

LAMDA

Admissions Policy and Procedures

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1. Strategic priorities of the school

Our Mission

Founded in 1861, LAMDA is the oldest drama school in the UK, offering exceptional vocational training to actors, stage managers, technicians, directors and designers. In addition to six validated undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes, LAMDA offers a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) and a number of validated semester and short courses.

LAMDA's mission is to foster exceptional talent through world-leading performance arts training, ensuring inclusive access and empowering students to enrich global culture by excelling on the world stage.

Our Vision

Our vision is to be the global beacon of excellence in performing arts education, nurturing ensemble-based diverse talent, inspiring innovation and shaping the future of our industries.

LAMDA is an ensemble:

- The ensemble is inclusive
- The ensemble is collaborative
- The ensemble is compassionate

We are led by the following principles:

- We will change the face of theatre, film, and future media
- We will create new work and remake/reimagine the classics
- We will adopt a partnership-first, planet-first approach

Our Student Body: LAMDA's Objectives

We want the students we train to reflect the society we live in and to be recruited on the basis of talent, passion and ability to learn, regardless of background, educational qualifications or economic circumstances. The industry will be as successful, diverse and representative of our society as the actors, directors and technicians that we train. It is LAMDA's objective to ensure that our student body is reflective of a multicultural and diverse society and therefore to widen recruitment and access to our training, ensuring that any talented student is able to access our HE courses, regardless of economic, social or cultural background or other barriers.

In order to achieve our mission, we are committed to equality of opportunity for all students. A central pillar of our 2030 strategy is "training without borders" where we set out our core objective to create an inclusive and diverse learning environment where every student, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to thrive and fulfil their potential. This commitment is embedded in all aspects of our educational and operational practices, from admissions and curriculum design to student support services and community engagement.

2. Application Process

2.1 Admissions criteria

2.1.1 General

All admissions decisions are taken on the basis of an applicant's ability:

- a) to benefit from the course,
- b) to make a positive contribution to LAMDA as a student and
- c) to make a positive contribution to the profession as a graduate.

In addition, auditions and interviews for LAMDA's courses are designed to identify potential students who demonstrate:

- evident ability;
- a commitment to the rigour of the training;
- the capacity to be adaptive and receptive.
- a willingness to work in a group;
- ability to work in the English language to a standard appropriate for the course;
- compatibility with LAMDA's particular training and ethos.

LAMDA reserves the right to refuse applications at its discretion.

2.1.2 Age

The minimum entry age for LAMDA courses (including all those listed in 2.1.3 below) is 18. Potential students should be 18 or over by the date the course is due to start. Some short courses have a minimum age of 16; these are identified on the website. There is no upper age limit.

If the applicant is under the age of 18 on the date of application, a parent or guardian must check and agree all details provided and these terms and conditions, before the application is submitted.

2.1.3 Qualifications and experience

All courses listed below

For all courses listed, below, in addition to the particular requirements stated, LAMDA requires that applicants should be fluent English speakers. Non-native speakers do not need to provide an English language test report when they apply, as we assess this at the audition and interview. However, you'll need to provide a valid IELTS UKVI Academic test report with an overall score of seven if you're offered a place.

Cert HE Foundation in Stage and Screen

There are no academic prerequisites. Admissions decisions are taken on the basis of auditions and interviews, informed by the information on students' application forms.

BA (Hons) Professional Acting

There are no academic prerequisites. Admissions decisions are taken on the basis of auditions and interviews, informed by the information on students' application forms.

BA (Hons) Production and Technical Arts: Stage & Screen

There are no academic pre-requisites, but applicants must have some backstage experience – amateur or professional. Admissions decisions are taken on the basis of interviews, informed by a written application form.

MA/MFA Classical Acting for the Professional Theatre;

MA/MFA Musical Theatre;

MFA Professional Acting

Applicants must have completed a BA or BFA degree, or have comparable professional experience. Applicants without a first degree must demonstrate the ability to work at postgraduate level, and a comparable level of knowledge and experience, gained in a professional company or at a vocational drama school. All applicants will be auditioned and interviewed, and those without a first degree may be asked to provide an example of their academic work. Admissions decisions are taken on the basis of auditions and interviews, informed by a written application form.

MA Directing

Applicants must have completed a college or university course, or have adequate professional experience to meet the demands of the course. They must have been sufficiently involved in theatre (professional or student) in order to demonstrate serious professional intent in pursuing a career as a director. Admissions decisions are taken on the basis of auditions and interviews, informed by a written application form.

Semester Programme Classical Acting and Shakespeare Summer School

There are no academic prerequisites for these courses. Admissions decisions are taken on the basis of the information on students' application forms. Non-native English speakers will be required to undergo a live assessment of their language ability by a member of the Admissions team.

2.1.4 Nationality, visas and immigration

LAMDA is a sponsor for UK Student Visas. Students who do not meet the criteria for 'home' student status may have to apply for a Student Visa when they have been offered a place at LAMDA. The Admissions team are able to offer advice on visa requirements.

2.1.5 Equality and diversity

We welcome applications from all sections of the community.

We do not discriminate on the grounds of disability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or religion. LAMDA does, however, judge applicants critically on their suitability for a course, according to their ability and their potential to complete the training successfully. All of our courses are intensive and require high levels of energy and commitment.

We will work with individual students to identify potential barriers to training and will do what we can to remove those barriers. We will make any reasonable adjustment to ensure that disabled students can train at LAMDA. Dedicated support staff are available in Student Services to facilitate this process.

In our admissions process, we are committed to supporting students with disabilities. Disabled students are encouraged to disclose their needs in advance so that we can endeavour to meet them during the audition process and subsequent training. This includes unseen disabilities such as epilepsy or dyslexia. Information disclosed during this process remains confidential, is only released to relevant staff members with the applicant's permission, and does not form part of the admissions decision.

The Admissions team are all equipped to answer queries about the support available for disabled applicants/students and can be reached by email at admissions@lamda.ac.uk.

2.1.6 Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning: AP(E)L

LAMDA's courses are not suitable for the operation of AP(E)L arrangements. The nature of the education and training provided means that students are not able to join a course with 'advanced standing' or deploy towards a LAMDA qualification any academic credit earned elsewhere.

2.2 How to apply

2.2.1 Applicant and Student Gateway

Applications for undergraduate degree courses are made through UCAS, with some exceptions for applicants wishing to audition in North America. Applications for all other courses must be made direct to LAMDA via the Applicant and Student Gateway, which is linked from the LAMDA home page and on all the relevant pages about the courses in the on-line prospectus.

All direct applicants are given a unique ID number, a user name and a password. This enables them to save an incomplete application, and then log back in as often as they wish, to complete it.

The application portal guides applicants through each section of the process, and offers advice about what to include in personal statements or educational history, for instance. More detailed help and advice is available from the Admissions team, via admissions@lamda.ac.uk. Applicants with any technical issues related to the Gateway should also raise them with Admissions in the first instance.

2.2.2 Deadlines and application limits

Deadlines for completing applications are published on each course's page on the LAMDA website.

LAMDA sets a limit each year for the total number of applications which can be processed for each course. Once that limit has been reached, the relevant course will be removed from the Applicant Gateway and no further applications will be possible.

2.2.3 Number of applications permitted

Applicants may only apply once during the annual application cycle. Those applying more than once will not be offered additional interviews / auditions and will not have the additional application fee refunded.

2.2.4 Availability for audition / interview

If you are required to attend an audition or interview, you will be asked to list any dates on which you will not be available. The Admissions team will inform applicants of the dates between which their audition will take place. LAMDA will try to offer an audition / interview slot that fits with an applicant's stated availability and preferences, but this cannot be guaranteed. Applicants should inform Admissions if there are any potential issues during that time period for their audition. Auditions and interviews take place during a limited period of time so alternative slots may not always be available. LAMDA will not reschedule auditions / interviews on multiple occasions. LAMDA aims to give every applicant two to three weeks' notice of an audition or interview, but this can vary according to the time of year. Applicants are advised that they should be ready to be

seen at the point at which they complete their application. It is applicants' responsibility to keep LAMDA informed of any changes to their availability.

North American auditions are held on advertised dates only. The dates and venues available are updated regularly on the LAMDA website.

Applicants who fail to attend the slot they have previously accepted must contact Admissions within 48 hours of that scheduled audition / interview to explain the circumstances. If, in the judgement of the Admissions and Student Services Manager, there is sufficient evidence that the failure to attend was beyond the control of the applicant, a further audition / interview may be offered, subject to the availability of dates, times and venues. Acceptable reasons for a missed audition or interview would normally be limited to ill health, cancelled transportation or similar emergencies.

2.2.5 Criminal convictions

Applicants are not asked to declare any unspent criminal convictions until an offer of a place has been made. All of LAMDA's courses involve contact with the general public, and some courses involve an integral work placement; students may not be able to undertake the placement (and therefore complete their studies) if they have criminal convictions or punishments.

Declaring a relevant criminal conviction or punishment will not exclude anyone from the application process; this information is collected during the offer / pre-enrolment stage only, to help LAMDA confirm the suitability of applicants for the place offered and to reduce the risk of harm or injury to students and staff caused by the criminal behaviour of other students. Where an offer of a place is made to someone with an unspent criminal conviction, LAMDA will use a proportionate, risk-based approach to consider each case before a final decision is made. Failure to declare a relevant criminal conviction may result in the termination of a student's enrolment.

2.3 Finance

2.3.1 Audition / Application Fees

LAMDA will only charge one first round audition fee per applicant per year, unless the applicant wishes to apply to MA Directing in addition to another course. The charges may vary by course and by location. The rates are published in full on the course pages of the LAMDA website, and are payable via the application portal.

The application fee is non-refundable under any circumstances other than

- credit/debit card payment errors or
- applications received after LAMDA's annual limit has been reached.

Applicants are urged to check the age restrictions and other published entry criteria before making payment, as application fees cannot be refunded for invalid applications.

For applicants to courses in acting, musical theatre and directing there is an additional fee for a recall audition.

2.3.2 Audition fee waivers

Receiving an audition or interview fee waiver will not affect the outcome of an application in any way; the audition/interview panel will not know which applicants have received a waiver.

First Round / Initial application: Pathways

LAMDA offers free audition and interview places each year for UK applicants via the organisations we work with in our “Pathways” Access and Widening Participation (AWP) projects. Places are limited. Candidates are selected either by the organisations we work with, or by the AWP team.

Recall auditions

- a) All Pathways applicants who are offered a recall will automatically have the recall fee waived, and have their UK travel / accommodation costs paid as appropriate
- b) All other UK applicants who are offered a recall will be sent information about applying for a recall fee waiver and a travel / accommodation bursary. The amount of a bursary will vary according to our assessment of an applicant’s need.
- c) Eligible applicants must:
 - Be current UK residents
 - Be applying for an undergraduate course (CertHE, FdA or BA);
 - new to Higher Education (with no previous degree or any other Higher Education-level qualification)
 - be from a household whose annual income is less than £43,000
 - have attended a UK state school
- d) In addition, applicants should meet, at least one of the following criteria:
 - Have a declared disability
 - Be a care leaver
 - Be an estranged student (ie not supported by a family)
 - Be from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background
 - Be from a neighbourhood with low participation in HE, as categorised by POLAR4
 - Be from a household with an annual income of under £25,000

Further guidance and an application form are made available to those invited to recall auditions.

2.3.3 Tuition fees

Tuition fees are published on the LAMDA website as far in advance as practically possible. On some courses, differential rates apply, depending on a student’s nationality and/or domicile; if applicants are in any doubt as to which rate will apply to them, they should contact Admissions for a full fee assessment to be carried out.

The initial offer of a place at LAMDA must be secured by the payment of a deposit, unless an official government-approved student loan has been arranged for the full amount of the fees or if a scholarship has been awarded. Thereafter, fees at LAMDA are generally charged on a termly basis. As stated in LAMDA’s general regulations, fees for each term must be paid in advance and no later than the date specified in the student’s offer letter. [These provisions for deposits and fees do not apply to students whose fees are paid via certain official student loan schemes; students’ individual offer letters set out the details of this provision.]

Any student who is in arrears with their fees will not be able to progress with their training until all outstanding monies owed to the Academy are paid. Students who have not paid their fees in full prior to completing their programme of study will have their degree withheld until such payments are made.

Payment for the course constitutes acceptance of a place and agreement to the course regulations. All payments will be subject to the refund policy as stated below.

Students, in exceptional circumstances, intending to leave the Academy must give at least a full term’s notice in writing of such intention to the Director of Actor Training and

Drama School. Students will be liable for fees throughout the notice period (for example if a student leaves halfway through the Autumn term they are liable for the remainder of fees for that term and the full fees for the following Spring term). Separate arrangements are in place for students funded via the UK Student Loans Company. Students' offer letters set out the details of the arrangements; the Finance Department operate a policy concerning students who withdraw early, a copy of which is available on request.

2.3.4 Funding, scholarships and bursaries

Maintenance and tuition fee loans are available for eligible UK students who are new to Higher Education and studying an undergraduate course at the Academy. UK students on a Postgraduate (MA / MFA) course may be eligible for a Postgraduate Loan. Applications for both of these schemes should be made to the Student Loans Company via the appropriate national body.

A programme of scholarships and fee waivers is available, as part of LAMDA's Access and Participation Plan, approved and monitored by the Office for Students. A further range of scholarships is also available, funded by a number of charitable trusts, foundations and private individuals.

Decisions about eligibility for scholarships are made by the Scholarships Committee.

For US students: LAMDA is eligible for the US Federal Direct Loan Program (school code: G21086). US applicants for our full-time degree courses (BA (Hons), MA and MFA) may be eligible to apply for a loan.

Full information is published on the LAMDA website, and information, advice and guidance is available from the Admissions team admissions@lamda.ac.uk.

2.4 Auditions and interviews

2.4.1 General

We usually hold auditions and interviews for our full-time courses between November and May each year.

Decisions are usually made within two weeks of the audition/interview, but this varies according to the time of year.

Due to the volume of applications, auditions/interview results cannot be discussed on the telephone under any circumstances. LAMDA is unable to offer deferred entry to any of our courses unless very exceptional circumstances apply.

The audition/interview offer letter is emailed to applicants, and includes full details of our audition/interview requirements and our admissions process. In addition, information for first round auditions and interviews is published on the LAMDA website. This information includes the kind of audition pieces which should be prepared, details of any portfolio to be brought to an interview, and other briefing material applicants need.

2.4.2 Filming of auditions

Live auditions may be recorded for decision-making purposes, to ensure fairness and consistency. Once results have been confirmed, videos will be deleted, in accordance with our Data Retention Policy, and our Privacy Notice, published on the LAMDA website. All applicants will be made aware through visible and audible signposting if their audition is being recorded.

2.4.3 Audition panels and process (acting courses only)

First round auditions will consist of an assessment of applicants' self-tape videos. Applicants will be given instructions on how to upload a video in a standard format. First round videos will be assessed by a trained and experienced member of LAMDA's Audition Squad. If an assessor is unsure how to grade a video, they will seek a second opinion from another member of the Squad or from the appropriate course leader. Applicants auditioning North America will be invited to an in-person first round audition.

Some applicants may be invited to an in-person workshop audition, which will be at LAMDA or one of our regional venues.

Final recall auditions will take place in person at LAMDA's main site in West London, or at locations in the USA. All recalls are in-person only. Panels will normally consist of a range of senior LAMDA teaching staff and the Admissions and Student Services Manager, plus any additional teaching staff deemed appropriate.

At all stages, assessors and interviewers are asked to grade the applicants they see on a range of appropriate criteria. All the panels' marks are compiled over the course of the year's auditions in order for decisions about offers to be made.

2.4.4 Admissions decisions

The ultimate responsibility for admissions decisions rests with either the Director of Actor Training & Drama School, or the Head of Production & Technical Training, as appropriate for the course. Decisions will be informed by the material presented on application forms; applicants' prior education and experience; and their performance at audition and/or interview, as assessed by a suitably experienced panel of LAMDA staff.

2.4.5 Deferred places

LAMDA is unable to defer the offer of a place. A deferral request from an applicant holding an offer but wishing to commence studies at LAMDA in the subsequent year will normally be considered under exceptional circumstances only, and may be advised to re-apply.

2.5 False, fraudulent or misleading information provided by applicants

LAMDA expects that all information provided to it by the applicant will be complete, true and accurate, with no misleading omissions. 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.

2.6 Feedback; Links to admissions appeals and complaints procedures

2.6.1 Feedback

The audition panel's decision is final, and any feedback provided will not alter the decision taken. Currently feedback is only available following recall auditions. Requests for feedback must be received with 14 days of receiving a recall result.

2.6.2 Complaints and appeals about admissions

LAMDA aims to provide an environment which in its opinion allows applicants to demonstrate their suitability for training. The audition and interview procedures are intended to be fair and transparent. Entry to audition/interview is on the understanding that there is an acceptance of the professional judgement of the panel.

LAMDA is committed to fairness and transparency, and we recognise that there will be occasions where an applicant may wish to lodge an appeal or complaint against the admissions process.

Some issues may be able to be resolved via an informal query, and applicants are encouraged to explore their issue informally with LAMDA admissions staff in the first instance. However, LAMDA has formal procedures, designed to be followed where an applicant wishes to pursue a formal appeal or complaint.

Grounds under which a **complaint** may be made:

- a) That there is evidence of significant administrative or procedural error in the admissions process
- b) That there is evidence of prejudice or bias in the selections process

Grounds under which an **appeal** may be made:

- a) That there is additional relevant information which was for valid reasons unable to be included in the original application, and which warrants further consideration of the application

The LAMDA Admissions Appeals and Complaints policy sets out the procedures by which an applicant may lodge a formal appeal or complaint against a decision regarding admission to a course. It is available to download from the auditions and interviews section of LAMDA's website, or from the Admissions team.

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