

RADA

Royal Academy of Dramatic Art

Attendance Policy

PLEASE NOTE: this policy is currently under review and this version applies until that review is completed during 2022-2023.

Introduction

- 1 RADA treats good time-keeping as an essential part of the learning experience and part of your preparation for professional life in an industry where promptness is the difference between keeping and losing a job. The Academic Regulations and Student Code of Conduct make it clear that lateness is not acceptable and that continued unauthorised lateness or absence constitute misconduct (a disciplinary offence). We also have a statutory obligation to monitor the attendance of any students who are present at RADA on a Tier 4 visa.
- 2 This policy covers the following programmes:

BA (Hons) Acting
FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management
BA (Hons) Technical Theatre and Stage Management
PgD Theatre Costume
MA Theatre Lab
- 3 This policy outlines the different arrangements for students on different programmes and/or in different year groups. The principle of ensuring that students attend on time, seek permission for absence and do not attend if they are unwell remains. We have adjusted the policy to accommodate special provisions during the 2020-21 academic year because of Covid-19.

What is 'on time'

- 4 Your timetable or call sheet indicates when your class, rehearsal or work for the day is due to start. Our expectation is that your 'call time' is always at least ten minutes before the time at which you are due to start. At present, you need to be ready to work in the space (including a digital space) for the designated start time. 'Ready to work' means you are not just arriving, but warmed up, in the right clothes and with the right equipment to start.
- 5 You need to arrive in the building leaving enough time for your temperature to be checked, and re-checked if it is above normal (this is around 15 minutes). You will not be able to use changing facilities so you should travel as light as you can (for example, wear or carry overalls, or layer clothing over movement leggings). You will be able to

- use your locker but access will be restricted to manage physical distancing requirements so please limit equipment to store or access. We will make special arrangements for students who cannot carry things because of particular conditions.
- 6 When you arrive, your temperature will be checked at a kiosk in Reception of any of our buildings (Chenies Street, RADA Studios building and Gower Street). If your temperature is above normal, you will be asked to sit in Reception for 10 minutes before it is checked again. If your journey makes you hot (the train/bus is over-heated, or you're cycling), please make sure you arrive with time to cool down before you come into the building so you don't get held up by a temperature check. As noted below, if your temperature is still too high after the 10-minute cooling down period, you will be required to leave the building and go home.
 - 7 The timetables have given space for breaks to allow for the staggered flow of people through the building (or for digital breaks if you are not working in person). You should therefore be able to be on time for each class.

Recording attendance

- 8 When you are present at RADA, you will go straight to your class. If you are participating in digital teaching, you will join the session as instructed by your timetable/the tutor. Do not gather or congregate in Reception areas and you do not need to sign into the building.
- 9 It is your responsibility to notify attendance@rada.ac.uk or telephone 020 7636 7076 if you are going to be absent for the day because you are ill or there is an emergency which means you cannot attend. You should always have permission for pre-arranged absence. If you are ill, especially if you have symptoms with Covid-19 you must not come into the building. This includes if you are isolating but able to attend digitally. If you are supposed to attend digitally and do not, this will be treated as unauthorised absence.
- 10 There are specific rules about attendance if you are late, especially for BA Acting students. These are outlined below under the sections for each course. Please make sure you familiarise yourself with these, as practice might differ from previous years and will also take account of digital practice.

Illness

- 11 Your temperature will be taken at Reception, on arrival (as outlined in point 6). If you have a high temperature, meaning you are at risk, you will not be permitted to be present in the building and must go home. This will be treated as authorised absence for the class missed and journey time. If possible, you may be able to join the rest of the day's classes digitally.
- 12 You must inform us if you are not present so that we are aware for track and trace purposes should someone else in your group become ill. Consistent failure to inform us will be treated as a disciplinary offence as it puts other students and staff at risk. (We would consider three occasions where you do not inform us of your whereabouts

to be 'consistent').

- 13 You must inform us if you have symptoms of Covid-19, or if you have had a Covid test and the test is positive, even if you do not have any obvious symptoms. This is for track and trace reasons. We will likely ask you to tell us who you have been in contact with and for how long. If you have Covid-19 symptoms, you must follow government guidelines, get a test and self-isolate.

Authorising Absence

- 14 Apart from exceptional circumstances (for example the bereavement or funeral of a family member), please understand that permission to be absent from timetabled classes, rehearsals and assignments will not be granted. This may seem hard, but it is completely in accord with the professional practice on which our training is based. Absence in these circumstances needs to be approved by the Course Director/Course Leader.
- 15 Absence for medical appointments is permitted, providing it has been approved by your Course Director/Leader, the Registrar, or another senior member of Student and Academic Services (Deputy Registrars, Head of Student Wellbeing or Student Wellbeing Advisor if HSW is not present). Do not ask other people for permission. You should email attendance@rada.ac.uk to request permission, in advance, and this should have been requested by 4 pm on the day before the absence. Staff will not check their emails at 11 pm even if that is when you have requested permission. If the appointment is an emergency and only bookable on the day, you can be given retrospective permission. In that case, let us know as soon as possible that you need an absence for medical reasons. Unless it is part of your learning agreement (and therefore an agreed reasonable adjustment), if you are consistently absent for medical appointments, we may require that you provide proof of attendance at these appointments for future permissions.
- 16 Please also note that approved absence is still recorded as an absence and students must meet the minimum attendance requirements to be able to proceed in their training. This is counted in whole days. The chart below shows the maximum absence permitted by RADA's regulations for each course. This can be consecutive (ie days following each other) or cumulative (ie individual days added up over the whole period).

Programme	Usual teaching days per week	Four weeks in days
FdA TTSM	5	20
BA TTSM	5	20
BA Acting	5	20
PgD Theatre Costume	5	20
MA Theatre Lab	4	16

Technology Problems

- 17 We recognise that students may experience technology problems on occasion, when working digitally. These will be treated sympathetically. If, however, you are persistently late and indicate that this is a technical problem, we will likely want some evidence for why this is the case and what steps you've taken to resolve the problem with RADA's IT support. If you find you cannot connect or your connection drops out mid-class, try to let your teacher know. If, after 15 minutes, you cannot reconnect, we will not expect you to rejoin, but will expect you to let us know that this has happened for the record.
- 18 If your teacher experiences an IT problem, then we expect you to remain available for 20 minutes after the class starts or interruption happens (assuming it is not at the end of a session) to try to reconnect. If, after that time, no reconnection has happened, you should assume the class has been ended early. Your teacher will notify us through the attendance inbox for the records. This applies whether you are working in person and your teacher is working digitally, you are working digitally or both of you are working digitally.

RADA Attendance Points system

- 19 For all first years and most students, we have established a **points-based system**. The purpose of doing this to have a simple way of tracking and reporting lateness and unauthorised absence which is transparent and consistent for all students. Any incident of lateness or unauthorised absence accrues a point as outlined in the chart below.

Code	Action	Points
L	Late for your first class of the day	1
A	Absent without consent and did not notify us	1
MC	Missed class	1
LC	Late class (for anything after the first class)	1
	<i>Authorised absence or lateness</i>	0
	<i>Authorised absence for high temperature test</i>	0

- 20 If you reach **three points**, you will receive a notification so you are aware that this might become a problem. At **six points** you will receive a warning letter and be asked to discuss your strategies for addressing lateness or absence with your course leader. Anything over **nine points** will be treated as a disciplinary matter and this might affect either your casting (in final year) for acting students or your assessment (for technical students), especially in the later years of the programme. In the case of persistent lateness or absence, you may be removed from the course. For postgraduate students,

it is considered within assessment as part of your professional behaviour and practice.

- 21 Points are recorded and you will be notified each half-term of your status. If you manage a half-term without accruing further points, we will drop you back a level (ie, if you have three points, we will drop you back to zero if you do not acquire more points in the next half term). Points are also carried over from term to term and then into your next year. There are some examples at the end of the policy.

Rules by Course

22 **BA in Acting**

The process as described above applies for all years of the BA in Acting, with the exception of reporting requirements from the point at which students are principally in rehearsal for public performances or films (ie from the second half of Term 6).

- 23 The process from Term 6 is that Deputy Stage Managers (TTSM students) will be asked – without comment - to record absence and arrival times of both students and staff who are late (forms are provided); and to record that either in rehearsal notes or the show report. They should send their weekly report on attendance to attendance@rada.ac.uk. It remains the individual student and staff members' responsibilities to notify on a daily basis if they are absent for health grounds. We ask that DSMs also report daily if anyone is absent on health grounds to aid the track and trace process. Please note that we might need to adjust these processes as we work under the new physical distancing arrangements; if so, we will notify everyone. We welcome any feedback from staff and DSMs on the effectiveness of this approach.

24 **FdA/BA TTSM Year Two and Three and PgD Theatre Costume**

From 2020-21, we will not use the points-based system for second and third year TTSM students. We will continue to record lateness and attendance in the same way but students will not be given points; their attendance will be considered as part of the 'Common Skills' element of assessment (as is currently the case). If students are consistently absent without permission, or late, this will be addressed in the marks given. Relevant staff will need to keep a record of student attendance, including lateness.

25 **MA Theatre Lab**

This course uses the system as described above, with the exception of reporting requirements from the point at which students are principally in rehearsal for public performances or films (ie from the second half of Term 4, 2019 / 20).

26 **MA Text and Performance**

This course is covered by [Birkbeck attendance requirements](#).

Reasonable adjustments for disabled students

- 27 Where appropriate, RADA will make adjustments to the attendance requirements for certain students as part of a Learning Agreement (see the Reasonable Adjustments

Policy for more information). This might include permitting a student a short ‘buffer’ period during which they are technically late but will not be given a point. We would usually use this to help students adjust to attendance requirements. We might also give students permission to arrive late occasionally (we interpret ‘occasionally’ to mean no more than four times per term) and still join class if they have a particular condition or impairment which can result in the need for such absence. RADA will work with students, through the Learning Agreement, to articulate what is and is not reasonable in the context of their particular impairment or condition.

What if I do not agree with the points awarded?

- 28 If you receive a notification of points, you can appeal the decision to award them. You should appeal in writing to the Registrar who will consult staff maintaining the record, registers and course leaders/directors of training. If the Registrar agrees that the point has been unfairly given, it will be revoked (removed). This will then be reflected in your total. If you are unhappy about your attendance record in relation to an assessment, the appointed member of the Theatre Production staff will review the circumstances of your attendance and advise whether your assessment should be adjusted in relation to those points. You may only appeal once in relation to any points given and the decision is final.
- 29 Students who are placed on a final warning because of persistent lateness or unauthorised absence will have an opportunity to appeal any decision to remove them from the programme, using the [Appeals procedure](#), which offers an initial appeal process and a review stage as well as access to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (the UK higher education independent body for reviewing the outcomes of student complaints and appeals).

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