

## **Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression**

### **Context**

Section 46 of the Qualifications (Education and Training Act 1999) requires that all providers of education and training are to inform learners on access opportunities to programmes and on the transfer and progression linkages for learners on the attainment of the award. The NQAI require that all providers of education must have clear policy on Access, Transfer and Progression in order to have awards included on the National Framework of Qualifications.

The context of an explicit lifelong learning agenda informs a vision of Access, Transfer and Progression so that the learner should be able to enter and successfully participate in a programme, or series of programmes leading to an award, or series of awards, in pursuit of their learning objectives (National Framework of Qualifications: Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access Transfer and Progression. October 2003).

The concepts of Access, Transfer and Progression are defined in the Qualifications Act:

**Access:** The process by which learners may commence a programme of education and training having received recognition for knowledge, skill or competence required.

**Transfer:** The process by which learners may transfer from one programme of education and training to another programme having received recognition for knowledge, skill and competence acquired.

**Progression:** The process by which learners may transfer from one programme of education and training to another programme, where each programme is of a higher level than the preceding programme.

## **Access**

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 workbased 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** (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)

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;

### **5. 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

### **6. 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

## **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](http://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.

### **Transfer**

All programmes should be designed to facilitate transfer and progression routes from level 6 through 10 in the National Framework of Qualifications. The Gaiety School of Acting has implemented the national approach to credit as proposed by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland and has developed a Policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which can result in a learner getting credit towards an award or exemption from some programme requirements.

### **Other Higher Education Institutions (HEI)**

Applications from students wishing to transfer from other Higher Education Institutions with stage or award qualifications are welcome. Students applying to transfer to the second or later stage of a similar programme will be subject to places being available on that programme.

Applicants must have passed the stage examinations and have achieved the learning outcomes for transfer or progression to the GSA course. Applicants will be ranked on overall average if demand exceeds available places.

Applicants holding professional awards may gain admission to stage 2 or higher of the proposed B.A. (Hons) in Acting.

The Policy on RPL aims to provide a framework for accreditation of credited learning and for accreditation prior experiential learning in the Gaiety School of Acting.

This policy will apply to students who have gained prior learning through:

- *formal learning* which takes place through programmes of study or training that are delivered by education or training providers, and which attract awards.
- *non-formal learning* that takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification. Examples of non-formal learning are: learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace, voluntary sector or trade union and in community-based learning.
- *informal learning* that takes place through life and work experience. (And is sometimes referred to as experiential learning.) Often, it is learning that is unintentional and the learner may not recognise at the time of the experience that it contributed to his or her knowledge, skills and competences.

## **Context**

Prior learning may be a result of successful participation in a formal learning programme for which you were awarded certification. If you use your prior certificated learning towards a GSA award, the process is called: Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL).

Prior learning may also be an outcome of non-formal or informal learning achieved through work, voluntary activities or private study, for which you may not have a certificate. The process of using this type of learning for higher education purposes is called: Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

It is not uncommon for both APCL and APEL to be considered together in an RPL process.

## **Award of Credit**

APL can be used for a number of purposes in the GSA including the following:

- for entry to programme at the initial stage where the applicant may not meet the standard entry requirements
- for advanced entry to a programme at a stage beyond the first stage
- for transfer from one programme to another
- for exemption from some programme elements or from programme modules

For further information please refer to the **Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning**.

## **Progression**

The programme provides graduates with strong prospects both for further study at postgraduate level and for employment in the area of drama. The course is suited to students contemplating careers in theatre, media, film, the performing arts and education, but it is geared towards any student with a passion for theatre and performance.

## **Postgraduate Opportunities**

Graduates have strong prospects for further study at postgraduate level as the proposed programme will provide many transferable skills: public speaking, leadership, critical analysis, teamwork, research skills, and public relations.

There are a number of postgraduate opportunities in Ireland available to students of the proposed B.A. (Hons) in Acting in the field of drama and performance including:

- MA Drama & Theatre Studies, University College Cork
- MPhil and PhD Drama & Theatre Studies, University College Cork
- MA Directing for Theatre, University College Dublin
- MA Drama and Performance Studies, University College Dublin
- MA Drama Theatre Studies, National University of Ireland, Galway
- Postgraduate Diploma Drama and Theatre Studies, National University of Ireland, Galway
- MPhil Theatre and Performance , Trinity College Dublin
- MPhil in Irish Film, Music and Theatre, Trinity College Dublin
- Research Degrees: MLitt and PhD

Students may also decide to apply to postgraduate courses in the UK of which there are some excellent programmes such as:

- MA Performing Arts Innovation and Enterprise, Coventry University

- MA Playwriting/Devising for Performance, Kingston University
- MA Ensemble Theatre, Rose Bruford College
- MA Theatre for Young Audiences, Rose Bruford College
- MPhil Directing and Dramaturgy, University of Birmingham
- MA Choreography, University of Leeds
- MA Acting, University of East London

### **Career Opportunities**

Most graduates will find employment in theatre or related professions. A number of recent graduates of the two year full time actor training programme have formed their own theatre companies, have won awards, or have active careers in theatre, film, or television. Recent graduates of the programme have gone on to work for a variety of prestigious companies including: the Abbey Theatre, The Gate Theatre, Guna Nua Theatre Company, London's West End, RTÉ and TEAM Theatre Company.

Many graduates of the current full time programme have achieved national and international success as actors, writers, critics, and directors. The school has strong links with theatre companies locally and throughout Ireland. Students will therefore meet a variety of theatre professionals and writers during the course. Career pathways include actor in live theatre and recorded media; commercial role play artist; voice-over artist, writer, director and theatre critic.