

London's
International
Drama School

**Rose
Bruford
College**

of Theatre
& Performance

Student Employability

A strategy for career education, information,
advice and guidance (CEIAG)

STRATEGIES and
PLANS

STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY

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1. Introduction

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education expects HE providers to **“have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.”** This includes support provided to students in preparing for their future careers, and the careers education, information advice and guidance available to students as they make the transition from study into employment. Rose Bruford College is committed to providing students with individual guidance, access to employers, careers information and work experience, and to promote the development and use of transferable and career management skills to achieve rewarding and sustainable employment in the theatre and its related industries.

The College provides programmes of study that educate and train its students to enable them to have a successful transition into the graduate employment market, professional or advanced study. Rose Bruford College greatly values the achievements of its graduates both in moving on to employment and further studies after graduation and in developing successful and sustainable careers.

The College’s purpose and ambition is to equip students with the skills for successful, sustained careers, using a curriculum that reflects and informs industry practice. The College has a dynamic involvement with the professional theatre and its related industries and professional organisations through teaching, training and research activities. The College’s Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Strategy places professional practice and industry awareness at the centre of its approach to teaching. The highly vocational content of programmes provides students with access to potential employers through projects, work-based learning and research activities.

2. Relationship to the College Strategic Plan

Two sections of the College's Strategic Plan make specific reference to employability and engagement with the industry:

Strategic Plan: Section 1.3

We aim to continually develop and lead our sector through education and training that is industry focused. We will offer our graduates the best possible preparation for successful and satisfying careers as innovative and enterprising practitioners.

We will:

- a. Make certain that our programmes reflect changing practices in the industry.
- b. Improve student employability through career guidance and by showcasing their work to industry professionals.
- c. Attract industry professionals to the College to teach and share their knowledge and practice with students and staff.
- d. Collaborate with external partners nationally and internationally to create opportunities for students to learn in diverse professional and educational environments.

Strategic Plan: Section 4.3

We aim to further establish industry collaborations that will fast-track graduates' careers and allow the College to grow through and with the industry.

We will:

- a. Create industry partnerships that will give our students practice-based placements linked to future jobs.
- b. Form production partnerships that will take more student work off campus and allow us to build a stronger identity nearer the centre of London.
- c. Maintain the move of our Creative Industries Fair to London¹ to give the School of DMTA and their students its own London showcase.

This Employability Strategy address these aims in five broad themes:

- Programmes of study
- Careers Information
- Industry professionals
- Partners and external opportunities
- Generic and transferable skills

The following Strategy is not intended to be a stand-alone document, but should be read in the context of several other key College policies including:

- The College's Strategic Plan;

¹ CIF was renamed The Graduate Exhibition in 2013.

- The Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Admissions Policy;
- Assessment Policy.

2.2 Programmes of study (SP1.3a)

As a specialist institution the Colleges' objectives are to provide students with individual guidance, access to employers, careers information, work experience and to promote the development and use of transferable and career management skills to achieve rewarding and sustainable employment in the theatre and its related industries. To enable students to learn, develop, and broaden their understanding of a programme of study, key transferable skills are identified in individual programme and module specifications and developed by students through a personal development programme. All full-time programmes have specific modules which are concerned with professional preparation and development and provide students with models of professional practice.

All modules have a range of transferable skills embedded within their learning objectives including (but not limited to) literacy, communications, ICT skills etc., which help to make graduates attractive to potential employers.

A large proportion of the College's visiting teaching staff work regularly as practitioners in the theatre and related industries and/or have membership of appropriate industry associations and networks (see below). The contacts and networks that result from this engagement help to ensure the currency of the programmes of study and inform future programme and curriculum developments.

Academic staff within the institution are contractually obliged to engage in appropriate Research and Scholarly activity as part of their annual deployment. This activity generally supports the development and up-dating of subject specialisms and programme and teaching content.

We will enhance this by:

- reviewing and integrating personal and career development planning at Level 4, building on this in each succeeding level and on exit from the programme;
- making an online (VLE) personal development pack available to students);
- continuing to monitor and develop the Professional Preparation modules that incorporate, including career management skills, facilitating access to employment including self-employment, and postgraduate study opportunities;
- ensuring we clearly articulate the range of transferable skills in all programmes;
- facilitating staff awareness of and engagement with professional associations and networks;
- encouraging industry-related staff research and scholarly activities.

2.3 Careers Information (SP1.3b)

The specialist nature of each programme of study enables students to understanding how graduates gain employment in the theatre, film, television and related industries and how these organisations recruit, find freelance or portfolio workers and service providers Agents and other industry professionals are regularly invited to the College to events showcasing student work by the Marketing Department or individual programmes. Events include:

- Productions at the College
- Productions at external (London) venues
- The London Showcase for actors/actor musicians
- The Graduate Exhibition
- The College Symposium

Additionally the College supports students in the preparation and production of CVs and other promotional material.

We will enhance this by:

- ensuring the availability of comprehensive careers information and advice that is accessible, appropriate, accurate impartial and relevant;
- developing industry panels/advisers advisors to ensure that developments in the employment market and work opportunities in the community at large are understood and integrated;
- further developing the London showcase for the Graduate Exhibition in London

2.4 Industry professionals (SP 1.3c)

A large proportion of the Colleges visiting teaching staff work regularly as practitioners in the theatre and related industries. The contacts and networks that result from this engagement are shared with students allowing them to make informed choices about their entry into the theatre and related industries.

Furthermore all programmes of study regularly invite active practitioners and experts in their respective fields to meet with students in master classes, lectures and workshops. Professional Directors and Production Supervisors work with students across the institution at various points during their periods of study allowing them to experience industry best practice.

We will enhance this by ensuring that:

- the College continues to support visiting active practitioners to support and supplement the core curriculum;
- students and staff interact with a range of professional development activities and work placements appropriate to the discipline

2.5 Partners and external opportunities (SP 1.3d and 4.3b, 4,3d)

The College has considerable contact with a range of Professional Organisations (See Appendix 1). Such links ensure that the views of employers, unions and the wider industry are reflected in programme developments and delivery of teaching.

Many of the College's programmes feature placement or work-based learning opportunities and such networks also form the foundation of active student engagement within the industry either as industry study modules or individual research projects.

Additionally opportunities for study or work-based learning abroad are a feature of a number of programmes either in the EU through Erasmus collaborations or further afield through other collaborations and exchanges developed at an institutional level.

We will enhance this by:

- enabling students where practical to engage in part-time activities within the industry to develop personal networks and potential employment opportunities;
- maintaining existing and developing new industry partnerships that will give our students practice-based placements linked to future jobs;
- recruiting a placement and career development officer to manage industry links and placements and monitor graduate employment;
- developing and maintaining a register of external links and (approved) placement organisations.

2.6 Transferable skills

As indicated throughout this strategy, the College takes a holistic and integrated approach to career development. While the College actively prepares its students for entry into the theatre and related industries it also recognises that students may wish to pursue other opportunities either on graduation or in the future. Therefore all modules have a range of transferable skills embedded within their learning objectives including (but not limited to) literacy, communications, ICT skills etc., which help to make graduates attractive to potential employers. Alongside the professional preparation modules, these skills enable students to:

- be aware of the principles of recruitment and selection, and the techniques used by theatre industry and other employers;
- evaluate jobs by identifying the work tasks and relating these to their knowledge, skills, personal qualities, and circumstances;
- identify information and illustrative examples of their knowledge, skills and personal qualities which demonstrate competence when applying for a post;
- apply the skills and understanding of their training and education to applications for academic and training courses and to research opportunities;
- commit the information and examples to application forms, curriculum vitae, and letters of application, in a style appropriate to the opportunity.

3. Monitoring, Feedback, Evaluation and Improvement

The performance and development of professional preparation and employability within the College is monitored using a range of data including graduate destinations including the DLIHE survey to ensure currency and effectiveness. However, the DLIHE has only limited applicability given the portfolio nature of employment within the industry. While the College has a rich and comprehensive range of qualitative data on career destinations at the programme level, the 2013 Periodic Reviews identified this as an area for further institutional development.

Heads of Schools evaluate the effectiveness of provision within their particular school. The analysis and evaluation of graduate progression is incorporated into reports from each programme which is presented to the Learning Quality and Standards Committee bi-annually.

We will enhance this by:

- developing a systematic process for the capture and maintenance of graduate career destinations as recommended by the 2013 Periodic Reviews;
- recruiting a placement and career development officer to manage industry links and placements and monitor graduate employment.

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