

Admission Policy

Policy Statement

Entry arrangements to all programmes of study at The Gaiety School of Acting (GSA) should be fair and transparent, that all learners should be satisfied that they have been treated justly, and that arrangements to ensure equal opportunity have been observed, including compliance with relevant Equality legislation.

Implicit in this policy is the understanding that entry criteria to programmes should be focused on the outcomes of the programme and not simply as a means for selecting the most able from a group of applicants.

The HEA National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008 – 2013 aims to broaden entry routes to higher education so that students disadvantaged by social, economic and educational issues account for 30% of all entrants by 2013. In 2010, students with disabilities made up 8% of entrants which is comparable to the 9% of all entrants to higher education currently. The GSA welcomes a diversity of student backgrounds and has a proactive recruitment strategy to target prospective students in line with the HEA plan. As part of the GSA's commitment to broadening access, the School has reserved 25% of places on the first year B.A. (Hons) in Acting course for students from non-traditional learning backgrounds, students from a socio-economically disadvantaged background and mature students. The target for students with disabilities is 10%.

Entry Policy and Procedures **Pre-Entry Arrangements**

Pre-entry can be described as the phase when institutions begin to liaise with groups of potential students. The aim of pre-entry activities is to identify groups of potential students and encourage them to consider third level options. Pre-entry activities at the GSA include:

- Clear, accessible information on the practicalities of applying to college and on the types of supports that are available through promotional materials, school prospectus, school website, school syllabus and admission procedures.
- Open days
- School visits to secondary school which includes a prospectus and information pack being sent to these schools followed by visits from the Programme Coordinator. It is possible to receive a list of

- secondary schools with high numbers of students with disabilities from the Department of Education and Skills.
- Orientation visits for students who have indicated on their application forms they are a mature student, non- EU Student or a student with disabilities before the beginning of the academic year.

In order to ensure pre-entry activities are successful the following are some of the actions that should be taken (as recommended by the Action on Access, Guidelines for Admissions, 2007):

- Availability of printed information in alternative formats
- Availability of disability-aware staff
- Evaluation of events
- Accessibility of premises for wheelchair users and people with mobility difficulties
- Signage around the school facilities

Admission Arrangements

The GSA's B.A. (Hons) in Acting is a direct entry course, and as such is not in the Central Applications Office (CAO) system.

Entry Requirements for the B.A. (Hons) in Acting

There is no points requirement for entry to the course, but the minimum entry requirements must be attained as follows:

- A minimum of 6 passes (grade D or higher) at Ordinary Level in Leaving Certificate. These pass subjects must include English.
- A FETAC Level 5 award in any discipline.

The following non-standard applicants may also be considered:

- Mature applicants, EU nationals aged 23 on or before January in the year of entry.
- Where applicants can demonstrate sufficient learning gained in a relevant work-based context, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) procedures may apply.
- The Leaving Certificate Applied programme does not meet minimum entry requirements. However, LCA applicants who have significant, appropriate post-qualification work based learning may be considered under the RPL route.

Application Procedures

The application requirements of the GSA for the programme are as follows:

1. Completed application form
2. Application statement
3. Applicant is invited to submit portfolio
4. Audition
5. Interview
6. Call back workshop

Appeal

The Gaiety School of Acting has appropriate arrangements in place for learners to appeal a decision to refuse entry onto the programme. The appeals procedure is clear and transparent and available on the school website www.gaietyschool.com. See **Appeals Policy document**.

Supplementary Admission Procedures

- **If an applicant is applying as a mature student, the following procedure applies:**

The entry criteria for mature students are the standard minimum entry requirements for all applicants. If a mature student does not meet the minimum entry requirements as they have qualifications other than the 1985-2011 Irish Leaving Cert and/or 2002-2011 FETAC Level 5/6 (NCVA Level 2/3), they must complete the Mature Student Supplementary Admissions Form and requests for relevant documentation.

- **If an applicant is applying as a Non-EU student, the following procedure applies:**

If an applicant is from outside the EU and / or presents qualifications gained outside Ireland they must complete the **Non-EU Supplementary Admissions Form**.

All applicants must present evidence of English language proficiency.

Below are the acceptable forms of verification:

- Irish Leaving Certificate, Ordinary level English, grade D3 or higher
- English GCE A-level, grade D or higher

- Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English, grade C or higher
- **If an applicant is applying as a student with a disability, the following procedure applies:**
 - Applicants with a Disability are encouraged to disclose their disability on the standard application form.
 - Students who disclose their disability will be asked to submit a **Supplementary Information Form for Students with a Disability** (Appendix A) and evidence of the disability.
 - Disclosure by a student of a disability leads to support and enables the School to anticipate the support and accommodation requirements of the student.
 - **Evidence of Disability:** The Supplementary Admission Form asks that students provide verification of their disability as it helps to identify the appropriate supports at the GSA.
 - Please see the GSA's Student Disability Policy in full for more information.

- **If an applicant is applying for recognition of prior learning, the following procedure applies:**

Please refer to the Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning which sets out in detail the admission procedures.

Acceptance and Defer

An applicant, having received an offer, may accept the offer by confirming in writing to the GSA by the required closing date for acceptance or seek a deferral of the place to the next academic year. Candidates may defer for any reason. There is an open defer policy and generally all defer requests are granted subject to the programme being available in the next academic year. The school reserves the right to cancel the offering of the programme the following year, even if defers have been granted.

Admission Arrangements for Students with a Disability

All applicants with a disability who have not achieved the entry requirements will be individually considered and these candidates will have to produce a medical verification from a consultant, a reference

from their school and a self statement. The admission routes for students with a disability take into account difficulties the student may have encountered because of their disability during second level education and the school will assess each application separately.

The School is committed to ensuring that enrolment, registration and induction of new students should accommodate the needs of people with disabilities and in particular that open days, student orientation and induction activities should be carried out in accessible locations.

Audition Procedures

1. Applicants are auditioned. Audition consists of:

- Audition presentation of two contrasting monologues each of approximately 2-3 minutes in length to the School's director plus one other member of full time teaching staff
- Interview with School's director plus same member of teaching staff

2. Applicants attend workshop. This is a one hour (approx) session with other applicants to assess abilities to respond to direction and to work together as an ensemble. It occurs on the same day as the original audition.

3. The GSA has not traditionally invited students back for a second audition. A second audition will however be arranged should demand dictate, i.e. if there is a particularly high number of applications.

4. Students will be contacted afterwards in writing regarding the outcome of their audition. Applicants will be:

- Accepted and offered a place on the programme;
- Declined and offered a yearlong part time GSA course;
- On hold – this means that a firm decision is yet to be made, and applicants in this category will be included in the decision-making process of the following round of auditions, although not necessarily auditioned again;
- Declined: in rare cases it is felt that a student is unsuitable for any course at the school they will be declined and not offered an alternative course.

5. On acceptance of their place, students must pay the first instalment of their fees for the year; failure to abide by fee payment terms and schedule can jeopardise a student's place on the course.

Criteria for Successful Audition

The Gaiety School of Acting considers applications according to the students' general standard of education, experience, training, motivation and commitment – all of which are assessed through application form, portfolio, audition, interview and workshop process.

The following is a breakdown of how the audition and portfolio requirements are assessed and the relative emphasis of each as follows:

1. Completed application form (not graded)

2. Application statement (10% of total marks)

The statement should include the following:

- Reasons for wishing to train;
- reasons for choice of GSA in particular;
- details of previous training and/or experience to date;
- sense of commitment to pursuing the course and commitment to achieving their own full potential;
- appreciation of role of theatre and the arts in society;
- commitment to achieving professionalism in their craft;
- a sense of their aspirations and ambitions for after the course;
- an appreciation of the role of ensemble in actor training
- Statement should be an articulate and well thought out piece of writing;
- Statement should be a clearly and neatly presented piece of writing and be no more than 500 words.

3. Applicant is invited to submit portfolio (not graded)

(1000 words approx, excluding any supplementary information and materials)

This should be a personal response to the world around them – it can be in any hard copy format the applicant wishes and is primarily used as start point for interview discussions. This is not graded.

4. Audition: (25% allocated to each piece; audition pieces constitute 50% of total)

- Applicants will be asked to present 2 contrasting monologues of approx 2-3 minutes in length each;
- They will be challenged on their presentation of these pieces and will be asked to represent taking on board directions concerning,

- for example (but not limited to) movement, gesture, articulation, voice, energy;
- They will be asked to explore a character motivation choice and show evidence of research into the character, piece and overall work from which it came;
 - Applicants must show an understanding of the importance of the voice area in performance;

4. Interview: (20% of total)

Applicants will be questioned using their application statement, portfolio and choice of audition pieces as a start point for discussion. Examples of questions/topics that may arise from this could include (but will not be limited to):

- Their world view on the role of theatre and the arts in society
- The nature of the craft of acting and the role of the ensemble in performance
- Their reasons for wishing to train
- Their favourite play and playwright and why
- Their favourite actor and why
- Their reasons for wishing to be an actor
- Applicants will be invited to question us

5. Call back workshop: (20% of total)

The call back places the applicant in the dynamic of an ensemble and will address the following areas amongst others:

- Warm up – working as an ensemble;
- Concentration and focus used for perfecting an exercise or task set by director;
- Work on a Shakespearean sonnet;
- Physical coordination;
- Vocal clarity and articulation;
- Improvisation and use of imagination and creativity in response to a task set by director;
- Cooperation and completing a challenge – working in small groups to present as asked by director

In summary, the weighting of the audition and application process is as follows:

Element of Application	Grade Allocated
Application Form	Not graded
Typed Application Statement	10%
Portfolio	Not graded
Audition Piece 1	25%
Audition Piece 2	25%
Interview	25%
Workshop	20%
Total	100%