

## Student Protection Plan

Provider's name: Royal Academy of Dramatic Art

Provider's UKPRN: 10009292

Legal address: 62-64 Gower Street, London, WC1E 6ED

Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan: Laura Witt, Registrar and Secretary

### Student protection plan for the period 2022-23

#### 1 An assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for your students, how those risks may differ based on your students' needs, characteristics and circumstances, and the likelihood that those risks will crystallise

- a. The provider as a whole is no longer able to operate or no longer intends to operate

The risk that we will become unable to operate is **low**, because our financial situation is healthy, we are able to attract high quality staff, and our appeal to students, as measured by application levels, is strong.

Our most recent financial accounts (2020-21) show total reserves of £35.2m, of which £3.182m is cash and accessible investment. Our income is diversified between regulated course fees, short courses and commercial activity and significant philanthropic support, so we are not completely reliant on any one area. Our reserves include endowment funds of £6.2m and unrestricted or designated reserves of £2.3m that are available at short notice. We have freehold property in our central London campus that adds to our long term security.

RADA's Council confirmed in January 2022 that we continue to be a going concern. Our Business Continuity Planning, including a robust approach to risk management, gives us confidence that we will be able to continue operating and delivering our core purposes.

We have been able to draw on our reserves over the past two years to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our operating income and to continue to deliver our programmes largely as intended, with some changes to timetables and cohort sizes. Over the coming years we plan to rebuild these reserves to ensure that we are similarly prepared for severe disruption to our operations in future.

- b. The provider is no longer able to award the qualifications for which its students are registered because the OfS has varied or revoked the provider's degree awarding powers, or a validating partner has withdrawn validation

The risk that the validation arrangements for our degrees will be withdrawn is **low**. RADA has a longstanding validation partnership with King's College London and engages with its annual monitoring and periodic review processes. RADA has a strong working relationship with King's and the teams within each institution responsible for quality assurance are in regular contact. Our two main undergraduate programmes are currently validated until 2023-24.

- c. One or more of the locations at which the provider delivers courses to students is no longer available

The risk that one or more of the locations at which RADA delivers its courses is **low**. RADA fully owns one of the buildings in which it delivers its degree programmes and has long and affordable leases on the others. No change of delivery location is under consideration at the present time.

- d. The provider is no longer able to deliver courses to students in one or more subject areas and/or departments

The risk that we cease to offer programmes in any given area is **very low**: we offer a small portfolio of two undergraduate and two postgraduate programmes, in our core disciplines of acting and technical theatre. The delivery of specialist, vocational education in these areas is at the centre of our institutional mission.

- e. The provider is no longer able to deliver one or more courses to students, particularly if course closures are likely in the next three years

We consider the risk of being unable to deliver courses due to course closure to be **low**. RADA is not planning to close any of its courses during the next three years. Demand for our programmes continues to be strong, with applications far exceeding the number of places available on each course.

Should we decide to close a programme, we would commit to teach out the remaining student cohorts.

We also regard as **very low** risk the possibility that programme change leads to students on the 'old' programme being neglected. As our portfolio and student body is small and our delivery is highly intensive, any curriculum changes are implemented gradually following consultation with all affected students.

- f. the provider is no longer able to deliver material components of one or more courses, particularly if there are areas of vulnerability, such as single person dependencies for teaching

We consider the risk of not being able to deliver components of courses to be **low**. RADA has strong contacts within the industry and a large pool of teaching staff and professional practitioners that we would be able to draw upon should an individual subject specialist become unavailable.

### **Pandemic or public health emergency**

In the case of pandemic, it may be necessary to make some material changes to delivery and/or assessment arrangements in order to comply with public health restrictions. Wherever possible, a blend of in-person and online learning (blended learning) will be used to ensure that students are able to meet the intended learning outcomes for each module or course. We will liaise with our validating body to ensure that academic standards are maintained. Where it is necessary to close our physical premises to comply with local or national restrictions, RADA may seek to delay the start date of or postpone elements of a course to a later date in order to facilitate delivery of the full curriculum.

Students will be informed of such changes where necessary or likely, at the earliest opportunity and wherever possible, before registering for the academic year. Where a student does not wish to undertake the modified course will be given the opportunity to interrupt their studies and return at a later date, or to defer their entry to the course where they have yet to commence studies.

- g. The provider is no longer able to deliver one or more modes of study to students, particularly if withdrawal of a mode of study is likely

We consider the risk of being unable to deliver a mode of study to be **very low**. All RADA's courses are currently delivered in full time, face-to-face mode only.

- h. The provider is no longer able to recruit or teach a particular type of student

We consider the risk of being unable to recruit international students to be **low**. RADA is a member of UKCISA and actively engages with its duties as a student sponsor, keeping up to date with guidance issued by UKVI. We conduct relevant document checks at the point of registration, monitor student engagement throughout the year and report any changes of student circumstance as necessary.

In the event that RADA did lose its student sponsor licence, we would support all international students and offer holders to secure a place at another UK institution. We would also reimburse all tuition fees for incomplete years of study and for applicants, we would reimburse any visa application fees paid.

**2 The measures that you have put in place to mitigate those risks that you consider to be reasonably likely to crystallise**

Section 1 outlines our risks, all which we consider to be low, and the mitigation steps in place. We have also started a major fundraising campaign (Stage Critical) and have applied for OfS funding as a world-leading small specialist institution.

In relation to the risk of pandemic, we have developed processes for hybrid, blended and online learning which will enable us to continue deliver courses in the event of public health restrictions.

**3. Information about the policy you have in place to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to your students and to provide compensation where necessary in the event that you are no longer able to preserve continuation of study**

Our refund policy is attached.

As noted above, the likelihood that we would be unable to preserve continuation of study for our students is very low. Our assets far outweigh the possible costs of compensation under this policy: in this way we would be able to honour the obligations set out in that policy.

**4. Information about how you will communicate with students about your student protection plan**

We will provide a link to our student protection plan from our webpage, and notify current and future students via an update to our terms and conditions over the summer period.

All significant programme changes require approval our Principal and Senior Leadership Team, who are aware of the Student Protection Plan and its implications.

We will review our Student Protection Plan annually at Academic Board, which has student members from all programmes.

In the event that we need to implement our Student Protection Plan, we will meet with affected students – either individually or in a groups – and follow up in writing.

Should students need independent advice we will provide access to advocacy or counselling as appropriate.

## **RADA – Refund policy**

### **Scope**

1. This policy addresses refunds and compensation for RADA students. It is written to satisfy the requirement of the OfS for a policy statement in this regard.
2. This policy covers situations where RADA is unable to continue to offer a programme upon which students are currently registered and either
  - a. is *unable* to identify satisfactory alternative provision which will enable the registered student or students to complete their study and achieve the qualification for which they are enrolled; or
  - b. is *able* to identify satisfactory alternative provision which will enable the registered student or students to complete their study and achieve the qualification for which they are enrolled, but this provision is offered by a different provider in a different location.
3. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy does not cover any circumstance where a student ceases their study at RADA through their own choice, or has their registration terminated because of academic failure, misconduct, failure to pay tuition fees, or other process or reason set out in our terms and conditions, academic regulations and policies.

### **Tuition fee refunds**

4. In the event of RADA being unable to preserve continuation of study for a student or a group of students (that is, the situation in paragraph 2.a above) we will refund the tuition fees which they have paid. If a student's fees have been paid to RADA by a third party, RADA will refund the third party unless otherwise agreed.
5. This applies to:
  - a. Students in receipt of a tuition fee loan from the Student Loans Company.
  - b. Students who pay their own tuition fees.
  - c. Students whose tuition fees are paid by a third party.

### **Changed location or mode of delivery**

6. In the event that RADA has to move the location of delivery of our programmes out of central London (defined as a location within Transport for London's Zones 1-2) we will, during the remainder of the academic year in which the move occurred, arrange suitable transport or pay students' additional travel costs from their term time accommodation.
7. In the event that RADA is unable to deliver any physical location (for example due to pandemic or public health restrictions), we will adapt our courses for online delivery. In these circumstances no tuition fees will be refunded provided that the learning outcomes of the course continue to be met.

## **Student bursaries**

8. In the event of RADA being unable to deliver programmes to a student or group of students, who transfer to another provider to complete their study (that is, the situation in paragraph 2.b above), and subject to the terms of the underlying donation or bequest, we aim to honour scholarships in line with our Scholarships Policy. The Scholarships Committee will make an assessment of the circumstances and determine the amount payable in each case.
9. Again for the avoidance of doubt, this does not include any circumstance where a student transfers from study at RADA through their own choice, or has their registration at RADA terminated because of academic failure, misconduct, failure to pay tuition fees, or other process or reason set out in our terms and conditions, academic regulations and policies, and then resumes study elsewhere.

## **Compensation for maintenance costs and lost time**

10. In the event that RADA is unable to preserve continuation of study (that is, the situation in paragraph 2.a above), we recognise that students will not benefit from the formal qualification for which they are studying. Nevertheless, they will have gained from the development of skills and knowledge through their study. Our approach to compensation for maintenance costs and lost time is not therefore to compensate actual costs incurred, or income foregone.
11. We will consider compensation for maintenance costs on a case-by-case basis, to a maximum of £500 per calendar month during term time.
12. We will not compensate students for lost time during their study.

## **Compensation for maintenance costs and lost time where students have to switch to a different provider**

13. In the event that a student or group of students transfers to another provider to complete their studies, because RADA is unable to continue to provide the course for which they had enrolled (that is, the situation in paragraph 2.b above), RADA may provide compensation for any additional travel or living costs incurred during the academic year in which the transfer took place, and any additional course costs over those which would have been incurred through study at RADA, but will not otherwise provide compensation. This decision would be made on a case-by-case basis by the Principal and Senior Leadership Team, based on the impact of the course closure, the extent to which RADA is accountable for the student's costs associated with the course closure, and RADA's financial position.
14. Again for the avoidance of doubt, this does not include any circumstance where a student transfers from study at RADA through their own choice, or has their registration at RADA terminated because of academic failure, misconduct, failure to pay tuition fees, or other process or reason set out in our terms and conditions, academic regulations and policies, and then resumes study elsewhere.

## **Transfer**

15. In the event that a student or group of students transfers to another provider to complete their studies, because RADA is unable to continue to provide the course for which they had enrolled (that is, the situation in paragraph 2.b above), RADA will liaise with the new provider to seek to arrange as much continuity of experience as is possible. This will include discussion to enable students' time at RADA to be included on their ultimate transcript from the new provider. In such circumstances, students' permission will be sought to share relevant personal information and assessment records with the new provider.

Updated 22 July 2022