

# Bristol Old Vic Theatre School

## Admissions Policy & Procedures

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## 1. Admissions Policy Statements

### 1.1 Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (CDD) Admissions Policy Statement

As part of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama ('CDD'), the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School ('The School') is one of eight small specialist schools with international reputations for high quality delivery and excellent success rates in the number of students gaining sustained employment in the dance, drama and circus professions. Schools select students with the greatest talent and aptitude for training underpinned by a commitment to widening participation and to promoting courses to young people who are less likely to participate in higher education.

Details of courses currently on offer at the School can be viewed at:

<https://www.oldvic.ac.uk/course-finder/>

This policy relates to all undergraduate and postgraduate courses offered at the School, unless otherwise specified.

The School's Admissions Policy coheres with that of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama.

### 1.2 Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (CDD) Admissions Policy Statement

The Conservatoire for Dance and Drama exists to train artists who will match the world's best and, on entering their professions, shape the future of dance, drama and circus arts. Established in 2001, the Conservatoire is a Higher Education Institution with a unique structure, comprising eight schools. All of these are small, specialist institutions with international reputations for high quality delivery in their respective fields.

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School students are registered with both the CDD and the University of the West of England (UWE). The School determines its own approach to admissions within the following guidelines.

Schools which are part of the CDD will:

- Audition or interview all applicants that meet the basic criteria for the discipline and course as outlined by the School;

- accept individuals based on talent and potential for training alone (i.e. not discriminating on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, economic background or otherwise); and
- consider each particular applicant's suitability for the course.

Applicants must demonstrate:

- the ability and capacity to study at a higher education level within a conservatoire setting;
- the facility to receive and potential to benefit from vocational training;
- evidence of suitable preparatory training and/or experience;
- an awareness of the rigours of the training and its vocational nature;
- an understanding of the nature of the industry; and
- an understanding of the aims and objectives of the course.

### **1.3 Equality and Diversity**

Celebrating diversity and working to achieve the creative potential in all our students, is at the heart of the work of the School.

As part of the CDD, the School is committed to selecting, training and supporting students, regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or religion. Applicants to Conservatoire schools are chosen solely on the basis of their talent and potential to develop the skills required for their chosen profession. The School does, however, judge applicants on their suitability for a course and their potential to successfully complete the training, as the work is rigorous and requires high levels of energy and commitment.

In our admissions process, we are committed to supporting students with disabilities. Disabled students are encouraged to disclose their support requirements so that we can endeavour to meet these during the audition or interview process and subsequent training.

We recognise that everyone is an individual and we will work with students to identify potential barriers to training and do what we can to remove those barriers. We will also make any necessary reasonable adjustments, in accordance with the Equality Act (2010), to ensure that disabled students can train at the School.

## **2. Entry Requirements**

The School welcomes applications from prospective students who can demonstrate that they will benefit from their chosen course and from the professional preparation that the School provides its students. General entry requirements are detailed on the School's website [www.oldvic.ac.uk](http://www.oldvic.ac.uk).

### **2.1 Age**

The minimum age for enrolment for all courses is 18 years at the start of the course. There is no upper age limit. Applicants need to have demonstrated to the School's satisfaction, taking into account individual circumstances, the intellectual maturity necessary to gain full advantage from the educational experience offered by the course.

## 2.2 Qualifications and previous experience

We cannot accept applications for our three year BA Hons courses if an applicant already holds a HE level 6 or level 7 qualification ( normally a BA or BSc (Hons) degree or an MA or MSc degree). Applicants should be able to demonstrate their potential to successfully complete the course they have applied for and their intent to pursue professional employment. They should also be able to satisfy the School's academic and non-academic criteria for the level and course as detailed on the School's website <https://www.oldvic.ac.uk/>

## 2.3 International applicants

The School is a sponsor for Tier 4 visas with UKVI, which enables us to recruit international students. International applicants who have been offered a place may need to apply for a Tier 4 visa, if they do not also hold an EU/UK passport. Once an offer has been accepted information about the Tier 4 visa process is sent from the Admissions Administrator, [admissions@oldvic.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@oldvic.ac.uk), together with their individual and personal Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) number for their visa application.

## 2.4 English language

The School requires prospective students to show that their English language is at a level which allows them to complete their course successfully as outlined in each course's entry requirements. These can be found in the courses pages of the School's website [www.oldvic.ac.uk/courses](http://www.oldvic.ac.uk/courses). Applicants may be required to demonstrate a proficiency in both written and verbal English language. This will normally be at GCSE English or equivalent International English Language Testing System (IELTS) at 7.0 pass level or higher.

## 3. Recruitment

Target recruitment numbers are agreed annually between the School and the CDD. The School normally accepts between 70-80 new students each year, depending upon the number of continuing students.

### 3.1 Marketing

Marketing and promotional activities include:

- information available on the School website: [www.oldvic.ac.uk](http://www.oldvic.ac.uk)
- printed Courses guide
- Social media including Facebook and Twitter
- Student performances

Applicants can email [admissions@oldvic.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@oldvic.ac.uk) if they require any of the above documents in an alternative format.

### 3.2 Participation and outreach

The School has a strong commitment to widening participation. It engages in a range of activities to widen access to technical and acting training by identifying and targeting under-represented groups through widening participation and outreach activities, including:

- outreach work in the South West including Theatre in Education productions visiting local primary schools, organising school workshops and project work with organisations.
- collaborative work with local theatres and youth groups
- grants to cover the cost of training and bursaries for youth or short course participants
- application fee waivers to cover the cost of application fees

## 4. Selection

The School's selection policies and procedures are transparent, effective, consistent and fair. Information concerning applicants is subject to the School's Data Protection Policy & Procedures.

Selection for all courses will normally be through audition or interview. To ensure equality of opportunity the School will:

- audition or interview all applicants (in rare cases, applicants may be contacted to discuss their application prior to audition or interview).
- ensure that all applicants are informed of the audition or interview procedures
- ensure that staff involved in the audition or interview process clearly understand the entry requirements and selection criteria
- ensure that staff are suitably trained to make fair and sound judgements (having regard to the specified selection criteria)
- monitor selection procedures with particular regard to equal opportunities
- ensure reasonable adjustments are made wherever necessary to improve accessibility and support disabled applicants

Auditions and interviews are designed to ensure that places are offered to those candidates who have the greatest talent and potential to develop and succeed in acting and technical careers regardless of previous experience, cultural or socio/economic background.

The School is committed to removing unnecessary barriers and increasing accessibility. Applicants are encouraged to disclose any impairment or condition (for example dyslexia or a physical, sensory or mental health condition) so that the School can endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments at audition or interview and during the course to enable participation. The School encourages disclosure in advance wherever possible but applicants can also disclose a disability or condition at any stage of the audition or interview process.

The School also encourages applicants to disclose any previous or current injuries to ensure that they can be supported during the audition or interview process and potential further training.

### 4.1 Application Procedure

Applications for most courses are now made via [UCAS](#). Applications to some courses are made directly to the School. Further details can be found on the [BOVTS website](#) in the "how to apply" section of each course page.

Applicants resident outside of the European Union should note that training in England does not entitle them to work in the UK unless they are personally eligible to do so by holding a UK or EU passport. Please note that all applicants, including UK citizens, must have been permanently resident in the UK or EU for the previous three years prior to starting a course in order to qualify for government funding.

The Equality and Diversity Monitoring data is considered confidential and information is used for statistical purposes only.

The deadline for acting course applications each year is usually the last working day in February. Technical course applications remain open until advised by the head of the course. The School reserves the right to extend the deadlines via the School's website at short notice.

#### **4.2 Application fee waivers**

In line with the School's and the CDD's commitment to widening participation, applicants who meet the following criteria are able to apply for an application fee waiver:

- UK Resident
- applying to an undergraduate course (Foundation and BA Hons Degrees)
- new to higher education (no previous degree-level qualification)
- annual household income of less than £25,000

The fee waiver system is administrated by the CDD and applicants are asked to visit the CDD website for further information and how to apply: [www.cdd.ac.uk/student-info/auditions/](http://www.cdd.ac.uk/student-info/auditions/).

#### **4.3 Withdrawals prior to audition or interview**

Applicants must inform the School if they decide to withdraw their application and do not intend to attend audition or interview. If an application is withdrawn, any application fees will not be refunded. A refund of the application fee will only be considered if the applicant is not eligible for their chosen course. Any applicant who wishes to be considered for the next round of admissions must reapply the following year.

#### **4.4 Information to Applicants prior to Audition or Interview**

Details of the audition or interview procedures are available on the School's website [www.oldvic.ac.uk](http://www.oldvic.ac.uk). These details are also emailed to applicants who have applied by the published deadline, along with the following documents/information as part of an audition/interview pack:

- directions to the School
- information about support for disabled students and encouragement to disclose if support is required at audition or interview.

#### **4.5 Audition or Interview and Selection Procedure**

All applicants must be 18 years of age on the date they would commence the course for which they are applying. Applicants are auditioned or interviewed by a selection panel, which will comprise of at least two panel members with relevant expertise as determined by the Principal and Artistic Director. Please refer to the School's website (<https://www.oldvic.ac.uk/>) for details of the audition or interview procedure for individual courses.

The Student Support Manager or other members of staff may wish to contact any applicants who have disclosed a current or previous injury or disability to ensure their needs can be supported during the course if they are offered a place.

The selection panel will be provided with a copy of each candidate's application form. A final decision on whether applicants will be offered a place is made by the panel at a deliberation



meeting following the audition or interview. A decision will be made based on the suitability and the level required for the course the applicant is auditioning or interviewing.

#### **4.6 Confirmation of outcome**

Confirmation of audition or interview outcome will be emailed to all applicants as soon as possible after a decision has been made. Those students who are offered a place will also be sent full terms and conditions which they must agree to on acceptance of an offer. These applicants will be asked to confirm their place by a given deadline. Once an acceptance of an offer is received, the applicant will receive confirmation of receipt. Applicants have the right to cancel within fourteen days of accepting an offer of a place (see [School's Fees Policy and Terms and Conditions](#) for more detailed information).

For the BA Hons and Foundation Degree Acting courses, if a candidate is on the reserve list in the preceding year, they will automatically be put through for a recall audition if they apply the following year.

Applicants who are not offered a place can request feedback from their audition or interview by contacting [admissions@oldvic.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@oldvic.ac.uk). A member of the admissions team will respond with a summary of feedback based on the notes provided by the audition or interview panel, but not with copies of the notes themselves.

#### **4.7 Communications with a third party**

All communications regarding an application and audition or interview outcome will be conducted directly with the applicant and not with a third party, including relatives.

#### **4.8 Entry to the BA Hons Costume for Theatre, Television and Film (top-up) following the Foundation Degree Costume for Theatre, Television and Film**

The BA Hons Costume for Theatre, Television and Film (top-up) is a separate course from the Foundation Degree Costume for Theatre, Television and Film. Successful completion of the Foundation Degree does not guarantee automatic entry to the BA Hons. Students are considered for selection for the BA Hons top-up course based on their progress during the second year of their Foundation Degree course but must formally apply to the head of the costume course to proceed onto the BA Hons top-up year.

#### **4.9 Complaints and Appeals**

For information about submitting a complaint regarding the admissions process, please refer to the School's [Admissions Complaints & Appeals Procedures](#),

#### **4.10 False, fraudulent or misleading information provided by applicants**

The School reserves the right to refuse admission to a programme or, if already registered, terminate registration if information provided by an applicant is fraudulent, inaccurate or incomplete.

The School expects that all information provided to it by applicants will be complete, true and accurate, with no misleading omissions or inaccuracies. Any submission of fraudulent, inaccurate or misleading information on the application, or the omission of relevant information, will result in the immediate cancellation of the application and/or the withdrawal of any offer made. Where information comes to light that an application may contain false, fraudulent or misleading information from a successful applicant who has already registered

as a student on a programme of study with the School, the student's registration may be terminated and student status withdrawn, or the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

#### 4.11 Criminal Records

From September 2018, the School will process any information relating to a criminal record in line with the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama's policy on disclosure of criminal records, which is published on the Conservatoire's website at <http://www.cdd.ac.uk/policies/student-related-policies/>

The School has a responsibility to provide a secure, safe environment for staff, students, visitors and others, and must balance this alongside any legal requirements, such as those to protect vulnerable individuals. As a result, at the point of making an offer to an applicant, the School will request information about whether an applicant has a relevant criminal conviction to disclose. Where a disclosure of a criminal record is made by an applicant in accepting an offer of a place to study, this will be assessed by the School under the Conservatoire's policy.

Having a criminal record is not a bar to training at the School, and the School welcomes applications from all individuals. Applicants should note that the School has some programmes which require an enhanced DBS check, and in certain cases whilst not preventing an individual from training with the School, this may preclude them from undertaking certain pathways. The School will not request any specific details about an applicant's criminal record until the point of making an offer of a place to study to an applicant, and applicants should not disclose any specific details until requested to do so by the School. Convictions which are deemed spent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, should not be disclosed by applicants under any circumstances. However, where successful applicants become registered students of the School, if they wish to undertake modules and/or placements which involve the need for an enhanced DBS check (i.e. teaching modules or modules where you are likely to be working in unsupervised environments with minors or vulnerable adults), applicants should be aware that spent convictions deemed as 'exceptions' under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 may be disclosed.

For independent advice and support regarding criminal convictions, applicants may wish to contact the charity [UNLOCK](#) who also have the following tools and guidance:

[The Disclosure Calculator](#) (for calculating when convictions become spent)

['Is it spent?' poster](#) (with information about when convictions become spent)

## 5. Enrolment

A place on a course at the School will be conditional upon an applicant complying with enrolment conditions including any conditions relating to fees, and enrolling at the start of the course and at the start of each subsequent academic year.

Applicants must enrol at the designated session at the start of their course, details of which will be set out in a Course Induction pack sent out approximately six weeks before the start of term.. If an applicant cannot or does not enrol at the designated session they must



provide the School with a reason for the non-enrolment which is acceptable to the School in order to be permitted to enrol on another occasion, otherwise they will not be entitled to enrol for that year of study (or any future year of study unless agreed with the School) and the relationship with the School and contract shall be terminated.

See UWE's and the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School's Terms and Conditions for further information available at <https://www.oldvic.ac.uk/about-us/policies/>.

## 5.1 Pre-enrolment information

Prior to enrolment applicants holding an offer of a place will be contacted and emailed a Course Induction pack. The induction pack will include:

- a welcome letter including information about:
  - student finance
  - registration procedures on the first day of term
  - term dates
  - accommodation
- the School's General Information Handbook
- financial information relating to tuition fees payable
- CDD registration form and accompanying notes, including CDD's Data Protection Statement.
- other information relevant to joining the course.

Applicants will receive direct from UWE, a link to the UWE registration form together with accompanying notes and UWE's Data Privacy Statement.

In addition, applicants will also be asked to provide proof of their identity, qualifications and international students will be asked for copies of their current passports/visas.

## 5.2 Enrolment

At enrolment students are asked to submit completed CDD forms, copies of which are kept at the School and a copy sent to CDD, where they are formally registered as CDD students. They are also asked to provide:

- a working and current e-mail address and a working land-based or mobile telephone number
- a term-time address
- for acting students £10 in cash as a deposit for a locker key for personal effects. This will be returned at the end of the course.
- a passport to be copied and returned on the day (international students only)
- confirmation of loan payment from Student Finance, if applicable

All registration forms and photocopied documents are kept in secure files subject to the School's Data Protection Policy & Procedures.

Students who are self-funding will need to have paid the first term of their annual fees prior to starting the course, and must sign a payment plan agreeing to pay the remaining fees in termly instalments at the start of the Spring and Summer terms. Please see the [BOVTS Fees Policy](#) for further information regarding fees and finance

### 5.3 Withdrawals

Applicants who hold an offer of a place and wish to withdraw prior to the start of their course must inform the admissions department as soon as possible. Any applicant who wishes to be considered for the following year of admissions must reapply the following year. Students who withdraw after the start of the course will be subject to pay tuition fees in line with the School's Fees Policy available with this policy on the School's website [www.oldvic.ac.uk](http://www.oldvic.ac.uk).

### 5.4 Intermission (interruption of studies)

Please refer to the [General Student Information Handbook](#) for information about interrupting periods of study at the School.

## 6. Allocation of Scholarships and Bursaries

The School and the CDD are able to offer bursaries and scholarships. To be considered for a bursary or scholarship, an applicant's household income must be assessed and the CDD relies on the Student Loans Company's assessment of their household income to determine any bursary or scholarship. They must, therefore, apply through the relevant agency (such as Student Finance England for English students) for their income to be assessed.

Applicants can also provide evidence of their household income using the CDD's Interim Income Assessment form. A copy of the form can be requested from the admissions department [admissions@oldvic.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@oldvic.ac.uk). The financial assessment based on this form will be used as guidance for likely bursaries and scholarships only, and applicants will still need to apply through the relevant Student Finance agency before any fee waivers can be confirmed.

Fee waivers are normally confirmed by the second term of study, but will not be paid until the third term of study. They may very occasionally be confirmed prior to enrolment.

## 7. Monitoring and Review of Policies and Procedures

This policy is subject to periodic review by the School's Senior Management Team. The Senior Management Team also monitors the following annually, all of which are relevant to admissions:

- recruitment, marketing and the prospectus/information on the School's website
- data related to admissions and the methods used to collect that data
- support for students and applicants with disabilities
- external requirements of CDD and UWE, which validates Bristol Old Vic Theatre School degrees

**In certain exceptional cases we reserve the right to vary these procedures. When we do so, the circumstances will be monitored and recorded through quality assurance measures.**

Name of Policy Writer/Amendments	Date Written & agreed / Amended	Approved by	Review Date
Julia Heeley	13/02/17	Paul Rummer	13/03/17
Heather Newton / Maxine Esser	30/05/18		
Maria Foster	15/6/2018		