit, the launch of a new fundraising initiative Stage Critical, and look forward to taking a full cohort of students for the new academic year.

RADA is now embarked on the next exciting phase in its journey; embracing the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead with the passion, professionalism and creativity that has made RADA the world-renowned institution it is today.

## Finance

RADA relies on fees from students and grants from the Office for Students (OfS) to deliver its world-leading under-graduate and post-graduate courses. However, the intensive nature of the work means that the full costs of the core courses have to be subsidised by other sources of income. The major sources of this additional funding are the profits earned through RADA Business, the wholly owned trading arm of RADA, as well as through RADA's Short Courses and fundraising. Together these activities account for over a third of RADA's total income.



## Structure

RADA is established by Royal Charter and is a registered charity. The primary responsibility for RADA is vested in the Council (the governing body) – the members of which are trustees – with management of RADA being delegated to the Principal, and through the Principal to the Senior Leadership Team. In addition, RADA Business is led by a board of director comprising non-executive and executive directors. Council's current membership of 27 is made up principally of independent members and includes three members of RADA staff and two student governors.

Marcus Ryder was appointed Chair of RADA's Council in June 2021.

The Council is supported by the following committees chaired by independent Council members, with relevant senior RADA staff attending as appropriate:

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Finance and General Purposes Committee (which also oversees remuneration)
- Nominations Committee
- Training Committee

- Development Board

Currently, the Senior Leadership Team consists of the following roles:

- Director of Actor Training
- Director of Technical Training
- Director of Finance and Operations
- Director of Communications & Marketing
- Director of Development & Public Affairs
- Director of Access & Participation
- Director of Equity
- Registrar & Secretary

The board of RADA Business reports directly to Council.

RADA Council has reviewed the leadership structure and proposed that the Principal will lead a three person Executive Team consisting of a Managing Director and Director of Training. However, this proposed structure will not be instigated until it has been considered and agreed by the new Principal.



# The Role

The Principal is the senior executive leader of RADA providing artistic, and creative direction, and is responsible to the Chair of Council and Council for the quality and management of all the varied aspects of RADA's work as an HEP.

The Principal will also be the Accountable Officer for RADA as required by the Office for Students (OfS).

It is intended that the Principal should work collaboratively and coherently with the proposed smaller Executive Team (Director of Training & Managing Director) as well as the wider leadership team and staff to ensure the continued development and progress of the Academy in all areas.

In more detail, the Principal will:

- Have experience in the fields of directing, producing, acting, theatre production or dramatic arts education.
- Be a visible leader of the Academy, a respected ambassador externally and an active and engaged leader internally.
- Review, renew and promote RADA's position, ensuring continued relevance, and impact.
- Be a strategic thinker able to develop and drive a renewed vision for RADA.
- Play an active part in leading the anti-racist agenda at RADA, including decolonisation of the curriculum.
- Work with the Director of Training, acting and technical leads to ensure the vision and strategy for training are clearly defined and implemented to deliver the best outcomes for all students.
- Establish a collaborative and supportive working relationship with the Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team and staff.

**“I can’t even imagine having had a career without RADA. It is inseparable from who I am as an actress”**

**Juliet Stevenson CBE,  
RADA Acting graduate, 1977**

- Work with the Executive Team to ensure the development and progression of the entire RADA staff body.
- Work with the Managing Director, Finance Director and liaise with the RADA Business board to ensure the ongoing financial health of the Academy.
- Work with the Executive Team to ensure the professional and collegiate development of the entire RADA staff body.
- Work closely with the Chair of Council and other Council members to ensure transparency and effective communication and reporting.
- Ensure the Academy complies with all rules and regulatory requirements and is administered in line with the highest standards.
- Lead the process of recruitment of new members of the Executive Team and other key staff hires.

This is a new post within a proposed new structure so there will be leeway to develop and mould some detailed aspects of the role for the successful candidate. This would be done in collaboration with the Chair of Council.



# The Person

The ideal candidate for the position will have expertise in a number of the following areas:

- Knowledge of and passion for the performing arts and creative industries, especially in theatre, screen and radio, and a commitment to the nurturing of talent.
- A proven track record of leadership and organisational change.
- An understanding of management structures and experience in leading change, building empowered teams.
- An understanding of the international market for the dramatic arts.
- A demonstrable commitment to education, including an understanding of the Higher Education environment.
- An empathetic and empowering leadership style.
- An individual who puts the organisation above themselves and inspires confidence and trust in those around them.
- Commercial awareness and experience to identify and capitalise on the commercial opportunities within RADA.



# How to Apply

## Terms and Conditions

This is a full-time permanent appointment. In order to apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a covering letter which sets out your interest in the role and describes the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria.

The preferred method of application is online at: [www.odgers.com/83120](http://www.odgers.com/83120)

If you are unable to apply online, please email: [83120@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:83120@odgersberndtson.com)

All applications will receive an automated response.

Closing day for applications is 1st October 2021.

Interviews are expected to take place in **October / November 2021**.

RADA is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. Through this appointment process it is RADA's aim to develop candidate pools that include applicants from all backgrounds and communities. RADA welcomes applications for all posts from people who identify as black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, people who are members of the LGBTQ+ community and those that identify as disabled.

All candidates are requested to complete an online Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process. This will assist RADA in monitoring selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Any information collated from the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms will not be used as part of the selection process and will be treated as strictly confidential.

## Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and / or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

## Contact details

For a conversation in confidence, please contact:

**Samantha Colt on 020 7529 6357**

**[Samantha.colt@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:Samantha.colt@odgersberndtson.com)**

We are committed to ensuring everyone can access our website and application processes. This includes people with sight loss, hearing, mobility and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to these documents in alternative formats, please contact **[response.manager@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:response.manager@odgersberndtson.com)**

Also, if you have any comments and / or suggestions about improving access to our application processes please don't hesitate to contact us

**[response.manager@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:response.manager@odgersberndtson.com)**

Image credits:  
Linda Carter, Helen Murray

