

# RADA

## Royal Academy of Dramatic Art

### RADA Admissions Policy 2023-24 entry

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## Purpose

This policy sets out the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art's aims for the recruitment and admission of all home and overseas 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 and links to the aims outlined our Access and Participation Plan 2020-2025.

## Responsibility

The Deputy Registrar (Admissions and Student Services) is responsible for the annual review and monitoring of this policy and that the principles are embedded in 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

In this document, "you" and "your" means the student; "we", "us" and "our" mean RADA. 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. This policy is subject to annual review and approval by Academic Board.

## 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:
  - i. equipped with all the skills and techniques that will help them thrive in the theatre, film and recorded media industries
  - ii. confident in exploring and using their creativity in their chosen field of work
  - iii. Adaptable and prepared to manage a portfolio career.
- 2 In admitting students to RADA we are looking for applicants with:
  - i. the talent, potential and the willingness to explore and realise the fullest extent of that potential;
  - ii. intellectual and emotional capacity to meet the challenges of their programme and discipline;
  - iii. The necessary fluency in the English language as described for each programme (see the Entry Requirements at [www.rada.ac.uk/courses](http://www.rada.ac.uk/courses)).
- 3 To select appropriate prospective students, RADA will:
  - i. offer an appropriate admissions and interview procedure, fit for each programme;
  - ii. audition or interview every applicant who applies (with the exception of the MA Theatre Lab, please see paragraph 21 below);
  - iii. ensure that applicants understand the audition and interview process and what to expect.
  - iv. make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants attending for audition or interview and encourage them to disclose any impairments in advance so that adjustments can be offered.
- 4 This policy links back to the [Access and Participation Plan](#) which sets targets for increased recruitment of applicants and students from the following under-represented groups:
  - i. Applicants and students from a Black and Global Majority background, particularly to our theatre production programmes
  - ii. Applicants and students from the Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles 1 and 2 and POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2
  - iii. Applicants and students with physical/sensory impairments while also maintaining our current level of access for disabled students

- iv. Applicants and students from a care experienced background
- 5 We are committed to providing a transparent, fair, effective, professional recruitment, selection and admissions service which aligns with the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the Office for Students Regulatory Framework.

### Responsibilities

- 6 A number of RADA departments work together in support of the recruitment process.
- 7 RADA's **Academic Board** approves the admissions policy and core principles associated with admission to the Academy.
- 8 **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.
- 9 The **Access and Participation** department are responsible for advising on matters concerning equality, diversity and inclusion in the conduct of RADA's admissions process.
- 10 The **Acting Auditions Panel, Technical Theatre Admissions Panel and MA Theatre Lab 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 applicants. 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 19 to 21 for more information about the Audition/Admission Panels
- 11 The Deputy Registrar (Admissions & Student Services) is responsible for the general management of admissions procedures, reporting to the Registrar
- 12 King's College, London is responsible for the academic standards and quality of the qualifications it awards as RADA's validating body. As such King's regularly monitors and reviews the efficacy of RADA's entry criteria and admissions practices.

### Information for prospective students

- 13 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](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 **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 - General

- 14 RADA welcomes applications from all individuals who can demonstrate that they will benefit from their chosen course, and from the professional preparation that RADA provides its students. Minimum entry requirements for each programme are published on the website.

General entry requirements are set out in RADA's Academic Regulations, and are as follows:

- i. 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;
- ii. due to the curriculum containing adult content, students must be 18 years of age on the first day of the induction week in the year that they start their programme of study. It is not possible to make adjustments for individuals that would exclude all such content. Term dates are published on our website ://www.rada.ac.uk/contact-us-home/term-dates/
- iii. satisfy the additional academic and non-academic criteria for the relevant programme;
- iv. have an appropriate student visa, where applicable;
- v. comply with the registration procedure laid down by the Academy.

### Entry requirements – International students

- 15 Applicants who are not from the UK may be required to obtain a [student visa](#) to study on one of our full-time programmes.
- 16 Successful applicants will be sent a conditional offer alongside a 'CAS form'. The CAS form is used to collect information required to issue a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies as follows:
- i. Passport details
  - ii. Current or previous UK visas
  - iii. English Language Requirements - 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](http://www.rada.ac.uk/courses).
  - iv. Tuberculosis Test, if applicable
  - v. Financial information (sponsorship and/or proof of available funds)
- 17 International students are required to pay a £3000 deposit on acceptance of their place which is held against the first years' tuition fee.
- 18 On receipt of a fully completed CAS Form, supporting documents, and receipt of a deposit we are then able to issue a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies number and unconditional offer letter.

### Audition and Interview

- 19 Admission to RADA is by audition and/or interview.
- i. For BA (Hons) in Acting and Foundation Course in Acting all prospective students will be auditioned and interviewed
  - ii. For BA (Hons) Technical Theatre and Stage Management and PgD Theatre Costume, all prospective students will be interviewed.
  - iii. For FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management, all prospective students will be interviewed and take part in a practical workshop
- 20 For the MA Theatre Lab, the MA Course Leader (or their nominee) will review each application to determine whether the prospective student has sufficient prior professional/practical experience to be meet the entry requirements for the programme. All applicants meeting that requirement will then be offered an audition, which they can complete

either in-person or in the form of a self-taped creative task. Those auditioning in person will be interviewed and submit a short reflective assignment on the day of their audition. Digital auditionees will be invited to an online interview after the viewing of their self-taped task by the Panel. Prior to said interview, they will also submit a short reflective assignment. Following interviews, applicants will be contacted to let them know if their application has been successful or otherwise.

- 21 Applicants may only submit one application per programme in each admissions cycle and application fees are not normally refundable

### Admissions Panels

- 22 The admissions process for RADA's BA Acting programme is conducted by members of the **Acting Admissions Panel**. The terms of reference for this panel are as follows:

- i. The Chair or Chairs of the Panel are appointed by the Principal having taken advice from the Director of Actor Training and Academic Board (or relevant sub-committee).
- ii. The members of the Panel are appointed by the Chair(s) of the Acting Admissions 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 of Actor Training is automatically a member of the Panel.
- iv. Panel members may be invited to join the audition of specific programmes such as the BA in 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 Admissions 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 Chair(s) of the Acting Admissions 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.
- 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.
- ix. Panels are required to provide a mark and brief written feedback for each audition

- 23 Admissions to the Foundation Degree and BA in Technical Theatre and Stage Management programmes and the Postgraduate Diploma in Theatre Costume are conducted by the **Theatre Production Admissions Panel** whose terms of reference are:

- i. The Chair of the Panel is the Programme Director.
- ii. All members of the technical theatre faculty are automatically members of the Theatre Production Admissions Panel.

- iii. External 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 technical theatre disciplines and/or of technical theatre training. Such appointments should be approved by the Chair of the Panel. All interviews/workshops should be chaired by either the Programme Director or their nominee. The panel should include two other panel members, one of whom should be an external member.
  - iv. Panel members will be required to participate in relevant training and briefing sessions. New panel members will not be chairs of panels.
  - v. For the PgD Theatre Costume, the Panel will include the Head or Deputy Head of Theatre Costume.
  - vi. 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.
  - vii. Panels are required to provide a mark and brief written feedback
- 24 The admissions process for RADA's MA Theatre Lab programme is conducted by members of the **MA Courses Admissions Panel**. The terms of reference for this panel are as follows:
- i. The Chair of the Panel is the MA Theatre Lab Course Leader
  - ii. All members of the MA Theatre Lab faculty are automatically members of the MA Courses Admissions Panel.
  - viii. All interviews/workshops should be chaired by either the MA Theatre Lab Course Leader or their nominee. The panel should consist of three panel members
  - iii. 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.
  - iv. 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.
  - v. Panels are required to provide a mark and brief written feedback

### Application process

- 25 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 23-26 summarise the application process for each programme.
- 26 **BA Acting applicants** go through a four-stage audition process, with the length and complexity of the audition process increasing at each stage. The preliminary and recall stages include the delivery of short audition speeches and an unaccompanied song via self-tape. The third stage is a three-hour Director-led workshop session. The fourth stage is an all day process consisting of group workshops and individual work spanning the various disciplines of the Acting course. The third and fourth rounds may take place digitally or in-person at RADA. Candidates are informed at each stage whether they will proceed to the next audition. Auditions are conducted by members of RADA's Acting Admissions Panel, which includes members of the acting

faculty. The final decision is made by the Chair of the Acting Admissions Panel and the 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.

- 27 **Theatre Production** applicants attend an interview (this can take place digitally or in person), which will include at least one panel member drawn from the technical theatre faculty, but usually two.
- i. For the **BA Technical Theatre and Stage Management**, the interview will usually include a panellist not drawn from the faculty, who may be an industry member. 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 or auditions (in person or online).
  - ii. Candidates applying for the **FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management** will be interviewed and take part in a workshop (which is expected to be in person). The workshop could take the form of a set task or group work, but we will never ask any candidate to take a formal written test or exam. Prospective students may be asked to bring a portfolio of prior work experience.
  - iii. RADA requires that **PgD Theatre Costume** applicants bring a portfolio to their interview or auditions (in person or online).
- 28 **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 Admissions 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 or submit a self-tape. In cases where the application information is insufficient to determine prior experience, the Panel will favour auditioning an applicant. The audition takes two different possible forms:
- i. A workshop approach conducted by the MA Theatre Lab Course Leader with designated staff from the MA Admissions Panel Applicants auditioning in person are interviewed on the day of their audition, following the workshop. The in-person process also includes an unseen and timed 30-minute reflective assignment
  - ii. Digital submission of an extensive self-taped 'creative task', physical piece and audition speeches. Digital applicants will be invited to a digital interview after members of the Panel have viewed their submissions.
- The interview constitutes part of the application process and an invitation to interview does not guarantee an offer.
- 29 **Foundation Course in Acting**: this course does not lead to a formal award. The audition process follows the same principles as for the BA (Hons) Acting, but with a three-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. Applicants for both courses are seen at the first and second rounds and then those who are assessed by the Panel to be more suited to the Foundation Course will be directed towards a group workshop day. Students may also be directed to the Foundation Course in Acting at any of the recall stages of auditions for the BA Acting. Students on this course are ineligible for student visas.
- 30 All prospective students are asked to provide a personal statement on the application form, which will be considered as part of the process.
- 31 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.

- 32 MA Theatre Lab applications open in March each year for January commencement. Note: MA Lab runs over a calendar year.
- 33 Applications are submitted directly to RADA using the appropriate application form. Applications received after the deadline will not normally be considered. RADA does not use UCAS or UCAS Conservatoires for any admissions. Applicants may apply to other programmes and higher education providers on the UCAS or UCAS Conservatoires system as well as applying to RADA.
- 34 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 have been processed.
- 35 The other information we will send to prospective students is:
- Details about how to submit their video audition or 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'.
- 36 Once an applicant has accepted an audition or interview date RADA will not usually agree to change that date unless there are exceptional circumstances and only once.

Should an applicant miss their scheduled audition/interview owing to unavoidable circumstances, an alternative date will be offered, wherever possible, although this cannot be guaranteed. 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. In such cases that we are unable to reschedule, the application fee may be retained.

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 new date. We will normally only offer one opportunity for applicants to change an audition/interview date.

### Disabled students

- 37 RADA welcomes disabled students into its courses. Prospective students with a disability or impairment (for example a specific learning difference, 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, but candidates are welcome to disclose at any point in the admissions process. Once applicants have been offered a place, they will be asked to complete a Student Support Questionnaire to ascertain more information about their condition to assess reasonable adjustments for their course of study.

### Contextual Admissions

- 38 We are committed to increasing access to our programmes from underrepresented groups. Where available, the following contextual data is considered as part of the admissions process:
- i. Disability flag
  - ii. Ethnic origin from an underrepresented group
  - iii. POLAR4 (POLAR4 classifies local areas across the UK according to the young participation rate in Higher Education)
  - iv. Care experienced status

Where the decision on whether or not to offer a place to a student is borderline, favourable consideration will be given to applicants with one or more of these indicators.

### Application fees

- 39 RADA charges an application fee for the BA in 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 and interviews for MA Theatre Lab applications. Application fees are not refundable.
- 40 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.

### Non-standard entry, direct entry and transfer

- 32 Entry to each of our degree programmes is set out in the respective admissions requirements. We accept direct entry to the BA Technical Theatre and Stage Management (equivalent to Year 3 of a degree programme) if the entry requirements are met. We are unable to offer direct entry into subsequent years or progression stages of our BA Acting, Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) in Theatre Costume and MA Theatre Lab programmes due to the specific nature of the training. We are also unable to accept direct entry into Year 2 of the FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management for the same reason.

### Application outcomes

- 41 The application process will result in one of three outcomes: offer, waiting list or unsuccessful. An offer may be made to an applicant on the waiting list if a place becomes available before the start of the programme.
- 42 Successful candidates will receive an offer usually by email from the Admissions team. The offer may be subject to one or more conditions. When an offer is made, the applicant will be asked to read and agree to our Terms and Conditions. Terms and Conditions can be found at [https://www.rada.ac.uk/documents/608/Terms\\_and\\_conditions\\_2022-23\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.rada.ac.uk/documents/608/Terms_and_conditions_2022-23_FINAL.pdf).

### Deferred applications

- 43 RADA does not usually permit applicants to defer a place once an offer has been made, but will consider requests for deferral where there are exceptional circumstances, on a case by case basis. In such cases deferral will be granted for a maximum of one calendar year.

### Contract with applicants/students

- 44 A contract is formed when an applicant accepts an offer of a place with us and agrees to the Terms and Conditions of the offer which includes the Fees Policy. Applicants should note that tuition fees become payable on the first day of the first term.
- 45 Terms and conditions are provided to the applicant in durable form. Along with the relevant programme specification, policies and procedures, this document forms part of a contractual agreement between RADA and the applicant.

### Feedback

- 46 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.

### Appeals and complaints

- 47 If an applicant feels that they have grounds for an appeal or complaint on an application decision, they should follow the process published on the RADA website:  
[https://www.rada.ac.uk/documents/607/Admissions\\_Appeals\\_Complaints\\_22-23\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.rada.ac.uk/documents/607/Admissions_Appeals_Complaints_22-23_FINAL.pdf).

### Criminal convictions

- 48 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 with us. It will depend upon the circumstances and type of offence. Our BA (Hons) Acting and Theatre Production courses may 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. We 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 2023-24 entry, we 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

- 49 RADA reserves the right to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an application which is found to contain fraudulent information. We 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 will be subject to RADA's non-academic misconduct process and may have their studies terminated.

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