

LAINE

THEATRE ARTS

ADMISSIONS POLICY AND
PROCESSES
2023

ADMISSIONS POLICY

The following policy statement applies to all courses run by the College; that is the *Trinity National Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre*, the one-year *Foundation Diploma in Dance and Musical Theatre*, and the *BA (Hons) Top-up Degree*, validated by the University of Portsmouth.

POLICY STATEMENT

As a Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) accredited training provider, Laine Theatre Arts complies with CDMT's Code of Practice for Auditions and Interviews. In so doing the College welcomes applications from any candidate who believes they have the passion, dedication, and physical and artistic potential to train for a career in professional performing arts.

Laine Theatre Arts (the College) is committed to an accessible and fair admissions procedure that admits students with the potential to succeed in the performing arts as demonstrated in audition and interview irrespective of their background and/or previous experience. In so doing, the College is committed to the key principles of fair admissions as outlined in *Fair admissions to higher education: recommendations for good practice* (Schwartz et al. 2004).

The College aims to follow admissions policies and procedures that are transparent, fair, courteous, consistent and expeditious and ensures that judgements on the potential of candidates are made by industry and training experts best equipped to make them.

The College uses the guidelines established by the Competition and Markets Authority to ensure that the consumer rights of applicants and students are safeguarded; we are guided by the Consumer Protection Regulations, Consumer Contract Regulations, and Unfair Terms Regulations.

The College ensures that all the information a candidate may need concerning training at Laine Theatre Arts prior to making an application to join the College will be conspicuously published on its website.

At each stage of the recruitment and admissions cycle, (i) Student Research and Application, (ii) Offer/Rejection, (iii) Acceptance, (iv) Student Enrolment), the College will provide the material information and contractual information an applicant/student needs to make an informed decision, and will ensure that it is accurate, complete, clear, unambiguous, up front, timely, and accessible. Information about how an applicant, or prospective student, can make a complaint or appeal is also provided at each stage, and can be found on the policy pages of our website.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADMISSIONS

The College provides a professional admissions service to all applicants. Recruitment and admissions activities are delivered in accordance with this Policy. This includes the following important aspects:

- The Academic Board has responsibility for the approval of the College's Admissions policies and procedures and for ensuring they are implemented effectively.
- The Executive Director is responsible for this Policy and for ensuring it is reviewed annually to guarantee that it best serves the College's applicants and its aims.
- Individual applications will be determined by a panel of senior tutors and members of the senior management team.
- The Admissions Officer is responsible for guaranteeing the accuracy and integrity of the core requirements and information on courses and the admissions process.

The College strives to ensure that all promotional materials are relevant, accessible and accurate at the time of publication, are not misleading, and that they provide as much information as possible to enable applicants to make informed decisions about their options. The Director of Studies & Educational Compliance is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of all course information published by the College for recruitment.

Other significant areas of responsibility include:

- The Admissions Officer and/or Outreach Lead are responsible for all recruitment activities in consultation with the principal and/or senior management committee, including ensuring that all staff attending such events are briefed on appropriate processes and procedures.
- The Admissions Officer is involved in supporting potential students in local schools and colleges in partnership with the Access and Participation Outreach Lead.
- The Admissions Officer and/or Outreach Lead are responsible for the design and delivery of Open Days and Applicant Experience Days, in consultation with the principal and/or senior management committee.
- The Head of Operations manages marketing campaigns, support for Open/Applicant Experience Days, the College website, and other printed or soft-copy materials.

Enquiries about the courses and admissions matters are the responsibility of the Admissions Officer. The nature of Higher Education means that sometimes the courses, services and other matters included in the prospectuses, associated websites, and other media may change. The College considers this in light of guidance from the Competition and Markets Authority and will only ever make changes where it is necessary to do so by a regulatory Authority and/or is beyond its control. The College will always inform applicants/ students of any changes as soon as possible.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS - DIPLOMA AND FOUNDATION COURSES

Entry to the Diploma and Foundation Courses is by audition. Ideal applicants will be hardworking, self-disciplined and courageous individuals who have a genuine passion for theatre, and who strive to be the best they can be in all disciplines.

All applicants need to be 16+ on or before the commencement of either course. There are no academic requirements, though ideally, candidates should have achieved a pass in English and Maths at GCSE or the equivalent.

The College's application and audition procedures are published on the College website. At audition, we assess the individual's ability to be able to cope with the rigorous, broad range of training we deliver.

Diploma and Foundation Applicants are assessed together on the same audition day, against the same criteria. Potential Foundation students may have less experience of prior formal training, or still be in the process of discovering which career path they wish to take. It might also be that the skills of a Foundation applicant are not yet strong enough to train at the next level, but that the College feels they would benefit from a year of intensive vocational training.

Most applicants know which course they wish to apply for at the point of application. It may be, however, that the College feels a particular applicant is better suited to a course other than the one for which they have applied, and an offer is given for that course instead.

The possible outcomes from the audition process are: an offer to study on the Diploma Course, an offer to study on the Foundation Diploma, or no offer given.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES - DIPLOMA AND FOUNDATION COURSES

The College is committed to delivering a professional admissions service, where staff are expert in course profiles and requirements, national and international qualifications, and internal and external admissions regulations. The Admissions Officer seeks to provide support and guidance to any prospective student navigating the audition/ application process.

- Applications to the Diploma and Foundation courses may be made online via the applications page of the College website. Alternative methods of application are available on request.
- Candidates are encouraged to inform the College of any assistance or aid required at audition and/or interview.
- Receipt of an application, a candidate is sent an 'Audition pack' containing the audition date, time, and location, travel and accommodation information and audition requirements. The pack also includes information on the outline of the audition day and clothing suitable for each element of the audition. Each applicant is offered a full audition day in a supportive, inclusive environment including a face-to-face interview. Audition marking criteria can be found in our Audition Procedures Policy.
- Applicants will be offered an audition date and details of the audition day schedule once their application is submitted. Alternative dates, where available, will be offered where an applicant is unable to attend on the date proposed. The outcome of the audition will be communicated to the applicant by the Admissions Officer.
- The College takes into consideration relevant skills and expertise gained from work experience or previous vocational training, particularly for mature candidates.
- Additional references may also be requested in order to inform the admissions process.
- Declarations of mitigating/extenuating circumstances should be emailed to Sarah Carroll at sarahcarroll@laine-theatre-arts.co.uk. Extenuating circumstances may be considered if an applicant narrowly fails an audition, however, this is at the discretion of the College.

DECISIONS

Decisions on Diploma and Foundation course applications will be sent to the applicant via post or email, commonly within seven days of the audition, by the Admissions Officer.

All successful applicants are provided with pre-contractual information. This information includes

- information on fees and other costs
- information on the College's full terms and conditions
- information on what could change in the future
- information on applicants' 14-day right to cancel

If any material changes are made to the course and/or the information provided to applicants in advance of the College making an offer of a place that the College deems to be significant, the details of the change will be communicated to the applicant who can then make an informed decision as to whether they wish to take up their offer of a place (see page 5 of this policy). In such circumstances, applicants will have 14 days from the date the changes were communicated to them to withdraw in line with the College's Terms and Conditions.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS - BA TOP-UP DEGREE

Entry to the BA (Hons) top-up is open to internal (existing) Diploma students; external students (students studying on equivalent Diploma courses at other CDMT-accredited colleges) and mature candidates who have significant experience of working in the theatre industry as performers or creative practitioners. The College will also consider applicants who hold a Higher National Diploma or any other level 5 qualification in a related subject.

The majority of BA students at Laine study the Degree course alongside their third year of Diploma study. Applications should be made directly to the Course Leader who will organise an interview with the applicant. Students may apply mid-way through their second year of study, although places will only be confirmed upon successful completion of it.

ADMISSIONS PROCESS - BA TOP-UP DEGREE

- Applications to the BA (Hons) Top-up degree should be made by completing the application form on the BA (Hons) 'How to Apply' page of the College Website.
- On receipt of the application form, the course leader will arrange for an interview to take place. This may be online or in person, and the interview may be held by the course leader or a nominated degree course tutor.
- Consideration of individual applications takes place with the Course Leader, who will inform individual applicants of an expected response time at the point of interview.
- Further information relating to degree admissions can be found in the FAQ's section of the BA (Hons) page of the College Website.

FEEDBACK

The College will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants on request. To obtain feedback, the applicant must email the Admissions officer, Sarah Carroll at sarahcarroll@laine-theatre-arts.co.uk. The College aims to provide this within fourteen working days.

APPLICANT'S RESPONSE

The College expects those who hold an offer to respond with their decisions on that offer within the deadlines that are made known to them.

Once an offer is made, the College will correspond with applicants directly to provide material relevant to the admission process. For the Diploma and Foundation courses, this will include information about accommodation, residence, induction processes, and the College's location within the town of Epsom. For the Degree course, this will include further information about course delivery and academic enrolment as a student of the University of Portsmouth.

Responses received out of time may result in the place no longer being available.

ACCESS AND WIDENING PARTICIPATION

Widening participation in higher education is a key strategic aim for the College and we welcome applications from students from a wide range of backgrounds. Further information regarding the College's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion is available on the policies page of our website.

APPLICATIONS FROM STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

Whilst the College welcomes applications from students who will be 16 or over at the commencement of the course, it recognises its special duty of care towards students who are legally still children, and has established procedures for dealing with applications from people who as students will be under 18 years of age on entry. Principles, institutional responsibilities, and procedures relating to the protection of under 18s and guidance covering important points of consideration at the pre-acceptance stage are set out in the Policy for the Admission and Support of Students Entering the College Under the Age of 18, which is available on the policies page on our website. Please note that parents of such students will be required to complete the consent form found on page 4 of the aforementioned policy before a student under the age of 18 can be enrolled at the College.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Complaints

Applicants may complain if they are dissatisfied with the service they have received regarding an application or any other aspect of the admission or audition procedure. Complaints relating to admissions will be managed in accordance with the Applicant Complaint Policy which is located on the policy pages of our website.

Appeals

An appeal is a request for reconsideration of an application decision. An applicant can only launch an appeal where they believe there were irregularities in the audition and/or interview procedure, and should follow the procedures laid out in the Entry Auditions Appeals Policy located on the policy pages of our website

APPLICANTS WITH CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

Our processes for considering applications from individuals with criminal convictions are designed to enable us to provide a safe and transparent context in which to assess potential risk. There are requirements of Colleges to consider and reduce to the maximum extent possible the risk of harm or injury to students, visitors and staff caused by students.

To enable this, applicants are required to declare any relevant unspent criminal convictions or declare any spent or unspent convictions or punishments that would appear on a criminal records check.

More information on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974>

CHANGES TO A COURSE

Where material changes have been made to a published course, applicants with an offer on that course will be informed of those changes as soon as possible. Such changes may include;

- a change in the approval status of the course;
- a course gaining or losing accreditation from a professional body;
- variation to the published course fees;
- variation to the published course content;
- change of location of course delivery;
- change to a course name;
- the closure or suspension of a course.

Under these circumstances, applicants will have the option to withdraw their acceptance to the course. Should they wish to be considered for an alternative course, their application will then be assessed against the entry criteria for that particular course, provided there is sufficient space and time to accommodate them.

DATA PROTECTION

All applications to Laine Theatre Arts are considered in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 (as amended). The information provided in applications will be used for admissions purposes and will form part of the students' record if they accept a place. The information will be confidential between the applicant, the College and any other relevant parties the applicant has consented to as part of the application process. The College may have to release information to authorised outside agencies, such as the police or the Home Office, to prevent or detect fraud.

APPLYING FOR DEFERRED ENTRY

Deferred entry means applying for a course and taking year out before starting it.

- Applications for deferred entry will be considered until the end of the application cycle and authorised at the absolute discretion of the College.
- Normally deferred entry is granted for one year only, however additional deferral requests may be considered on an individual basis.
- Applicants who decide to defer after accepting a place at the College for the current cycle should contact the Admissions Officer and will be considered on an individual basis.
- The Principal reserves the right to ask any student holding a deferred entry place at the College to attend a re-assessment day prior to their taking up a place at the College to ensure the individual is still able to satisfy the entry criteria.

APPLICANTS WITH SEND

All applications from candidates who have disclosed a disability, special need, and/or specific learning difficulty will be considered in the same way as any other application and a decision will be made based upon the candidate's performance merit and potential.

Where an application indicates a disability, special need, and/or specific learning difficulty, the details relating to this are picked up by the Head of Student Services when an applicant is registered on a course. The applicant's requirements are considered, and appropriate action taken to support, for example, their learning and access needs. Where necessary a meeting will be organised with the applicant to explore such requirements and how these may be met. Following this, support will be put in place and reasonable adjustments made at the College to address barriers which disabled students may encounter in the learning, teaching and assessment environment and which may affect performance.

NB: Whilst the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 normally make it illegal to reject an applicant on the grounds of disability there are three instances in which a College can reject a disabled applicant if they have the entry criteria necessary and these are

- overriding health and safety concerns
- barriers resulting from professional requirements
- necessary reasonable adjustments cannot be made.

FEES

The College is committed to a fair and transparent policy in respect of all fee charges made to students, whether tuition fees or additional course-related costs. Tuition and other fees may be subject to change and are available on the College website. Details of specific fees are provided at the time of offer.

FRAUDULENT APPLICATIONS AND NON-DISCLOSURE

The College requires applicants to provide full, honest, and accurate information on their application form and in all subsequent communications with the College. Where the College has reason to suspect that this may not be the case, it reserves the right to investigate the matter fully and to decline an application to enrol.

If, in the course of such an investigation, the College finds that an applicant has made fraudulent or misleading claims in their application, the College reserves the right to withdraw any offer it has made. Where an applicant has omitted to provide all relevant information on their application form (including, but not limited to, qualifications commenced but not completed, qualifications resulting in a fail grade, exclusions) it similarly reserves the right to withdraw any offer it has made. In the event that an offer is withdrawn for the reasons set out above, the College may also, where appropriate, inform any other relevant professional bodies and/or third parties about the withdrawal.

In cases where the fraudulent and/or misleading information is discovered at any time after the applicant has enrolled as a student of the College, the College reserves the right to carry out its own investigations. If, after the completion of the investigation, it is found that there has been a deliberate attempt to use fraudulent and/or misleading information or relevant information was withheld in order to obtain a place on one of the College's courses, the College may take action to permanently exclude the student. In the event that a student is permanently excluded for the reasons set out above, the College may also, where appropriate, inform any other relevant professional bodies and/or third parties about the exclusion.

POLICY APPROVED - NOVEMBER 2023. DATE OF NEXT REVIEW, NOVEMBER 2024

Annex 1

Relevant legislation

Data Protection Act 2018 defines a legal basis for the handling of personal information relating to living people.

Freedom of Information Act 2000 creates a general right of access, on request, to information held by public bodies.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) enables some criminal convictions to be regarded as 'spent' after a rehabilitation period. Some professions are exempt from the Act and include those working with children and other vulnerable groups, such as teachers and social workers.

Human Rights Act (1998) the Act makes it unlawful for a public body to act in a way which is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Equality Act 2010 (as amended) seeks to prevent differing strands of discrimination.

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 which merged The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to become the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). CRB checks are now called DBS checks.

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Children Act (2004) The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 - The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides public access to information held by public authorities. The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act allows employers and institutions to gain access to documentation related to nationality, asylum and immigration.