



Higher Education Access and Participation Statement 2024/25

A. Our Approach

ArtsEd is committed to enabling people of all backgrounds and ages to access high quality performing arts training, through a broad range of outreach activities run by the ArtsEd Extra and Outreach Department and through the provision of barrier-free Higher Education learning.

This document forms our Access and Participation Statement for 2024/25 and is published on our website.

B. Our focus for 2024/25

In 2024/25

- i. We will work to continue to increase our provisions for current students and applicants who identify as disabled. Particular attention is being given to reasonable adjustments for applicants with physical disabilities with a focus on wheelchair users to attend auditions in the context of the age and limitations of the Bath Road site,
- ii. We will seek to ensure students from low participation backgrounds are supported to be able to continue and able to fully participate in their studies.
- iii. We will review our applicants and students' data at the end of each audition process, as a means of establishing new targets aimed at supporting and increasing the participation of underrepresented groups at ArtsEd. This data is of particular use to the school's Outreach programme (in terms of geographical reach and pinpointing possible feeder schools for the next year).

C. Financial support to learners

Funding is secured from a wide range of sources to help gifted students and applicants access our training and see it through to completion. Most of our Higher Education students have access to an SLC student loan, whilst one third of our student body receive Dance and Drama Awards, a means-tested, government funded scholarship scheme. We support as many students as we can through our own bursary scheme and in total nearly half of the students who study with us receive a form of financial support (not including student loans).

- i. **Dance and Drama Awards (DaDAs)** offer annual scholarships to exceptionally talented performing arts students. Funded by the government through the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), DaDAs offer reduced tuition fees and assistance with living costs for the duration of the course. DaDA funding is linked to Trinity College London Professional Diplomas in Acting and Musical Theatre. Currently students in receipt of a DaDA are means tested according to national scales and may receive support for their course fees and apply for income assessed

maintenance of up to £5,185 a year. This support is in the form of a grant, not a loan. Each year there are a limited number of Awards which are allocated to those students who have been judged at audition to have the most potential to succeed in the profession and are in the most financial need.

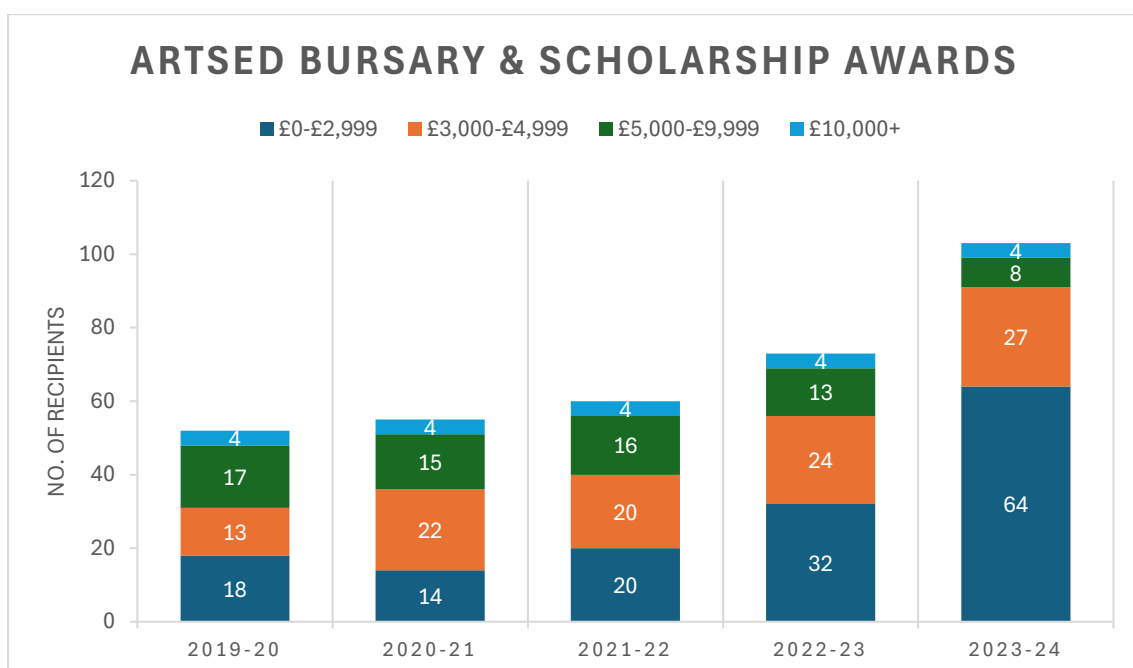
- ii. **Student Loans:** ArtsEd is in the ‘Approved’ category of the Office for Students Higher Education Register, which means that eligible undergraduate and full-time Foundation students can apply to Student Finance England for maintenance loans up to £13,022 and tuition fee loans up to £6,165. MA Acting students can apply for a maximum of £12,167 towards maintenance and/or tuition fees.

Students on a low income may be eligible for income support. Students are also eligible to apply for Disabled Students’ Allowance (with assistance from our Study Skills Coordinator if required).

iii. **ArtsEd Scholarship & Bursary Fund**

- 1. **Additional External Funding:** Every year we are invited to nominate or invite students to apply for awards from external organisations. Students have recently been successful in securing awards through the following schemes: Equity Student Bursary, The Laurence Olivier Bursary, Lilian Baylis Awards, Spotlight Prize, Lionel Bart Foundation Award, Sir John Gielgud Charitable Trust Bursary, BAFTA UK Scholarship, and Ian Fleming Musical Theatre Awards.

The following chart demonstrates the steady increase in the bursary and scholarship funding available at ArtsEd over the last 5 years. This includes support via the ArtsEd Scholarship & Bursary Fund, Trust scholarships (Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation, Leverhulme Arts Scholarships) and corporate support, alongside other sources. In total, over £321,688 was awarded for the 2023/24 academic year.



2. **ArtsEd Student Support Fund:** An internal fund that helps us to provide ‘emergency’ support to students who find themselves facing unexpected financial constraints. The fund is administered internally and provided directly to students, generally to cover items such as living costs, medical fees or transport costs.
3. **Sixth Form:** Means-tested scholarships and bursaries are available for students entering Sixth Form and are allocated according to talent and individual circumstances.
4. **Audition Fee Waivers:** Since January 2019 we have offered our own audition waiver scheme. In the academic year 2022/23 we offered 120 free auditions for entry to our courses in September 2023.

D. Promoting Diversity

ArtsEd is committed to creating and sustaining a positive and mutually supportive working environment for our staff and an excellent teaching and learning experience for our students, where individuals are equally valued and respected. In contrast to the popular characterisation of drama schools as elitist institutions which favour privately educated students from wealthy backgrounds, we seek to attract students from a diverse range of backgrounds. As well as working to encourage applicants from under-represented groups and those with no family history of Higher Education, we are committed to maintaining high representation of students who identify as ‘Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic’ on our courses. Over the last 5 years, the average proportion of our new intake to BA courses who identify as ‘Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic’ was approximately 30%.

BA new intake	% of students who identify as 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic'
2023-24	29%
2022-23	24%
2021-22	41%
2020-21	29%
2019-20	29%

E. Outreach Activities

ArtsEd’s outreach programme lies at the heart of our commitment to access and inclusion. We strive to forge strong connections and enduring relationships with our local communities and youth groups by providing resources, mentorship, and practical programmes that inspire individuals from all backgrounds to explore the rich diversity of the arts.

In 2023-24, we welcomed Woodland School, a secondary school based in Basildon, Essex, to our facilities. The students participated in a workshop led by the assistant director of our third-year show, 'A Beautiful Game.' During the session, they explored the concept of protest as performance and engaged in a movement workshop using music from the show. Following this, the students were invited to watch the performance, which provided them with valuable insights into how creative ideas and political thoughts can be vividly brought to life through set design, lighting, and sound.

Additionally, we hosted young people aged 13-16 from the Deborah Day Trust for a weeklong Musical Theatre course. Under the guidance of an acting tutor, choreographer, and musical director, the students participated in various technical skills workshops each morning and devoted their afternoons to creating their own musicals. The week culminated in a performance for friends and family, showcasing the talents and hard work of the participants.

We are proud to offer several bursaries to our partners for fee-paying short courses. In the 2023/24 academic year, we awarded two bursaries to low-income students for our ten-week Saturday Skills Academy.

F. Auditions

We recognise that auditioning is expensive and that the cost of travelling to London can be prohibitive for prospective students. We provide audition fee waivers to students based on need and we have kept the audition fee low by charging only £25.

G. Widening Participation

Part-time Foundation Courses: ArtsEd is mindful of the high costs of further training in the arts that can exclude students from developing their skills to a point where they are at the level to excel in the arts as a profession. To address this issue, we developed our Part-time Foundation Courses: low cost, part-time intensive versions of our Acting and Musical Theatre Foundation courses.

Classes run three evenings a week over 23 weeks, allowing students to work during the day to help fund themselves. Participants have full access to all ArtsEd facilities including library resources and out of hours rehearsal space to help support their learning. Bursaries for the Part-time Foundation courses are available.