

Preparing for Professional Training

frequently asked questions

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Many young people who go on to professional training have already started to develop their skills in dance/acting/musical theatre/singing by attending part-time classes at private dance and drama schools. Some will also have studied these subjects at secondary school through GCSEs, BTECs and A-levels, and others may have been involved in competitions and festivals. This early background training is helpful, particularly at auditions, but it is important to remember that careers in the performing arts are highly competitive and it is therefore worth working hard to achieve a good set of academic qualifications to complement your practical skills. Artists often need to look for additional careers as part of a portfolio of employment, or as a result of injury, illness or other unforeseen circumstances, so the acquisition of good formal academic qualifications will help to widen the choice of alternatives.

How old must I be to enter professional training?

Full-time training for ballet dancers can begin as early as 10 or 11 years of age at specialist providers. If you wish to study a Trinity College London (TCL) Diploma in Dance or Musical Theatre then you can do this at one of the approved providers from the age of 16, and TCL Diplomas in Drama/Acting can be taken from the age of 18. Entry to a HE (Degree) course in any discipline usually requires a minimum age of 18, and acquisition of A-Levels. Some organisations may require candidates to have studied particular qualifications in advance of entry to either a Diploma or Degree course.

How do I choose a school or college to train at?

Each school is unique in what it can offer you and it is therefore wise to look at a number of websites/prospectuses and to target a number of schools. Read all the information very carefully and always try to visit the school, attend graduate performances, open days or Summer schools so you can get a 'feel' for the kind of training that is on offer.

You should look at the type of courses on offer, such as Diplomas and/or Degrees, and consider which one might be the best option for you, particularly as they are funded quite differently. You can find out more about funding options on the CDMT website by clicking [here](#).

The CDMT Careers Conference and Showcase Performance is the ideal environment to meet and chat with representatives from all of CDMT's Accredited schools, take part in bespoke audition style workshops and take in an exclusive Showcase Performance by students currently training professionally.

Why should I train?

Occasionally an individual may have enough raw talent to be 'discovered' by the media and launched into stardom, but in reality this happens very, very rarely. Proper training is essential to allow you to build the stamina, technical ability and range of practical and professional skills and contacts to enable you to sustain a long and satisfying career in the demanding world of the performing arts.

How do I apply?

Entry requirements vary so you will need to enquire directly to the school or consult the prospectuses/websites for more information. It is important to ensure you meet the entry requirements and that you complete your application fully and in detail by the deadline date stated. You may need to pay a fee for each audition and you will have to pay to get to and from the audition which might start quite early in the day. Once you have submitted your application the school will inform you if you have been successful in gaining an audition/interview. Some schools will see all applicants, whereas some will just see a selection.

Preparing for auditions

Auditions can be very daunting for a young person embarking on the process. Some key things to remember when preparing for auditions are to check the materials that you are required to prepare very carefully, as these might vary between organisations, and familiarise yourself with them well, dress appropriately according to each school's requirements, and remember to take any necessary items such as sheet music, recorded backing tracks, water etc.