

RADA

Academic Year 2020-21: Covid-19 Adjustments Overview

Introduction: training at RADA in 2020-21

RADA's training for actors, performers and theatre production professionals is based on work that happens in person in shared spaces. Because the lockdown in spring 2020 took place towards the end of the academic year, we were able to continue training for students digitally to enable them to complete their academic years and programmes. In some cases, this has been with exceptions where students need access to resources and materials which cannot be made available digitally. For these students, we have postponed the end of their programmes.

Our plans for 2020-21 for our King's College London-validated programmes are based on students being able to be present at RADA for the majority of their teaching. We have come to slightly different arrangements for the MA Text and Performance students as this is a different programme, offered jointly with Birkbeck and validated by the University of London.

We will be using a combination of in-person and digital learning, with the focus being on in-person work. This might be different for partnership teaching, where we will follow the lead institution (for example, Birkbeck for the MA Text and Performance).

The chart below summarises where we expect to be in different scenarios:

Level	Higher Education courses	Short courses	RADA buildings	Student Support Services
Level 5 – return to sustained national or local lockdown	Teaching will be delivered digitally (online) for the first three weeks. If lockdown is likely to extend beyond this, we will ensure students can complete their current module before we suspend all teaching and interrupt courses.	Delivery digitally if appropriate; alternatively, postponed and rescheduled.	Closed in line with government regulation and guidance	Services will be suspended apart from emergency contacts.
Level 4 – short-term local lockdown	Teaching will be delivered digitally for up to three weeks.	Delivery digitally if appropriate; alternatively, postponed and rescheduled.	Closed in line with government regulation and guidance	Digital services only
Level 3 – physical distancing with some contact	Accessible for timetabled activity only. Students and staff not required for timetabled activity will work from home.	Delivery mostly digitally if appropriate; alternatively, postponed and rescheduled.	Open with limitations	Digital services only
Level 2 – return to contact	Teaching in person, with some work offered digitally.	In-person delivery where appropriate and possible, adjusted to take account of circumstances.	Open with some limitations	Predominantly digital services with some in person as appropriate
Level 1 – business as usual, pre-Covid	Teaching delivered in person, in line with normal practice.	Delivered in person and digitally in line with normal practice.	Open as normal	A blend of in-person and digital services

Term dates

We have revised our term dates for autumn 2020-21 and our teaching period will be between Monday 7 September 2020 and Saturday 19 December 2020. The exact term dates for each course and year group might be slightly different and these are in individual documents. This document has the dates for **new students only**:

Year	Course	Return Date	End date
1	BA in Acting, FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management	5 October 2020: start of digital introductory sessions, not in the Academy buildings 26 October 2020: start of Welcome Week in the Academy buildings 2 November 2020: start of in-person teaching in the Academy buildings	12 December 2020
1	PgD Theatre Costume	5 October 2020: start of digital introductory sessions, not in the Academy buildings 26 October 2020: start of Welcome Week in the Academy buildings 2 November 2020: start of in-person teaching in the Academy buildings	12 December 2020
3	BA Technical Theatre and Stage Management	14 September 2020: start of Welcome Week in the Academy buildings 21 September 2020: start of in-person teaching in the Academy buildings	19 December 2020
1	MA Text and Performance	5 October 2020, delivered digitally.	18 December 2020
1	MA Theatre Lab	11 January 2021, further information to follow.	1 April 2021

What happens if we cannot teach you in person

Our teaching is based on in-person work for the majority of our higher education courses. We can deliver some elements digitally, but we expect to be working with you in person for most of your training. If we face a short period of lockdown, we will move to digital work and then return to in-person training when possible. We might extend our term dates by a week or two to accommodate this and ensure you can receive as much teaching as possible. If we are required to return to lockdown for any sustained period, then we will limit the period of digital teaching to **three weeks plus a possible additional week to bring modules to a close** and we will cease activity until it is possible to return to blended learning with a combination of in-person and digital work. This might include starting digitally with the expectation of a shift to teaching in person. What we have determined is not appropriate for our students is to offer our training only in a digital format for a degree or postgraduate diploma programme which is predominantly practice- or work-based. It might, however, be suitable for courses which combine a higher proportion of academic work and for shorter and more intensive periods such as in our short courses.

Our working approach is that you will be able to complete your course within the usual time period, including a potential slight extension of term dates to achieve this. We do not expect to be moving term dates beyond a week. If this is not going to be possible, for example because of an extended lockdown period, we will need to consult you further. This will include how you can complete your course and any additional financial support that might be available to you to do so. The fees will remain the same if we are obliged to change the course length because of Covid-related actions. For students who are not eligible for any government/publicly-sponsored financial support, particularly postgraduate students, we will aim to make hardship funding available to alleviate the additional costs of adjusted teaching periods.

Assessment

We are not anticipating any significant adjustments to assessments. We might need to make local changes to specific learning outcomes, for example where a module must be delivered digitally, but we will discuss this with you. Our position is to maintain the quality of our work, but also not to disadvantage a student because any element or outcome cannot be effectively assessed or delivered digitally. Our experience in spring and summer 2020 has indicated that we are able to implement our different models of assessment in digital teaching. RADA does not assess students through written examinations. Assessment is usually through performance or practice including associated written documentation (for example show reports). Our MA programmes include some assessed written work, but this is not timed nor under examination conditions. We will follow Birkbeck's policy and guidance concerning any assessment for the MA Text and Performance.

Productions, external visits and performances

Our RADA-only courses usually include opportunities for theatre visits, visits to professional companies and sometimes visiting productions coming to RADA and opportunities to attend international festivals for some students. We will continue to offer these opportunities as and when it becomes possible to do so in a safe way.

Placements

Our FdA Technical Theatre and Stage Management (TTSM), the BA TTSM third year and our PgD Theatre Costume all indicate the option of placements. Students are usually expected to complete a placement as a requirement of the FdA TTSM. It is unclear at this point when we can reasonably expect theatres and related professions to reopen and whether they will be able to accept students on placements. When and where it is possible, we will enable students to take up placements. Where it is not possible, these will be replaced with a 'placement project' which will include external professionals. The assessment for these modules will be the same (ie pass/fail). More information about this will be provided in the TTSM course documents.

Additional Equipment

In order to work effectively and access our digital teaching, you will need the following equipment as a baseline:

- A laptop or home computer
- A second device (a phone or tablet will suffice)
- Speakers, a microphone and a webcam (you should have all of these within either your laptop or your phone/tablet)
- Internet connection (please see our further guidance for minimum speed of connection)
- A set of headphones

Our information sheet Accessing Digital Training provides more detail, so we advise that you check this. RADA has some equipment it can lend to students and can provide access to hardship funding for those wishing to purchase their own additional equipment.

Attendance

RADA's Attendance Policy will apply to students for both in-person and digital teaching. The same limitations on absence apply. If students face particular circumstances (such as sickness), these can be considered as mitigating circumstances in relation to our attendance requirements. Please see the [Attendance Policy](#).

Student support arrangements

You will still be able to access all of our student support services when you come or return to RADA. We have the following services:

- Student Wellbeing Service - pastoral care and counselling

- Disabled Students' Support – support in obtaining assessments, access to mentoring or other supported covered by Disabled Students' Allowances, advice on completing forms and accessing support, managing and recording any agreed adjustments in a learning agreement.
- Financial Support: RADA Scholarships and access to Student Hardship Fund.
- GP practice access: Ridgmount Practice
- Physiotherapy: Physio Ed
- Registry services: Council tax letters, accommodation letters, general enquiries.
- Drop-in support sessions with the Registrar or Deputy Registrar

We expect that meetings can be in person, where possible, but predominantly held digitally using Microsoft Teams (all students have access), especially in the autumn term, and we will continue to use email as in the past to provide information requested by students.

You will be able to contact staff in Student and Academic Services, including members of the Student Wellbeing team, by email and through Microsoft Teams. The general emails are:

Yourstudentexperience@rada.ac.uk

Wellbeing@rada.ac.uk

Individual staff emails follow the structure: firstnamesurname(no dots)@rada.ac.uk.

People at higher risk

We will be conducting risk assessments for anyone who has disclosed information which places them at a higher risk in relation to Covid-19. It is important for new/incoming students that we are aware of any conditions or factors which might mean you are at higher risk. This is so that we can make appropriate adjustments. Where we cannot make sufficient adjustments to enable you to access the course properly, we will be willing to allow prospective students to defer their entry or for current students to interrupt their training.

Public productions

RADA students spend time learning their craft on productions that are open to the public. We are planning to deliver our curriculum in a blended way. The physical distancing requirements for theatres and public venues will mean adjustments to our public audiences, including family and friends. We anticipate offering the public productions required by the curriculum. If we cannot do so, we will find alternative methods including digital theatre and project work, subject to our commitment above, which is that RADA's primary mode of learning and teaching is in person.

Fee policy

We do not plan any changes to our fee levels or our fee policy: our fees will remain at their normal levels. This reflects the practical nature of the training at RADA. You have a right of appeal against decisions made as a result of our fees policy.

Complaints

If you are currently a RADA student and you are not satisfied with the changes that have been made, you have options open to you. You may wish to contact Student and Academic Services to discuss an interruption of study (taking a year out) or may wish to transfer to another course at a different institution. You also have the right to make a complaint and seek redress.

If you are a prospective student, you should note that RADA's admissions policy also enables you to make a complaint and seek redress.

For both prospective and current students, members of staff in Student and Academic Services can help you access the Complaints Policy and Procedure; the Appeals Policy and Procedure; and the Admissions Appeals and Complaints procedure. These are also published online [here](#). If you would like someone to talk to you, you can email:

yourstudentexperience@rada.ac.uk for current students

admissions@rada.ac.uk for prospective students

If you are a current student and you have completed RADA's complaints and appeals procedure, you can appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/>.

MA Text and Performance students should make any complaints using the Birkbeck system as they are registered with Birkbeck. You can find the policy [here](#).

Other relevant information

- Our Digital Platform (SharePoint)
- Accessing Digital Training (Web and SharePoint)
- Software guidance on Teams, Zoom and Voice Thread (Videos on SharePoint)
- Attendance Policy
- Individual course documents and guidance sheets

Policy created	8 July 2020
Version approval and date	Approved by Academic Board 15 July 2020 for immediate implementation.