

The Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Arts

Audition and Interviews Code of Practice

OVERVIEW

The Academy is committed to providing a strict code of practice to ensure its audition procedure is fair, rigorous and transparent.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish core principles that underpin good professional practice and the expected processes and behaviour that demonstrate our core principles and standards.

The Academy undertakes auditions for entry to secondary, further and higher education programmes. This policy is managed by the Academy Quality Board. Each level of education will have specific guidance and application relevant to each level.

The following policy applies to:

Performing Arts Courses (Further Education)

- **One year Performing Arts Foundation Course**
- **Three year Musical Theatre Course validated by Trinity College London**
- **Three year Dance Course validated by Trinity College London**

CORE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

The Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Arts follows the Code of Practice prepared by the Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET).

The Academy undertakes:

- To consider all applications
- All candidates will be offered an audition, provided they meet the entry criteria
- To provide candidates with the necessary information before and during the selection process
- To provide a specific audition process to uncover aptitude and potential within candidates for the programme and the profession
- To provide candidates with information on the availability of and criteria for the allocation of public funding
- To ensure that the decision-making process is fair, consistent and transparent
- To ensure that candidates are informed of the outcome of an audition/interview

Audition and Interviews, Code of Conduct and Appeals Procedure

Revised: April 2015

Next Review: April 2016

This policy applies to **PERFORMING ARTS COURSES** and **DANCE COURSES (FURTHER EDUCATION LEVEL)**

1: The Academy undertakes to consider all applications

All candidates will be offered a place provided they meet the following criteria:

- All candidates must complete the additional Italia Conti Registration form including a written statement, a photograph, and payment of the required audition fee.
- The candidate must meet the age requirements of their course at the start of their first year of study.
- Applications must be received by the deadline; this is usually 31st March for a September intake, although later applications may be considered for some courses.
- Candidates are invited to disclose any access or learning requirements on their application form, so that any reasonable adjustments within the audition or interview process can be made.
- In order to ensure that the Academy can offer as much support as possible, candidates are invited to disclose any long term, ongoing or significant past health issues on their application form so that these can be discussed.
- The Academy does not discriminate on grounds of age, background, race, colour, disability, family circumstances, gender, nationality, political beliefs or party membership, religion, sexual orientation, trade union membership or on any other grounds deemed to be irrelevant to participation in the course.
- The Academy is committed to providing access to our courses to as wide a range of social groups as possible.
- Successful candidates on the One Year Performing Arts Foundation Course looking to apply for the Three Year Diploma Courses are offered a free audition
- Course applications can be access on the website at www.italiaconti.com

2: Italia Conti undertakes to provide candidates with the necessary information before and during the selection process

BEFORE THE AUDITION:

- The Academy will contact all candidates within three weeks upon receipt of their completed application (sometimes this may be sooner). The letter will provide the following information:
 - Audition date
 - Audition requirements (what candidates will be asked to prepare)
 - Details of the audition day

Audition and Interviews, Code of Conduct and Appeals Procedure
Revised: April 2015
Next Review: April 2016

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- The Academy will not contact applicants until an audition date has been assigned. Students are welcome to contact the Academy at any point with reference to the audition process.
- All candidates should be aware that, owing to the high number of applicants, it may take up to three months for an audition date to be assigned (and on occasion longer).
- The Academy will provide no less than two weeks' notice for audition dates (unless specifically requested by the applicant), but aims to give a months' notice to applicants when possible.
- The Academy will endeavour to accommodate students' reasonable requests should they need to change their audition date, for example the audition date is clashing with another audition or they have an exam.
- Details of audition requirements and this code of practice are accessible for reference via the Italia Conti website at any stage of the process.

Audition requirements for:

Professional Diploma in Musical Theatre One Year Performing Arts Foundation Course

Auditions at the Italia Conti Academy usually consist of a short dance class followed by solo pieces prepared by the auditionee in dance, acting and singing performed in front of a panel of assessors selected from a team of senior tutors and management. Disabled candidates or those with learning difficulties should contact the Admissions Secretary for guidance through the audition procedures, and to arrange any specific help or support needed. Candidates should prepare the following:

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| Dance: | Participate in a Ballet and Contemporary or Jazz class
Prepare two contrasting dance solos in any style of approximate 1minute 30 seconds |
| Acting: | Prepare two contrasting monologues approximately 1 minute 30 seconds in duration. These should be thoroughly learned by heart and a copy of the pieces should be handed to the panel. |
| Singing: | Prepare two songs. One song should be Musical Theatre |

Each piece of music should be recorded at the beginning of a CD and be clearly marked. There will not be an accompanist. It is also advised that a back up of your music on either an mp3 player or phone is advisable.

Professional Diploma in Dance

Candidates will be required to:

- Participate in a Ballet, Contemporary and Jazz technique class
- Participate in a coaching session
- Prepare a dance solo in any style of approximately 1minute 30 seconds

Audition and Interviews, Code of Conduct and Appeals Procedure
Revised: April 2015
Next Review: April 2016

- Attend an interview

ENTRY CRITERIA:

Formal qualifications, vocational experience prior learning accreditation:

While audition is the primary means of determining the applicant's suitability for entry, normally the Academy requires the following:

For all Professional Diploma Courses and One Year Performing Arts

Foundation Course

- Formal qualifications: – Ideally applicant should have achieved GCSE A* - C passes in five subjects including Maths and English Language or their equivalent.

Professional Dance Diploma

- Applicants must have a minimum of 3 years' experience in ballet and either contemporary / modern dance and/or jazz dance.
- Applicants should be working at Major/Advanced level. It is not a requirement for applicants to have taken dance examinations.

Prior learning accreditation

The Academy, in common with other performing arts institutions, considers applications from those who have followed unconventional academic pathways, those who have changed careers later in life and those who have little experience in the performing arts but who show great potential. The value added dimension of a vocational education for the latter group should not be underestimated. The implications of these factors are that:

- There is no alternative to audition as a means of admitting students to the course.
- The cultural and academic diversity of entrant groups of performing arts students is likely to be greater than is common in many other areas of arts education and training.
- The Academy may ask for sample written work from prospective candidates to support an application.
- Where the Academy is satisfied that a candidate from an unconventional academic background without formal qualifications nevertheless fulfils the audition criteria (outlined below) it may waive these requirements.

AUDITION CRITERIA

The aim of the audition is to provide the candidate with the opportunity to demonstrate the quality of his/her work and his/her potential to benefit from the course. Auditions are normally conducted by senior members of faculty who look for reasonable evidence that the applicant:

Audition and Interviews, Code of Conduct and Appeals Procedure
Revised: April 2015
Next Review: April 2016

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Dance:

- Has the physicality and stamina to withstand the demands of full-time training
- Is able to pick up, retain and deliver moving sequences within their physical capability
- Is able to make sense of corrections, directives and perform these within the required style

Acting:

- Is able to interpret and understand text
- Is able to deliver a truthful character with natural spontaneity and expressiveness
- Is able to use the voice to project and articulate

Singing:

- Is able to demonstrate natural voice ability
- Is able to deliver a song with good pitch, tonal quality and articulation
- Is able to communicate intention and emotional context

Performance and presentation

- Is capable of work of distinctive individuality
- Is able to work effectively with others
- Is flexible, industrious and receptive to suggestions
- Possesses the fortitude, motivation and stamina to participate in and complete the course
- Is capable of becoming an excellent ambassador of the academy

Interview:

- Had demonstrated a clear rationale to support their personal statement of why they have applied to the academy
- Has demonstrated a clear understanding of the demands and expectations of the course
- Has demonstrated to have the ambition to succeed
- Understands funding arrangements and fees
- Would make an excellent ambassador for the Academy

3: Italia Conti undertakes to give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their potential to fulfil the aims of the course they are applying for

SELECTION PROCESS

Audition Day Procedure:

3 Year Professional Musical Theatre Diploma and One Year Foundation Course

- Prospective candidates arrive and need to register their attendance where they will be allocated an audition number
- They may be required to change into dance wear and will be welcomed to the studio to warm up
- Candidates will be greeted by the Course Director and/or senior members of staff who will explain the audition process, safety procedures and about the building in general
- All audition candidates are required to undergo a basic physical assessment to establish general suitability for training and highlight any specific problems such as scoliosis.
- Candidates will then participate in a Ballet and Contemporary or Jazz class followed by their solo.
- Candidates will then undergo an Acting and Singing warm-up before they present their acting monologues and songs.
- All audition candidates will be seen in a solo audition by a panel of judges selected from senior tutors and management representing a cross-section of performing arts disciplines.
- All audition candidates may be seen in a personal interview by the Principal or a member of senior management.
- Candidates are assessed during audition according to set criteria applicable to every auditionee. Once these criteria have been marked, the candidate may be asked to halt an audition piece.

Audition and Interviews, Code of Conduct and Appeals Procedure

Revised: April 2015

Next Review: April 2016

This policy applies to **PERFORMING ARTS COURSES** and **DANCE COURSES (FURTHER EDUCATION LEVEL)**

3 Year Professional Dance Diploma

The entry audition consists of five components which are conducted over three stages that include a call-back process.

- Upon registration students will be allocated an audition number and then are welcomed to the studio to warm-up

Stage 1:

- Candidates will participate in a Ballet, Contemporary and Jazz technique class. Candidates must successfully complete this stage before being invited to the next stage.
- Candidates who have not been successful to the next stage will be invited to receive feedback. Feedback will aim to provide general guidance applicable ONLY to the Academy's audition process and criteria.

Stage 2:

- Candidates will participate in a coaching session where they will be taught a short contemporary or jazz combination to assess response and understanding, ability to pick up unseen material and readiness in which information can be absorbed, directives applied, and the level of performance delivered.
- Candidates will then be asked to present a solo of their own choice

Stage 3:

- Candidates who have successfully completed Stage 1 & 2 will proceed to the physical assessment followed by an interview with the Course Director.

All candidates should be aware:

- That because most auditions are operated on a solo basis, you may have to wait for some time before being seen.
- The Italia Conti building is situated in Central London and there may be a degree of external noise for which the Academy cannot be held responsible.

4: The Academy undertakes to provide candidates with information on the availability of and criteria for the allocation of public funding

Dance and Drama Awards

Dependent upon the results of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, fee support may be offered to a number of students through the government-backed Dance and Drama Awards which is means tested.

If successful in gaining a place, the applicant will usually be told within 14 working days of the audition, although we aim to inform students earlier wherever

Audition and Interviews, Code of Conduct and Appeals Procedure
Revised: April 2015
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possible. Once a place has been accepted, candidates looking to apply for a Dance and Drama Award (see <https://www.gov.uk/dance-drama-awards> for details) will be sent a Financial Details form for them to complete. The award will then be allocated to the most talented of successful auditionees whose family's financial income meets the specified income band. Commencing with those who have scored highest at audition and working downwards.

The Academy does not usually have a separate award audition.

If not offered an Award the student must be absolutely certain they have enough funds for the fees and the considerable expense of living in London before accepting a place.

We advise students to investigate further sources of funding by looking at the Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET).

5: Italia Conti undertakes that the decision-making process is fair, consistent, and transparent

- The criteria for audition are available to candidates within this document which is available to all candidates who apply.
- Additional information is sent to all candidates once an agreed audition date has been set.
- Candidates are encouraged to call the Admissions Secretary of additional clarification and guidance on the audition process and criteria.
- The audition panel is made up of Heads of Department (Dance, Singing and Acting) who only assess candidates on their field of expertise.
- Each member of the audition panel completes detailed assessment forms (copy attached) with consistent criteria and marking guidelines for each audition element, asking them to grade each student according to criteria demonstrated.
- Each genre is graded as indicated below

Musical Theatre Diploma & 1 Year Foundation Course	Dance Diploma
<p>5 = Very good potential: No significant weaknesses</p> <p>4= Good potential: Some minor weaknesses in a few areas</p> <p>3= Satisfactory: Weaknesses in some key areas with potential to overcome these</p> <p>2= Weak : Overshadowed by weaknesses</p> <p>1= Poor:</p>	<p>4 = Excellent Potential: No significant weaknesses</p> <p>3 = Good potential: Some minor weaknesses in a few areas</p> <p>2 = Satisfactory: Weaknesses in some key areas with potential to overcome these</p> <p>1= Weak: Overshadowed by weaknesses.</p>

Audition and Interviews, Code of Conduct and Appeals Procedure
 Revised: April 2015
 Next Review: April 2016

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Weaknesses of which training could become a health and safety issue.	Some areas could become a health and safety issue
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- Candidates must achieve an overall mark of 65 /100 to be considered for entry to the professional Diploma Courses.
- Unsuccessful candidates are free to re-audition after a period of three months has elapsed since the previous audition.

6: Italia Conti undertakes to ensure that candidates are informed of the outcome of an audition/interview

- Every effort is made to ensure candidates feel at ease and are given opportunities to ask questions, speak to staff and students and to look around the building.
- All candidates are informed in writing within 2-3 weeks of their audition, although we aim to inform them within 14 days.
- Italia Conti will offer feedback to each candidate who requests it. All feedback, we stress is particular to our process and offers no specific or directed areas for improvement: i.e. we may note a poor dance solo, song or speech but there is no capacity to offer other suggestions.
- A potential place at the Academy is based on the audition(s) and so it is only AFTER the audition that a decision can be made.

7: APPEALS PROCEDURE

1. The right of appeal

Unsuccessful candidates will be advised of their right to appeal against the outcome of an audition. The Admissions Secretary will provide them with details of the appeals procedure on request.

2. Acceptable grounds for appeal

- Appeals will only be considered where it is claimed that there are irregularities in the audition / interview process
- Candidates who do not demonstrate an appropriate level of potential at audition are also ineligible to appeal
- The candidate was suffering from a certified illness or other extenuating circumstance which may have affected the performance, and did not inform

Audition and Interviews, Code of Conduct and Appeals Procedure
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either a member of staff (Admissions Secretary) or the Audition Panel beforehand or on the day.

In such circumstances, the decision of the audition panel remains final

3. The method of appeal

The appeal should be made in writing by the person who signed the original entry form. Candidates under the age of eighteen years are required to have their appeal authorised by a parent / guardian. All appeals should be addressed the Admissions Secretary.

Appeals should be post marked within 14 days following notification of failure to obtain a place at the Academy. The same procedure applies in the case of an appeal against a candidate not obtaining an award.

The receipt of all appeals will be acknowledged within 14 days.

The appeal is dealt with in the first instance by the Admissions Secretary, following which it is considered by the Course Director. The outcome is then presented to the Principal for further consideration.

Successful appeals result in the candidates being re-auditioned at the next available audition date.

Unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the results of their appeal which falls into one of two categories:

- A) The appeal is upheld and the candidate is re-auditioned;
- B) The appeal is denied

The Academy may wish to keep the details of an appeal on record. In respecting confidentiality, the Academy will keep the information in a secure place as part of the school's data protection procedure.

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