

Royal Academy of Dramatic Art Academic Regulations 2019-2020

Appendix 2: Attendance Policy and Procedures

This policy covers the following programmes:

BA (Hons) Acting
FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management
BA Technical Theatre and Stage Management
PgD Theatre Costume
MA Theatre Lab
Foundation Course in Acting.

Introduction

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 unauthorised lateness or absence constitute misconduct (a disciplinary offence). Lateness and absences are recorded by Reception staff.

What is 'on time'?

RADA students are given a CALL TIME. This is usually ten minutes before your first class of the day to give you time to prepare and be ready for class, rehearsal or production call. If you arrive exactly at the time of your class, this will be classed as LATE. Please always make sure that you abide by the Call Time rule. Your call time will be included on your timetable. For second-year FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management and PgD Theatre Costume students, if you have no call time stated on your timetable, or are not on a late call, the default call is 10.00 am.

What happens if I am late?

If you are running late, the first thing is to let Reception staff know. They monitor lateness and absences for all full-time students.

BA Acting and Foundation Students in Acting will not be permitted to join the class if you are late for the first class of the day. The same thing applies if you are late back for your first class after lunch. If you are late for classes during the day, this will also be noted on the register (see Academic Regulation 5.4).

Technical Theatre students may be permitted to join the class if they are late. This will be at the discretion of the tutor and will depend upon how late you are for class.

Unauthorised lateness will result in you being given a point (see overleaf for information about the points scheme).

Absence

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.

Absence for medical appointments is permitted, providing it has been approved your Course Director/Leader, the Director of Student & Academic Services or other designated senior staff member. Please do not ask other people to approve absence.

Permission to leave early can be granted by your Course Director/leader or, in exceptional circumstances such as illness, by the Director of Student & Academic Services (or nominee in the office if not present).

How does the system work?

RADA uses a **points-based system** where you receive **one point** for each occurrence of unauthorised lateness or absence, as shown in the chart below.

Code	Action	Points
L	Signed in late	1
A	Absent without consent / forgot to complete late call sheet	1
MC	Missed class	1
LC	Late class	1
X	Present but forgot to sign in	1
	<i>Authorised absence or lateness</i>	0
	Signed in by someone else/lie about time	3

The exception to the one point rule is if you sign someone else into the Academy or lie about your sign-in time (eg you sign in as 9.00 am but actually sign in at 9.15 am). In this situation you will receive **three points**. If you sign someone else in then both you and the person you're signing in will each receive **three points**.

Each time you are late or absent without consent, you will add a point to your attendance record. Each set of three points reached during a term brings with it disciplinary action of increasing severity. Persistent lateness or absence without prior permission (either on a case by case basis or confirmed in a learning agreement) is likely to result in formal warnings. The final stage in the process is removal from the course and the Academy.

There are **four stages in the points system** as outlined below.

Points	Stage	Action
3	One	Letter of notification and Course officer arranges a tutorial with Course Director to discuss reasons for lateness or absence.
6	Two	Meeting with Director of Student & Academic Services, who might put student on an early call and issue a verbal warning .
9	Three	Meeting with Course Director and Academy Director. This is a serious stage which may result in a written warning in accordance with the Disciplinary (non-academic misconduct) Policy
12+	Ultimatum	This is the final stage and if further points are incurred, the student may be removed from the programme , especially if there are any other disciplinary issues in accordance with the Disciplinary (non-academic misconduct) Policy

How long do points stay on a student's record?

The points system works generally on a termly basis and students can drop down a level until they are back at 0 by not incurring further lateness/absence penalty.

If the lateness or absence happens in weeks 1-6 and you reach the 3, 6 or 9 threshold in that time, then those points stay on the system until the end of that term. If you do not reach another threshold in the second half of term, then you drop back a stage (ie if you were on 3 points, you go back to 0, if you were on 6 you go back to 3 and so on). If the threshold is reached in the second half of term, you carry it over to the first half of the following term, so, if by week 10 of autumn term you are at 3 points but don't go higher than 4 points in the first half of the spring term, you'll be reset back to 0 from week 7. These points can also be carried across academic years.

There are some examples at the end of this policy.

Process overview

Reception staff monitor the sign in books, which are held both at Gower Street and Chenies Street. If a student is late, this will be marked on an attendance spreadsheet. For acting students in class, staff take registers and record lateness or absence which is then correlated with the master spreadsheets.

Absence is monitored daily and totals are tallied weekly. Students will be notified regularly where they stand in relation to their points.

Process changes for Year 3 Actors (starting from Term 6)

DSMs 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.

This arrangement starts from the second half of Term 6, when students embark on the Shakespeare in Schools project.

Teachers of Year 3 BA Acting classes are asked to report absence or lateness directly to reception after their class.

Reasonable adjustments for disabled students

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 awarded 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?

Each time a fresh letter outlining unauthorised lateness or absence is issued, you can respond to the Director of Student & Academic Services to appeal any points that you think have been awarded unfairly. The Director of SAS will consult with Reception (checking the records) and the relevant Course Director before deciding whether or not a point will be revoked. If it is revoked, your total will be reduced as if the point had not been given (including dropping down a level, if applicable). You may only appeal once and the decision is final.

Students on the final warning stage 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.

Cumulative absence from the programme

In addition to the procedure for authorising lateness and absence and awarding points for unauthorised occurrences, RADA also has regulations about how much time it is permissible to miss and still meet the learning objectives of your programme.

Academic Regulation 5.5 states that there is a limit of **four weeks consecutively or** cumulatively in each academic year of study. This means that if you have built up the equivalent of four weeks' absence in one go, or through several periods of absence, we will review your situation to see if you are able to complete your year of study. A 'study week' will vary from programme to programme. The table below shows how many actual days is meant by the study week and thus how many days constitutes four weeks if these are not consecutive.

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	3	12

Examples of the points system

<p>Example 1 Student P has three lateness incidences during Spring Term Weeks 1 – 4. She receives a letter to attend a tutorial and has no further unauthorised lateness or absence. At the start of the Summer Term she is returned back to 0.</p>	<p>Example 2 Student C starts the Spring Term with 6 points (and a verbal warning). He has no further absences and is reset to 3 points at the start of the Summer Term. He is late in the first week of the Summer Term but not late or absent again. He is returned to 0 at the end of the Summer Term ready for the next year. The verbal warning is removed from his record.</p>
<p>Example 3 Student V starts Autumn Term with no points. From weeks 6 – 8 he is late or absent three times and receives a warning and has a tutorial. Because the lateness occurred in the second half of term, the 3 points carry over into the first six weeks of the Spring Term. At the end of week 6 he has not incurred any further points, so his record is reset to 0.</p>	<p>Example 4 Student A has been consistently late or absent during the first two terms of her second year and has managed to acquire 10 points by the start of the summer term. She has received both a verbal and written warning. She is late once again, and is now at 11 points. Student A then removes props without permission and fails to return them. This is another disciplinary offence. Student A had already accumulated other disciplinary offences within her first year. A disciplinary meeting is held and the Panel decide that the student should be removed from the course. The student has the right of appeal against this decision, but is withdrawn from RADA.</p>

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