



Dublin Academy of Dramatic Arts Agency FAQ

Who can join the DADA Agency and is there a cost?

Any student attending our classes, including RJS after school drama classes with Hilary, can be represented by the DADA Agency. We do not charge a fee for this.

What are headshots?

These are photographs that represent accurately how you look. It should be the student's head and shoulders taken against a plain background in good light without shadows on the face. They should look straight towards the camera with a nice natural smile. Since younger students' appearances change frequently it is not necessary to have a professional headshot done, but we would recommend this for older students. If you are not sure which photo to send us, we would welcome a selection so that we could pick the most suitable. We can also recommend a couple of headshot photographers.

All students who wish to be represented need a headshot, this is their calling card and without a headshot we cannot submit actors for castings.

When do you need a new headshot?

It is important that the photo we hold on file is a good representation of the student. For any reason their appearance changes (change of hair style, dental braces on/off, loss/gain of front teeth or simply looking older) we need an updated headshot. Therefore at a minimum, we request that you send us a new headshot every year, although we do welcome new photos at any stage.

Why is it important that I look like my headshot?

For some jobs casting directors can request to see you based solely on your headshot, so if you book an audition with an out of date headshot, this can be a waste of time for all involved.

Biography or CV?

For younger students with limited experience we suggest a short biography describing themselves and including any skills or talents. Include any accents they can do very well, fluent languages and previous performance experience. Please also include exam level if applicable.

Experienced/older students should have an acting CV. This includes, but is not limited to, performance experience stage and screen, special talents/skills, and relevant courses/exams completed e.g. stage combat.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you need any guidance completing either of these.

How do you get submitted for a role?

We receive casting briefs from the casting directors which usually contain certain criteria we need to follow with regards to the roles being cast. We scan through all Agency students and select those who best match the casting director's requirements. We will then contact you to check availability and whether you would like to be submitted for consideration. It is very important to check all dates given on these invites so that you can highlight any difficulties at submission stage. We will send interested clients' headshots and biogs/CVs to be screened privately by casting

directors.

Often we hear nothing back but if the casting director wants them to audition, you will be given a venue, date and time to audition. You will also be informed at this stage of any script they need to learn in advance or any other audition requirements. Sometimes casting directors request submission of a self tape.

What are self tapes?

More and more casting directors are asking for self tapes. For younger students they may just want them to talk about their favorite toy or something similar. For older students they may need to prepare sides as they would for an audition. A lot depends on the role being cast as well as the age and experience of the actor.

If you "Google" self tapes you will get lots of help and advice on what to do/not do. If you are unsure, please do not hesitate to ask for advice.

Always remember to record self-tapes in landscape orientation i.e. if recording on your phone - turn it sideways.

Self tapes can be quite large so you may not be able to email them, as an alternative, please use Whatsapp to DADA using our phone number 085 8365895 OR the free file transfer application WeTransfer <https://wetransfer.com/>.

When and where do auditions take place?

Auditions generally take place in Dublin, common venues being the Courtyard Studios in Ringsend, Dublin 4, Bow Street, Dublin 7 or the Central Hotel, Dublin 2.

Auditions tend to happen outside school hours. However, sometimes they may be held during school. Please note if you agree to have your child submitted for consideration for a particular role and we contact you about an audition, it is important that they do their best to attend.

How long do auditions last?

Commercial auditions generally last five minutes. Film/TV auditions can last anywhere from five to thirty minutes.

What to bring to an audition?

Water. Any script you were given to prepare. A book or something you like to do, as sometimes there can be a bit of waiting involved, although the casting directors we deal with usually keep to a very good schedule! For older students it might be useful to have a copy of their acting CV with them.

What to wear to an audition?

Unless given specific instructions your child should wear regular clothes, avoid party dresses or anything that will distract the casting team. Keep hair natural, no gel for boys and for girls ideally it should be left down but off the face and no fancy ribbons or bows.

What happens at an audition?

This can depend on the type of audition. You should arrive about 5 mins before the audition time. There will be someone there to check in with, and there is often a form to fill in. This can be contact details, please use the Agency contact details – c/o Dublin Academy of Dramatic Arts, 085 8365895, agency@dada.ie rather than your own, your clothes/shoe size, and confirmation of availability around the shoot dates.

For commercial auditions, there are usually a lot of people in the waiting area, try not to be put off! These auditions can be quite quick, and mostly involve 'improvisation' which our students

learn about in class. If there is a script provided in advance, we will email it to you. For TV/Theatre/Film roles there are usually less people being auditioned at the same time. You will probably have been given sides and a brief character description, sometimes you might also be given the full script. Sides are excerpts from the script that you have been asked to prepare. Usually they ask you to be “off book”, this means your child should know their lines/cues completely without having to refer to the script in the audition. Directors do not like actors to be over practised in one way of delivery as they may ask them to deliver the lines in a different way, so they need to be flexible.

What happens in the audition room?

This again depends on who is auditioning and what they are auditioning for. The student will enter the audition room on their own, they should walk in with confidence and say 'hello' to the casting director. They should listen carefully to any instruction/direction given and try to do what is being asked, this is to see how well they can follow directions. The audition is often recorded, please do not look at the camera unless requested to do so. When leaving it is nice to say “goodbye” and perhaps thank them for giving you the opportunity to audition.

Do you hear back from your audition?

Usually you won't unless you have been shortlisted, recalled or cast, in which case we will get in touch.

Casting Directors see such a large volume of candidates during a casting session, so they don't tend to have time to get back to agents if their client has been unsuccessful. If however, we do receive feedback, we will always make sure to pass it on.

What is a recall?

If you are recalled, it means you are in the running for the role but the casting team have not made a final decision and would like to see a number of people again. This should be treated like another audition and unless told otherwise, try attend this audition looking the same as the original audition.

What does “pencilled” for a role mean?

If you are pencilled for a role, you are one of a very small number of candidates being seriously considered for the role. Please maintain a similar appearance and availability until you are told that that you have landed the role or it has been cast.

What is Fishpond?

Fishpond is an Irish online casting website <https://fishpond.ie/>

There is no requirement for students to join Fishpond but it may provide more opportunities for casting directors to spot the student. It is used extensively for casting commercials, so if you would like to be involved in that side of things it may be worth considering. There is an annual fee to have a profile on this site. This provides you the opportunity to upload self tapes, biographies and photos which can be seen by casting directors. This profile is not available to the general public. Please let me know if you would like more information about Fishpond.

To get the most out of your Fishpond profile you should keep it up to date, including headshots and video content is very important.

Whether a member or not, there are lots of useful tips on the “fish + tips” section on headshots, selftapes, etc. <https://fishpond.ie/site/fishtips?fishId=7>

Other castings / opportunities

Theatre Directors and production companies come to the school occasionally to meet with suitable students.

From time to time we send out "FYI" emails with information about unpaid opportunities which you can apply for. RTE/TV3 and other production companies look for children for various programmes e.g. RTE Jr radio, Young Peoples Programmes on RTE or reality kids programmes. As always it depends on what comes in and the targeted age bracket. Please note that these programmes are generally unpaid with no travel expenses. Students that have taken part in these programmes have had an amazing time and gained valuable experience.

If cast what commission is deducted?

If cast, we will negotiate contracts, get paperwork in order and assist with any other agency related matters. We will invoice for your payment and once funds have been received, we will transfer your payment with breakdown via email. We take a commission of on monies earned (10% - Theatre/low paid work, 15% - TV/Film, 20% - Commercials).

Actors are responsible for their own tax affairs.

Is there a guarantee of work?

No. It should be stressed that, due to the nature of the industry, it is impossible to guarantee work for members. The decision to cast members is not made by DADA, this is always made by industry personnel. It's about being in the right place at the right time, and we simply give you the opportunity to be seen by casting directors and industry personnel who are casting children in Ireland.

I am still unsure whether to have my child represented?

A lot of children adapt really quickly to the casting process and for other children they might not be ready to hear the words "sorry not this time".

The last thing we want is for any child to start losing their confidence and that's when you, the parent, need to decide if or when the time is right to join the Agency.

Do you have a question that has not been answered?

I have tried to address common questions about our agency and casting in general but I'm sure I have not covered everything, so please do get in touch with any questions relating to the DADA Agency and I will do my best to answer them.

Anne-Marie at agency@dada.ie