

ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE

Employee and Student Mental Health Policy

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1. Introduction and legislation

- 1.1. The Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) wishes to promote and maintain the mental health and wellbeing of all our employees and students in the same way as we seek to promote and maintain physical health and wellbeing.
- 1.2. The RAD encourages all employees and students to take responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing. In turn the RAD will work to improve mental health awareness in the workplace, tackle the causes of any work or study related ill health, create a culture where everyone can talk about their mental health and support employees and students experiencing mental ill health.
- 1.3. The RAD has a legal obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees. The RAD has a duty to assess and manage risks in the workplace to protect its employees. Under the Act mental health issues arising because of work conditions are classified as “personal injury”.
- 1.4. There is also a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for those who have (or are associated with those who have) disabilities. Some mental health conditions (see below) are considered disabilities under the Act.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all employees including casual, freelance, fixed term and temporary workers and volunteers.
- 2.2. This policy applies to Faculty of Education students, Dance School students, Dance Studies students, Step into Dance company students and any other student who regularly accesses RAD services.

3. Mental health awareness

- 3.1. Mental health is defined by the World Health Organisation as *“a state of well-being in which every individual realises their potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can*

work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community.”
(2014).

- 3.2. Factors within and outside work can affect our mental health and it can be helpful to think of our mental health as moving up and down a spectrum or continuum that can range from excellent, through good to poor or very poor.
- 3.3. Anyone can suffer from mental ill health ranging from feeling stressed to common conditions such as anxiety and depression (which can include panic attacks) and in limited cases to severe mental health conditions, which are often categorised as disabilities. These may include (but are not limited to):
 - bipolar disorder
 - body dysmorphic disorder (BDD)
 - borderline personality disorder (BPD)
 - paranoia
 - personality disorders
 - post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
 - psychosis
 - schizophrenia
 - self-harm
 - substance misuse
- 3.4. Some conditions can be persistent and may be a disability whereas others may be temporary, sporadic and/or come and go leading to good and bad days. With the right support, employees and students including those with diagnosed mental health condition(s) can enjoy positive mental health and productive lives.
- 3.5. There can also be cases of extreme crisis where someone can have suicidal thoughts, progress to make plans for suicide, or put themselves or others in danger. Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) at the RAD are trained to support colleagues at times of extreme crisis.

4. RAD Commitment

- 4.1. There are many causes of mental ill health, which relate to situations that exist outside the work place, and whilst work and study can be good for mental health, the workplace can sometimes have a negative effect on mental health.
- 4.2. With this in mind the RAD will strive to reduce the likelihood of and/or eliminate the common causes of mental ill health at work by:

- 4.2.1. holding a zero tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment or victimisation of others due to mental ill health.
- 4.2.2. ensuring work and study loads and demands are manageable taking individual capacity into account as much as possible
- 4.2.3. clearly defining job roles, responsibilities, study targets and objectives
- 4.2.4. providing support and flexibility to individuals so as to allow them as much autonomy and control over their work and study as possible and appropriate
- 4.2.5. taking steps to encourage a healthy work life balance exists and is maintained
- 4.2.6. providing employees with opportunities for a variety of work and where possible for career progression
- 4.2.7. managing and consulting as possible about changes to work or study
- 4.2.8. undertaking risk assessments (as part of the annual risk assessment of departmental activities) for the potential of stress related mental ill health and taking appropriate steps to manage and control those risks in the same way as physical risk assessments are handled
- 4.2.9. developing a culture where open and honest communication is encouraged and support and mutual respect are the norm
- 4.2.10. recognising that those who work entirely from home and/or alone, may be particularly vulnerable and may require additional levels of support, including regularly organised opportunities for communication and interaction with line managers, team members and others.
- 4.2.11. encouraging an ethos where individuals know that it is okay and acceptable to talk about mental ill health, take sick leave for mental ill health (when applicable) and that it is safe to disclose experiences, which in turn will help remove the stigma surrounding mental health
- 4.2.12. providing a confidential counselling Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with BUPA for permanent employees, which assists with emotional health through a telephone counselling service, offering free advice 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Qualified counsellors will listen and suggest ways to resolve problem(s) and point employees in the right direction to get back on track. Problems that they can help with include relationship worries, difficulties at work, stress, anxiety, bereavement, coping with change, and alcohol and substance mis-use. Where applicable to an individual, the EAP with BUPA will provide face-to-face counselling services
- 4.2.13. providing confidential points of contact in the Human Resources team for all employees (and particularly those fixed term and temporary employees without access to the EAP with BUPA in 4.2.10 above). The support includes trained Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) who are able to support **employees** through discussion and sign posting to professional advice and support. MHFAs are able to spot the early signs of a mental health issue. They can offer and provide initial help, preserve life where someone may be at risk of harm to themselves or others, help stop mental ill health getting worse, promote recovery of good mental health, guide someone towards appropriate treatment and other sources of help and understand the stigma that exists around mental health

- 4.2.14. providing a Student Support Officer who is also mental health first aid trained (Faculty of Education students) who is able to provide support to students through discussion and sign posting to professional advice and support
 - 4.2.15. working towards removing the stigma associated with mental ill health by establishing and publishing this policy, associated policies and actions
 - 4.2.16. providing Directors, Heads, Managers (or equivalent) and teaching employees with general mental health awareness training to assist them to recognise the signs of mental ill health and to foster an environment where employees and students feel able talk about their concerns
 - 4.2.17. providing appropriate numbers of employees with Mental Health First Aid training on a regular basis
 - 4.2.18. making appropriate referrals to Channel¹ should someone's mental ill health and behaviour lead the RAD to believe that someone is at serious risk of radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism (as part of the RAD's Prevent duty²)
- 4.3. The RAD recognises that performance or behaviour can be affected if an employee or student is experiencing mental ill health. Appropriate support and adjustments will be explored and discussed with the individual before considering any formal measures such as disciplinary action.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. All employees and students are expected to:

- 5.1.1. not discriminate, harass or victimise anyone because of mental ill health. This is not tolerated and will be treated as gross misconduct and dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure outlined in the Employee Handbook or Student Disciplinary Procedure available in the Student Handbook.
- 5.1.2. support the RAD in its efforts to promote positive mental health for colleagues and students
- 5.1.3. take reasonable care of their own mental health as well as their physical health. Whilst those with management and teaching positions have mental health awareness training and the MHFAs are trained to be alert to the signs of mental ill health, employees and students experiencing mental ill health are strongly encouraged to bring their mental ill health concerns to their Manager, Programme Manager or teacher / tutor's attention.
- 5.1.4. Home and/or lone workers who may not come into such regular contact with colleagues as much as others are particularly encouraged to "speak up" if they

¹ Channel refers to the multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being radicalised and drawn into terrorism

² Duty under the Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism

when they need to and to ensure they take advantage of the support provided through individual and team meetings, activities and chances to interact.

- 5.1.5. ensure that their own conduct is in line with this policy and that their actions in the workplace do not affect the health and safety, including mental health of others

5.2. All Directors, Heads and Managers are expected to:

- 5.2.1. act as role models and encourage healthy behaviours. This includes but is not limited to: taking regular breaks away from workstation, desk or study including lunch breaks, using annual holiday entitlement or, keeping a good work life balance with regard to working or studying hours, and encouraging others to do all of the above
- 5.2.2. after the training referred to in 4.2.15 and 5.1.3 above be alert to the signs of mental ill health and take colleagues or students seriously if they raise concerns about their own health or other people's behaviour
- 5.2.3. recognise that an employee or student's performance, attendance or behaviour can be impacted by poor mental health and that it may be necessary to provide appropriate support and workplace adjustment which may involve additional time to improve performance and behaviour, before formal measures such as disciplinary or capability procedures are implemented
- 5.2.4. allocate time in regular one-to-one meetings with students or direct reports to discuss how they are feeling, actively listen and act upon information shared
- 5.2.5. include mental health and overall wellbeing as discussion items in team or student meetings as appropriate.

6. Support

- 6.1. The RAD will support employees experiencing mental ill health in the first instance through support from Directors, Heads and Line Managers, but also from the BUPA EAP, Mental Health First Aiders and the HR department.
- 6.2. The RAD provides support to students experiencing mental ill health in the first instance through the Student Support Officer.
- 6.3. The RAD will work with individual employees or students who have disclosed that they have been diagnosed with a mental health condition to ensure that where necessary appropriate support mechanisms are in place and that where they have been absent from the work or study through mental ill health, their reintegration is properly and sympathetically managed.
- 6.4. The RAD will also encourage and facilitate the creation of lunchtime activities for employees such as book club, choir, arts/crafts, dance/movement classes and other activities to assist employees with their general wellbeing.

7. Further information

- 7.1. If an employee or student would like more information about mental ill health at work they are advised to refer to Appendix I, review the literature and articles on SelectHR (employees) or Moodle (students), speak to a MHFA, the HR team or the Faculty of Education Student Support Officer as applicable and/or speak to their Manager.
- 7.2. The HR team will provide regular updates on topics surrounding wellbeing and mental health as part of its contribution to Friday Briefing, to raise awareness amongst employees.

8. Policy Review

- 8.1. This policy is owned by the Head of HR, but is also kept under regular review by the Head of Quality Assurance (Faculty of Education), Head of Training, Step into Dance Programme Manager, the Health and Safety Committee, the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the Safeguarding Committee, Executive Board and Board of Trustees.

9. Policy publication

- 9.1. This policy is published on SelectHR and is made available to Employees at Induction. Students are given access to the policy via Moodle and they are also introduced to it at their Induction.

10. Signature



Chair of the Board of Trustees

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Associated RAD documents

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
- Employee and Student Drugs and Alcohol Policy
- Employee and Student Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedure
- Employee Disciplinary Procedure
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Prevent Policy

Appendix I

Sources of information and support for adults, students, children and young people

A full list of sources of information and support on different topic areas of mental health is available from the Mental Health First Aiders in the HR team; however the following may be most commonly helpful:

Employee Assistant Cashplan (RAD permanent enrolled employees only)

BUPA EAP: Telephone 0330 123 0124 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Crisis and Emotional support helplines for everyone

Samaritans

Telephone 116 123 (Freephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

www.samaritans.org

Saneline

Telephone 0300 304 7000 (local call rates 6pm – 11pm 7 days a week)

www.sane.org.uk

Helplines Partnership offers a list of organisations in the UK with helplines at

www.helplines.org

Shout (for text support in a crisis)

Get help text 8528

www.giveusashout.org

Mental health information for everyone

Mind info line

Telephone: 0300 5000 927 (Local call rates 9am – 6pm Monday to Friday)

Text: 86463

www.mind.org.uk

Rethink Advice and Information Service

Telephone 0300 5000 927 (Local call rates 9.30am – 4pm)

www.rethink.org

Students in Higher Education

Nightline provides listening support and information helplines run by university students for university students, including mental health related issues

www.nightline.ac.uk

Student Minds is the UK's student mind health charity aiming to provide students with the skills, knowledge and confidence to talk about their mental health and support their peers.

info@studentminds.org.uk

www.studentminds.org.uk

Children and Young People

Childline – provides free confidential counselling and emotional support for children and young people. Online chat services with a counsellor are also available on the website.

Telephone: 0800 111 Freephone 24 hours a day 7 days a week)

www.childline.org.uk

YoungMinds – charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people through campaign and research. They also operate a parent helpline for any parents concerned about their child's mental health with resources for professionals working with young people.

Telephone 0808 802 5544

Ymenquiries@youngminds.org.uk

www.youngminds.org.uk