

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School

2025- 2026 Admissions Policy

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1. Admissions Policy Statement

1.1 BOVTS Admissions Policy Statement

For entry in 2025 this Admissions Policy will be operational. Applicants who applied in previous years will have done so under a different Admissions Policy.

BOVTS policies and procedures are closely aligned with the Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) expectations for standards and quality, as set out in the revised [Quality Code](#) (March 2018), and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE or OIA) Good Practice Frameworks.

1.2 General expectations

BOVTS selects 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. BOVTS students are registered as students of the University of the West of England (UWE Bristol) which is registered with the OfS.

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

1.3 Details of BOVTS higher education courses

Details of courses currently offered by BOVTS can be found in the Course Summary documents at <https://www.oldvic.ac.uk/about-us/policies/>

1.4 Equality and Diversity

The School is dedicated to upholding equality of opportunity for disabled students. As part of this commitment, the School believes that admissions processes should be as equitable as possible for all applicants. All applications from candidates who have disclosed a disability will be considered in the same way as any other application and a decision will be made that is based upon the candidate's talent and potential. The legislation with which the School's policy complies is the Equality Act 2010 (replacing provisions in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001) and this applies to both disabled students and applicants.

Applicants are encouraged to disclose as disabled when they apply by completing the relevant section in the application form and the online questionnaire which will be sent to them once they have been offered a place at the School.

Disclosure enables the School to collaborate with applicants to put support and reasonable adjustments in place. The Student Support Team will send an online questionnaire via the Admissions Department to all applicants who have disclosed as disabled.

The Student Support Team reviews the applicant's requirements, in collaboration with other relevant staff and departments as required, to address barriers which disabled students may encounter in the learning, teaching and assessment environment, and advise the applicant of the steps they need to take. Some adjustments and support can take time to work through so it is very important that applicants engage with any communications to ensure a smooth transition to the School. With this engagement, the School is able to provide the required support in the overwhelming majority of cases.

Whilst the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 normally make it illegal to reject an application on the grounds of disability there are three instances in which a university may withdraw, defer or reject an application 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.

2 Entry Requirements

2.1 Where to find entry requirements and criteria for BOVTS courses of study

Entry requirements and criteria for all courses are available in the course summary documents which can be accessed from the following link:

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

2.2 General Requirements for admission to a BOVTS course of higher education

Applicants must demonstrate:

- the ability and capacity to study at a higher education level within the BOVTS setting
- the facility to receive and potential to benefit from vocational training
- evidence of suitable preparatory training and/or experience
- an awareness of, and preparedness for, 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.

In addition to the above general requirements, specific entry criteria and requirements for each course of study can be found in the course summary documents (see 2.1 above).

3 Recruitment

3.1 Target recruitment numbers

Target recruitment numbers are set annually by the School and these are detailed on the Course finder website at <https://www.oldvic.ac.uk/course-finder/>.

3.2 Participation and outreach

The School has a strong commitment to widening participation, underpinned by the

School's Widening Participation Strategy and UWE's [Access and Participation Plan](#). The School engages in various widening participation activities to support students from underrepresented groups to achieve the best possible outcomes in their application to training at BOVTS. These can be found on our website [HERE](#).

4 Application and Selection

4.1 General information on application and selection

The School will seek to ensure that selection policies and procedures are transparent, effective, consistent and fair, and in accordance with the BOVTS's public sector equality duty. Information concerning applicants is subject to BOVTS [Data](#) Processing Statement

Applicants who have previously completed a course of study at BOVTS are not automatically guaranteed entry to any other course of study at the School. This means that an applicant who has completed the two-year Foundation Degree in Costume for Theatre, TV and Film with BOVTS must separately apply for a place on the one-year BA (Hons) Costume for Theatre, TV and Film top up degree, and that a place is not guaranteed (although in some instances there may be the opportunity to undertake a 'fast-track' application process if the Foundation Degree has been successfully completed). Students registered on the FdA Production Arts (Stage) should contact the course leader to discuss options regarding transferring to the BA (Hons) Production Arts (Stage and Screen). Applicants should contact the relevant Course leader or Admissions for further information.

4.2 How applicants are selected

All acting courses applicants will be invited to a preliminary audition. Selection for all courses will normally be through an audition or interview. School 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 their chosen career regardless of previous experience, cultural or socio/economic background.

Course title	Selection process
BA (Hons) Professional Acting	Self-tape and then an online preliminary audition and recall workshop.
BA (Hons) Stage Management *subject to validation	Interview and workshop day.
BA (Hons) Film and Television Production *subject to validation	Interview and workshop day.
FdA Costume for Theatre, TV and Film	Portfolio and interview
BA (Hons) Costume for Theatre, TV and Film	Portfolio and interview

MA Screen Acting	Successful candidates will be asked to submit a self-tape and, if successful, will be invited to a recall audition
MFA Professional Voice Studies	Based on application form, shortlisted candidates are interviewed and may be invited to undergo listening and perception tests
MA Performance Design	Shortlisting is based on applicant's portfolio and application form, if successful, the portfolio will be discussed at the first interview. If successful at the first interview applicants may be asked to participate in a second round interview.
MA Drama Directing	Shortlisting is based on the applicant's application followed by an interview
MA Drama Writing	Shortlisting based on example of drama writing followed by an interview
MfA Professional Acting	Preliminary audition and if successful recall audition

• Selection procedures are reviewed annually. For further information relevant to each course, see the relevant page of the School website at oldvic.ac.uk/course-finder.

To ensure equality of opportunity BOVTS:

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

BOVTS 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. BOVTS encourages disclosure in advance wherever possible, but applicants chosen for interview or audition can also disclose a disability or condition at any stage of the process.

BOVTS 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.

4.3 Application fees

If you are applying for the BOVTS BA (Hons) Professional Acting, MA Screen Acting or MFA Acting courses then you will also have to pay an audition fee of £25.00. **Please note that audition fees are non-refundable.** However, there is an Audition Fee waiver scheme for the BA (Hons) Professional Acting Course– see Section 4.4 below for criteria. For all other courses there are no application fees.

4.4 Audition fee waiver scheme

In line with BOVTS's commitment to widening participation, applicants who meet all the following criteria can apply for an audition fee waiver:

- 4.1.1 Being a current UK Resident
- 4.1.2 Applying to an undergraduate course (Foundation and BA Hons Degrees)
- 4.1.3 Being new to higher education (no previous degree-level qualification, including Foundation Degrees)
- 4.1.4 Having an annual household income of £25,000 or less before tax.

In addition to the above criteria, applications will be prioritised for individuals matching one or more of the following criteria:

- 4.1.5 State school or college educated
- 4.1.6 Black and Minority Ethnic Background
- 4.1.7 Declared Disability
- 4.1.8 Care leaver
- 4.1.9 Estranged student

The fee waiver system is administered by the admissions department – please contact admissions@oldvic.ac.uk for further information and an application form.

4.5 Additional support for Care Leavers and Estranged Students

BOVTS is committed to helping all students fulfil their potential whilst studying with us, regardless of background. The School welcomes all applications and judges prospective students solely on their talent and potential to develop the skills required for their chosen profession.

If you're in care, have left recently, or are estranged from your parents, we understand that you may have some extra practical considerations to take into account when making the progression to Higher Education, and may have concerns about accommodation, financing your studies, and pastoral support. BOVTS has strong traditions of providing student care and support services and commits considerable resources to this purpose.

4.1.10 Bursary for care leavers and estranged students

If you choose to let us know that you are a care leaver or estranged from your parents (which we encourage you to do), you may be eligible to receive an annual non-repayable bursary per year of study. You will have a chance to disclose at application stage, and again on your enrolment form. You can also talk to a member of staff at your school at any point during the academic year.

Further information can be found on UWE, Bristol's website at:

<https://www.uwe.ac.uk/courses/funding/scholarships-and-bursaries/uwe-cares>

4.6 Applicants with a criminal record

In line with BOVTS's commitment to removing unnecessary barriers and increasing accessibility, the majority of applications to a BOVTS course of study do not require any disclosure of a criminal record. All criminal records data will be processed in accordance with the UWE's [Criminal Records Policy](#) and BOVTS's [Data Processing Statement](#).

Currently, no BOVTS courses require a 'regulated activity'. Should this change, the School will require an enhanced DBS check for disclosure of a criminal record at the point of receipt of an offer of a place to study, before the School can confirm the offer of a place. Where such activities are an **optional** part of the course, an applicant will not be required to disclose a criminal record/undertake an enhanced DBS check at any point during the application and admissions process. Once enrolled on the course, students may elect not to undertake an enhanced DBS check and not participate in the optional activities.

4.7 Application Procedures

BOVTS arranges its own application procedures (e.g., the dates of auditions both online and in-person). Deadlines for making an application to study on a course of higher education with BOVTS are published on the School's website.

4.8 Late applications

Applications submitted after the application deadline may not be considered and will only be considered at the discretion of the School. BOVTS reserves the right to extend an application deadline where deemed appropriate.

4.9 Withdrawals prior to audition or interview

Applicants must inform the School if they decide to withdraw their application and do not intend to attend an audition or interview. If an application is withdrawn, any audition fees will not be refunded.

4.10 Audition/Interview and Selection procedure

A fundamental part of the application process to some BOVTS courses of higher education is via audition and/or interview, along with other requirements specific to individual courses. Details of audition and interview procedures, together with entry requirements to relevant courses, can be found on the BOVTS School website: see Bristol Old Vic Theatre

School www.oldvic.ac.uk

4.11 Unsuccessful applications

Applicants who are not offered a place can request feedback from their audition or interview by contacting admissions@oldvic.ac.uk. The School will do its best to respond however due to the large numbers of applicants it may not be possible to provide feedback from an audition or interview.

4.12 Confirmation of offer

Where an applicant is made an offer of a place to study a BOVTS course, the three-step process below will be applied:

4.1.11 Offer of a place to study is made by the School to the applicant. The offer will include the following pre-contract information:

a. **Offer letter**

4.1.12 Applicant must confirm 'acceptance of the offer' in writing to the School

4.1.13 School confirms receipt of 'acceptance of the offer' in writing.

Please note that an offer of a place to study on a course remains provisional until the School has confirmed the 'acceptance of the offer' in writing

4.13 Right to cancel a confirmed offer

When the School makes a formal offer to an applicant of a place to study, applicants have the right to cancel within fourteen days of formally accepting in writing an offer of a place (please see the UWE's [Terms and Conditions](#) for more detailed information).

4.14 Deferred admissions

An offer of a place to study on a BOVTS course of higher education will normally only apply to the next available course start date. Places will not normally be deferred to a subsequent course start date. However, whether an offer of a place may be deferred, and the length of such deferral is at BOVTS' discretion.

4.15 Communications with a third party

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

Where an applicant is under 18 years of age at the time of applying for any course, in this case, communication regarding an application and audition or interview outcome will, where necessary and appropriate, be communicated to the applicant's parent, guardian, or a named responsible adult, in line with the applicant's circumstances. All applicants must be 18 years old at the time their course commences.

4.16 Appeals and Complaints

An appeal is a request for reconsideration of an application decision and can only be requested after an applicant has received feedback on the reason for their original rejection. Appeals will not be permitted from parents, sponsors or employers of applicants. However, in cases where an applicant is under the age of 18 or has a mental

health issue or disability which might impinge on their ability to make an appeal, a third party may be nominated to progress the appeal for them. Applicants do not have a right of appeal against the academic or professional judgement about the applicant's suitability for entry to a particular programme.

However, if following receipt of feedback, an applicant feels an error has occurred, they can request a formal review of the selection decision on one of the following grounds: a. Pertinent information was missing from the original application; b. There has been a misinterpretation of information or data contained within the original application; c. There was a procedural anomaly in the handling of the application; d. That there is evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of University or Partner Institution staff. The request for a review must be made in writing to the Head of Recruitment and Admissions, and should be received within 28 calendar days of the provision of feedback. On receipt of a request, the Admissions Manager or trained Admissions staff will review the application, referring to relevant admissions staff where appropriate, and will respond in writing within 28 calendar days. It is expected that these deadlines will be adhered to, however in exceptional circumstances the time periods may need to be extended, either for the applicant or the Admissions Office. In such cases the applicant will be notified.

The applicant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal and given an explanation for the decision which has been reached. The decision of the Head of Admissions is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Applicants may complain if they are dissatisfied with the service they have received regarding an application or any other aspect of the admission procedure. Complaints relating to admissions will be managed in accordance with the University's Complaints Procedure which can be found at: <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/aboutus/contactuwe/complaints.aspx>, and Stage One will be coordinated by Admissions Manager or trained Admissions staff. The procedure cannot be used as a means to change a selection decision, however if the investigator believes there are grounds for an appeal against the selection decision, they may advise the applicant to submit a formal appeal. In the event that an applicant submits both an appeal and a complaint, the applicant's appeal will be addressed first, as satisfactory resolution can often remove the need for a complaint to be made. At the conclusion of the appeal process the applicant will be asked if they still wish to make a complaint.

4.17 False, fraudulent or misleading information provided by applicants

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

BOVTS 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 (where

applicable) 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 course of study with BOVTS, the student's registration may be terminated and student status withdrawn, or the student may be subject to disciplinary action under UWE's Student Conduct Policy.

5 Registration and Enrolment

5.1 General information

'Enrolment' is the annual process by which you formally confirm you are beginning each year of your course. Enrolment must normally be fully completed in order to receive full access to School and course facilities. Enrolment takes place annually (i.e., each student must re-enrol at the start of each academic year in order to continue their studies). Students are required to enrol with both BOVTS and UWE.

'Registration' is the final part of the admissions process, where you confirm and update as necessary the personal details, we hold for you which you provided in your application; confirm the course you are intending to study, and agree to abide by, comply and engage with UWE Terms and Conditions and all related regulations and policies. Registration confirms that you are a student of BOVTS and UWE.

A place on a course at BOVTS will be conditional upon an applicant complying with registration and 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.

5.2 Pre-enrolment information

Prior to enrolment applicants holding an offer of a place will be contacted by the School with pre-enrolment information (see 4.12.1 above). Applicants are advised to refer to the relevant Course Summary document for the course to which they have applied for more detailed information. The Course Summary documents for each course of study can be accessed from here: <https://www.oldvic.ac.uk/about-us/policies/>

5.3 Enrolment

Applicants must enrol at the designated session at the start of their course unless agreed otherwise. If an applicant cannot or does not enrol at the designated session, they must provide the School with a reason for the non-enrolment that 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 BOVTS and contract shall be terminated. Please see the [UWE Terms and Conditions](#) for further information about obligations and contracts.

5.4 Registration and Enrolment information

As part of the registration and enrolment processes, students will be asked to provide

some or all of the following details:

- 5.1.1 A working and current email address;
- 5.1.2 A working landline and/or mobile telephone number
- 5.1.3 A term-time address
- 5.1.4 'Next of Kin'/emergency contact details
- 5.1.5 A current passport, a copy of which will be taken and retained (overseas students only)
- 5.1.6 Confirmation of loan payment from Student Finance England (or other funding body), if applicable
- 5.1.7 Any other relevant information, if deemed necessary

All scanned documents are kept in secure files, in accordance with the BOVTS's Data Processing Statement.

5.5 Withdrawals

Applicants who hold an offer of a place and wish to withdraw prior to the start of their course of study must inform the School Admissions team as soon as possible via email (admissions@oldvic.ac.uk). Any applicant who wishes to be considered for the next cycle of admissions will usually be expected to reapply the following year. Students will be expected to notify UWE in writing that they are withdrawing.

Information about UWE's withdrawal process is available <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/study/academic-information/suspend-transfer-or-withdraw/suspending-your-studies>.

Students who withdraw after the start of the course will be subject to pay tuition fees in line with the [UWE Fees Policy](#).

5.6 Suspension of Studies

Where an applicant has accepted an offer of a place and commenced as a student on the course, circumstances may occur that necessitate the student to 'suspend' (also known as 'intermit or interrupt') their studies for a period of time whilst remaining registered as a student on the course. Information about UWE's suspension is available <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/study/academic-information/suspend-transfer-or-withdraw/suspending-your-studies>.

6 Allocation of Scholarships and Bursaries

6.1 General information

BOVTS offers scholarships in the form of bursaries and fee discounts to eligible students. Available bursaries are detailed on the UWE, Bristol website at <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/life/money-and-finance/funds-during-study/uwe-bursary>

To be considered for a bursary, students will need to indicate this on their application form. They will need to complete an application to Student Finance England (or its equivalent) as early as possible in order to be income-assessed. This will allow UWE to

assess what level of support the student may be entitled to.

BOVTS and UWE also operate a Care Leaver and Estranged Students Bursary (see Section 4.5 above), which is allocated in addition to any other financial support. To access this, students should indicate their status on their application or registration forms. Alternatively, they may also contact admissions@oldvic.ac.uk.

Applicants are asked to visit the BOVTS's website for further information: <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/life/money-and-finance/funds-during-study/uwe-bursary>

7 Monitoring and Review of Policies and Procedures

7.1 General information

This policy is subject to periodic review by BOVTS's Academic Board / BOVTS Executive Committee as required. Via its governing committees, BOVTS also monitors the following, all of which are relevant to admissions:

- recruitment, marketing and the prospectus/information on the Schools' website
- data related to admissions and the methods used to collect that data
- support for students and applicants with disabilities
- external requirements of BOVTS and the University of the West of England.

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