

ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE

**Minutes of the 88th Annual General Meeting
of the
Royal Academy of Dance
held at RAD Headquarters, 188 York Road, SW11 3JZ
and online
on
Sunday 11th May 2025 at 12.00 noon**

1.0 Introduction and Trustees Report – Stephen Moss, Chair of the Board of Trustees

Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the 88th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Academy of Dance.

I am Stephen Moss, the proud Chair of the RAD Board of Trustees, and I will be chairing today's meeting.

Allow me first to extend a warm welcome to all those who are here in-person, but also to those joining us remotely from all around the world. It is great to have you all with us on this action-packed members' day, filled with so many interesting options for you to enjoy. I do hope you have had a great day so far and are looking forward to the afternoon events.

This is the end of my second year as Chair, and the second time I am chairing the AGM, and it has been yet another period of changes and challenges for the organisation. Not least of these was the resignation of our Chief Executive, Tim Arthur, for very understandable personal reasons. On behalf of the board, and indeed all of our members, I would like to recognise his significant contribution to the RAD during his two and a half years with us. Whilst talking of previous Chief Executives, many of you will know that Tim's predecessor, Luke Rittner, sadly had a stroke recently but I am delighted to say he is well on the mend now and I know you would want to join me in wishing them both the very best for the future.

I am delighted to say that we now have our new Chief Executive in place so let me publicly extend a very warm welcome to Elizabeth Honer on the occasion of her first AGM. You will be hearing from her next but let me tell you that we are very fortunate to have her leading the organisation. Elizabeth has a wealth of experience, ranging from work with HM Treasury and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, to teaching as a visiting fellow at Cranfield School of Management, and taking up a variety of leading positions across the arts and culture. She has been a member of the RAD's Finance Sub-committee for some time which meant that she was able to hit the ground running when she joined us at the end of January. Perhaps most importantly of all, she is a dedicated Silver Swan and takes regular classes here at RAD headquarters.

The period under review is the 12 months to 31st July 2024.

Although the RAD weathered the Covid storm, it still casts its dark shadows, and its repercussions have been long lasting. The period under review saw a decrease in the appetite for exam-based activities and an increasing cost of living in many of our markets. This has meant that our financial results have again been sadly disappointing.

However, our five-year strategic plan offers many opportunities for long term new streams but, in the shorter term, we need to continue to grow the core of our revenue through membership and exams income. The move from capital fundraising for this building to revenue fundraising to support our activities has taken longer than anticipated to come to fruition but we have a great team in place and confidence that we will grow this vital area of additional future income.

We also have mitigation plans in place to reduce some areas of overhead and to create new areas of efficiency, not least through upgrading our software platforms. Indeed, one positive outcome from the pandemic has been our investment in new technologies, in particular the introduction of filmed exams. New flexibilities like that allow us to offer new ways to support our students and members and have been well received.

It remains a challenging time for charities generally but, overall, I think we can genuinely look forward to a brighter financial future.

Turning now to the highlights of the year in review, I am pleased to say that our Members' Day last year attracted nearly 800 attendees from all over the globe, both in-person and online. It enabled us to reduce our costs by combining the event with our AGM and, in so doing, we subsequently won the Cvent Excellence Award in the 'Best Hybrid Experience' category. This was a great example of our growing expertise in harnessing digital technologies to connect with our audiences which is why we have repeated that format again this year.

Another area of focus during the year has been safeguarding, where we have introduced mandatory standards for all our teachers. This underlines our prioritisation of the safety of all dancers in our care.

We have also continued to expand opportunities to dance through programmes like Silver Swans for older dancers, RADiate for those with special educational needs and disabilities, and *Step into Dance* for students in schools across London and Essex.

On that front, we were delighted that the Jack Petchey Foundation continued its much-valued support for Step into Dance for the 18th year running, but this was tempered, of course, by the sad news of Sir Jack's death. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge his huge contribution to improving the wellbeing of so many young people over so many years. His legacy lives on through the happiness and opportunities that he has brought to so many, and we greatly value our continued association with his foundation.

And so we certainly have faced challenges over the year in review, but everyone at the RAD has played their part in surmounting these, and in bringing many successes as well. So, on behalf of my fellow trustees, I would like to recognise the loyalty and commitment of the RAD management and staff for their hard work, and for their fearless adoption of new ways to deliver on our continuing mission at the RAD to teach the world to dance.

It is also hugely important that I thank all of our members, friends, supporters, donors and patrons, for their ongoing loyalty and generosity, and I look forward to the next year with anticipation and confidence in what we can achieve together.

2.0 Operational Review – Elizabeth Honer, Chief Executive

3.0 Financial Review – Renu Randhawa, Director of Finance

I am here to update you on our financial performance as of 31st July 2024. Our full annual report and financial statements are available online and provides more details on what I will outline today. Here are the key points:

As our chairman mentioned, we continue to feel the lingering effects of Covid-19 across our activities. This year, we reported a 2% decrease in our worldwide group income, down to £20.5m, primarily due to a reduction in the number of examinations taken during the year.

This decrease in income has been accompanied by a 2% increase in our expenditure to £22.1m. Consequently, we recorded a net loss of £1,6m for this period, double that of last year.

Many of our offices have faced significant cost increases, particularly for travel and accommodation for examiners and tutors, impacting their profitability. We are actively exploring various ways to mitigate these challenges.

Examination income decreased by 1% to £12.3m, while our expenditure increased by 3%. Total exam entries fell by 6% to 207,597, reduction of nearly 12,407 entries compared to the previous year.

While many territories have returned to in-person exams, our introduction of filmed exams have been well received. We have made them a permanent offering, providing teachers and student more flexibility and opportunities. Our key markets in China and Hong Kong have seen a particularly strong uptake of this format.

Our Faculty of Education experienced a decrease in income of £430,000 compared to the previous year. Despite returning to in-person delivery and increasing hybrid teaching, student numbers were down by 2%, reflecting the global economic constraints that we continue to face around the world.

On a positive note, Continuing Professional Development Education Income increased by 13% to £2.9, partly due to offering more courses, including one in China for the first time.

Membership also saw a slight increase in income of 1% to £1.2m as the team focused on enhancing membership benefits and expanding the membership base.

Trading income, which includes retail, licensing and royalties increased by 24% to £1.4m. The team is exploring new products to further boost profitability.

Our Fundraising income decreased by 22% to £716,000 with direct expenditure up by 56%. This decline followed the completion of the capital campaign in the previous

financial year and the shift towards a revenue fundraising model. The increase in costs is partly due to the Fonteyn, our annual international ballet competition, which took place in September 2023.

Other income from advertising, property rental, and sundry income decreased by 47%, reflecting the ongoing economic challenges that have limited our ability to generate additional income.

Our indirect costs increased by 6% due to investment in IT infrastructure, higher running costs of our headquarters, and increased bank charges.

At 31st July 2024, the RAD had total funds of £28.4m, including restricted funds of £1.3m and unrestricted funds of £27.1m. The group free reserves target is £3.3m, and actual free reserves at the end of the period was £3.4m. However, charity only free reserves were down on the previous period to £2.6m due to the year's loss.

The RAD generated an overall net loss of £1.2m, mainly due to a reduction in exams and country specific activities, such as the emigration from Hong Kong, which impacted the number of dance students in the city.

We have a CBILS loan of £800,000 with HSBC, drawn down in March 2021, to be repaid over years by March 2027. Additionally, a term loan of £2.5m, taken out in 2021, will be repaid over 25 years, with the loan agreement renewed every five years. Both loans are secured on the RAD's headquarters at 188 York Road.

The forecasts for the 12-month period from the date of signing the accounts have been reviewed including low-case scenario planning, indicate that the RAD will have sufficient resources available to meet its liabilities as they fall due. Therefore, the accounts have been prepared on a going-concern basis, and the auditors have given the Academy an unqualified report.

Looking ahead to the Financial Year 2024/25, we are committed to improving our offering and performance. The past two years have been financially challenging, and the current year is not expected to show significantly better results. However, we are taking a long-term view, investing in programs and strategic partnerships to yield better results in the future. Our global headquarters offers exciting opportunities as a venue for events, arts performances and for corporate hire.

We have set targets to increase our exam activities and member recruitment by 5% and are developing more revenue generating fundraising activities to boost our income over the long term.

I would like to thank the Chair of The Finance and Audit sub-committee for his guidance. It has been a great pleasure to work with him.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the members of the Finance and Audit sub-committee for their great support and advice, and to my Finance team, the worldwide Finance staff, and all the RAD staff for their hard work and commitment.

With this, I commend our latest annual report and financial statements to you.

4.0 Ordinary Business – Resolutions

4.1 To consider and approve the minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting

MOTION CARRIED

4.2 To receive and adopt the audited Financial Report & Statements for the year ended 31 July 2024

MOTION CARRIED

4.3 To re-appoint Crowe UK LLP auditors for the ensuing year

MOTION CARRIED

4.4 To re-elect three Trustees who are retiring by rotation in accordance with Bye-Law 36.1 and are offering themselves for re-election under Bye-Laws 33.1(b) (List B) and 35.1(A)

Deborah Cornelius MOTION CARRIED

Peter Flew MOTION CARRIED

Stephen Sacks MOTION CARRIED

4.5 To elect Trustees recommended by the Board in accordance with Bye-Laws 33.1(b) (List A) and 35.1(b)

Justine Berry MOTION CARRIED

4.6 To elect Trustees recommended by the Board in accordance with Bye-Laws 33.1(b) (List B) and 35.1(b)

Georgina Robbins MOTION CARRIED

4.7 To express the Academy's gratitude to Ida Levine and Joshua Tuifua who have stepped down as Trustees

Members expressed their gratitude to the retiring Trustees for their years of service to the Academy.

5.0 Any Other Business in accordance with Clause 14.6 of the Charter and Bye-Laws

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12.30 p.m.