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GSA
est. 1935

GUILDFORD
SCHOOL
OF ACTING





FOREWORD

THANK YOU FOR WANTING TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE POSITION OF HEAD OF GUILDFORD SCHOOL OF ACTING.

GSA has a global reputation for excellence and makes a unique contribution to the University as a whole. The world-class professional training that takes place at the School is a highly valued part of Surrey's portfolio and I take great satisfaction in following the careers of the School's graduates.

By combining the School's long-standing strengths with a keen sense of trends in the creative industries, and with the full backing of the University, I believe GSA is in an outstanding position to take its creative and education contribution to new heights, with care for its students and staff and a commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion being at the heart of all the School does.

We want to attract the widest and most diverse candidate field possible to join a community here that is welcoming, open, and places high importance on social responsibility and ethical conduct.

The international standing of the School and its importance to the University calls for a Head in tune with the needs of a modern conservatoire, with a deep

understanding of excellence and innovation in professional training and education, strong operational and strategic credentials, and close links to the creative industries. As an influential citizen of the University, the Head will need to speak for the needs both of the School and the wider institution.

Surrey is a wonderful place to live and work and I believe there are rich opportunities for building creative partnerships in our region and beyond.

I hope you find the information that follows a helpful guide to the work of Guildford School of Acting and the wider institution and to what we have to offer. Please do not hesitate to contact our advisors at Syllogism for a confidential discussion about becoming the Head of School.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Professor Graham Miller FAcSS
Pro-Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences





THE ROLE

AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

AS HEAD OF GUILDFORD SCHOOL OF ACTING, YOU WILL OCCUPY A KEY LEADERSHIP POSITION WITHIN THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LEAD A SCHOOL OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE TO THE UNIVERSITY AS A WHOLE.

Working closely with your colleagues at School and Faculty levels, you will formulate and implement strategies to build on the outstanding success of the School in relation to professional training and the student experience and promote the development of pedagogic scholarship.

Externally, you will project the work of the School to a broad range of senior figures in the creative industries.

The appointment as Head will be for five years, subject to renewal. The successful candidate will be appointed to a permanent position at the University.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion across all the School's activities, including within the curriculum, productions and staffing, and through outreach programmes
- Being at the heart of a collegiate, open, and ethical working culture at the School
- Providing the School with strategic and operational leadership
- Promoting excellence and innovation in vocational training and the student experience, achieving the highest standards of pastoral care and career preparation
- Articulating a vision for GSA that aligns with industry trends and leading a team of senior colleagues
- Projecting the work of the School to external audiences in the creative industries
- Playing a full role in the life of the Faculty and University
- Promoting the development of internationally recognised pedagogic scholarship.



AN EXCEPTIONAL CANDIDATE

THE ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE HEAD OF GUILDFORD SCHOOL OF ACTING ARE:

- A demonstrable commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion
- A track record of strategic and operational leadership, encompassing scale and complexity
- A deep understanding of excellence and innovation in conservatoire training and education, including pastoral support
- Strong links to the creative industries and the ability to anticipate and respond to industry trends
- The ability to articulate a vision for the School and to lead a team of senior colleagues
- An open, visible, and consultative leadership style
- The ability to take a Faculty/University wide perspective and to promote partnerships with other Schools and Faculties
- A good understanding, or the ability to develop such an understanding, of the UK higher education system.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

The Head is expected to work outside normal office hours as necessary (e.g. at Open Days held at weekends).





HOW TO APPLY



TO APPLY TO BE HEAD OF GUILDFORD SCHOOL OF ACTING, PLEASE SUBMIT:

- A covering letter of no more than 2,000 words setting out your interest in the role and details of how you match the criteria. The Selection Committee will find it particularly helpful if you can cite examples of your achievements and skills, making clear the difference you personally made to the events you describe.
 - A comprehensive CV, including current salary details and the names and addresses of three referees. Referees will not be approached until the University has drawn up a shortlist, and only with the prior permission of candidates.
- Applications should be emailed to recruitment@sylogism.co.uk by the closing date of **Tuesday, 4 January 2022**.
- Formal interviews and presentations will take place on **Friday, 21 January 2022**.
- For an informal discussion about the role and how to apply, please contact Christopher Lake or Sabine Tilly of our advisors Sylogism at recruitment@sylogism.co.uk or telephone +44 (0)20 3417 6076.



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY ▶▶ AND INCLUSION ◀◀

AT SURREY, WE ARE VERY PROUD OF THE DIVERSITY WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY AND ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT THAT OFFERS EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.

We strive for Surrey to be a place where everyone feels welcomed, valued and safe. Our vision to be a leading global university relies on our proven ability to attract the best people from the UK and internationally to work and study here; this can only be achieved when we work together to create a truly inclusive culture.

Our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Plan 2020-2025](#) lays out our aims to develop our inclusive and supportive culture, eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and advance equality of opportunities. Across University of Surrey, we are working actively towards fulfilling our EDI Plan targets and encourage everyone to engage with and participate in its progress. To achieve culture change,

we are working to embed EDI in all teaching and learning, research and partnerships, as well as supporting our professional services colleagues. This will enable a self-sustaining process that will support EDI in becoming 'second nature' for our community.

We are proud members of the Race Equality Charter and the Athena SWAN Charter for gender equality (holding University and departmental awards). We are also a Stonewall Diversity Champion and a committed Disability Confident employer. Our AccessAble app provides accessibility support to people who need it around our campus and we have thriving staff networks and equality groups that support our work in all our areas of equality (gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQI+, disability and faith).





THE UNIVERSITY

OF SURREY

THE UNIVERSITY OF SURREY IS A GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF IDEAS AND PEOPLE, DEDICATED TO LIFE-CHANGING EDUCATION AND RESEARCH. WITH A BEAUTIFUL AND VIBRANT CAMPUS, WE PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL TEACHING AND PRACTICAL LEARNING TO INSPIRE AND EMPOWER OUR STUDENTS FOR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

The University was granted its Royal Charter and established as a University in 1966. Although the University was founded as a science and engineering focused institution, its educational, research and other activities now cover a broad range of disciplines, which are organised within three faculties:

- [Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences](#)
- [Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences](#)
- [Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences](#)

In addition to its core academic activities the University owns and manages the Surrey Research Park. The Park is home to a number of technology, science, health and engineering companies, many of which are spinouts from the University or benefit from close links with the University's academic activities. Student and outreach sport are delivered by the University's wholly owned subsidiary company Surrey Sports Park Limited, acting as agent for the University.

Our vision is to be a leading global university, renowned for the outstanding quality and impact of our graduates and research, together making great contributions to society. We have already made significant progress towards this goal, as demonstrated by our metrics. As a Top 20 university nationally and Top 250 globally, we generate nearly £50m of research income annually and were amongst the Top 30 in the last Research Excellence Framework. We are Top 25 nationally for overall student satisfaction and are financially sustainable, with a healthy 3.5% underlying surplus.

As we launch our refreshed strategy to 2024, we do so in the context of rapidly changing HE and geopolitical environments, which provide us with great opportunities. We are seeing increased demand for HE, increased government willingness to invest in research and innovation, and increased economic internationalisation. New pedagogical approaches and technologies allow us to be more flexible, responsive and student-centric in our delivery of teaching and learning, whilst some of the biggest and most complex global problems – from climate change to pandemic recovery – provide avenues for high-impact research.

To capitalise on these opportunities, we are focusing on three key activities: student experience and outcomes, research intensity, and creating the conditions for success. For example, through the use of innovative education, digitally enabled learning, and learning analytics, we are giving our students an outstanding experience and a head start in the jobs market. In research, we are creating pan-university, interdisciplinary research institutes to harness our collective knowledge, scale our innovation and impact, and increase the synergies between research and teaching. Underpinning these two vital areas is an improved environment and culture, which increases the capacity for academic endeavour, improves the support for research and innovation, and creates an inclusive culture built on collaboration and trust. Surrey is a values-led institution, with a focus on inclusion, inspiration, innovation and integrity.

Our new **Corporate Strategy to 2024** can be viewed [here](#).



FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (FASS) BRINGS TOGETHER SCHOLARS AND STUDENTS FROM ACROSS AN EXTRAORDINARY RANGE OF ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES IN A LEARNING COMMUNITY THAT IS DEDICATED TO THE DISCOVERY AND ENRICHMENT OF THE ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES. THE FACULTY IS A COMMUNITY OF ARTISTS, ENTREPRENEURS, SCHOLARS AND PRACTITIONERS WORKING ON THE PLEASURES AND CHALLENGES OF CURRENT TIMES.

The Faculty provides internationally recognised undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and, each year, welcomes more than 7,000 bright, dedicated students onto its degree programmes. It delivers an exceptional student experience and quality teaching, as demonstrated in its ongoing success in national league tables (ranking in the top 10 for five subject areas in the Complete University Guide 2021)

The Faculty has a vibrant and diverse research community, and academics and researchers work with a wide range of external organisations – from government bodies to international businesses. While each discipline has distinct methodological approaches, there is a shared passion for studying ideas and practices relating to all aspects of human life and experiences. Research aims to contribute

to the theoretical advancement in the state of knowledge in the arts, humanities and social sciences, while achieving real-world effects by focusing on current global societal challenges and the cultural and socio-economic aspects at the core of large-scale human problems.

The Faculty is leading research in fields such as morphology, the digital economy, sustainable tourism, translation, and social simulation. Recent research projects have focused on the legal, social and ethical implications of AI technologies such as driverless cars; the development of spatial audio and psychoacoustic engineering in creative digital media; the effect of digital innovation on the arts, literature and education; and exploring what it means to work and live sustainably.





GUILDFORD SCHOOL OF ACTING

Established in 1935, the GSA brand name gives our students immediate visibility in the entertainment industry and a reputation for quality and professionalism. We're passionate about constantly upholding and developing this reputation, ensuring our students have the technical skills they need whilst also encouraging them to develop their artistic integrity, entrepreneurship and creativity to succeed as artists today and in the future.

At GSA, our staff, students, and alumni come from all over the world. Our diverse community and global focus are core elements of life at GSA.

GSA has a Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, who is supported by a team of 'Champions' – academic colleagues who deliver teaching and who are the School leads on Cultural Intelligence, Gender Identity, and our Department Disability Coordinator.

As part of the University of Surrey, GSA facilities rank amongst some of the best professional training and campus facilities in the UK Conservatoire sector. These include the £4.5million 200 seat Bellairs Theatre, 128 seat PATS Studio Theatre, and 80 seat Rex Doyle Studio Theatre; the Library and Learning Centre which has seen investment of £16million over the last 5 years; access to the £36million Surrey Sports Park; and, a range of on-campus student accommodation.

Our rigorous process of training and development is proven to develop versatile, dynamic graduates, not only as performers, but also as practitioners in fields including Theatre Production, Stage Management, and Applied Theatre. Their attention to detail, professionalism and talent gives GSA graduates an unrivalled reputation and employment record across the creative industries.



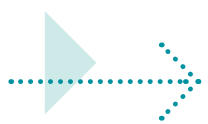
GUILDFORD SCHOOL OF ACTING

A high percentage of GSA alumni appear in the cast and crew lists of West End shows, national theatre tours, TV shows and films, and graduates gain professional representation or professional contracts within the first year.

Students at GSA are taught by leading West End directors, casting agents, designers, theatre practitioners, experienced professionals and leading academics, giving our students a comprehensive support network and knowledge base they can utilise pre and post graduation.

Our research, which encompasses both traditional and practice-based forms, addresses performance in history and contemporary culture. It ranges from Shakespeare to performance philosophy, and includes work in theatre history, contemporary dance, performance and the nonhuman, actor training, musical theatre, performance and cognitive science, mental health and disability arts. As a university conservatoire, we benefit from a close relationship between scholarship, performer training and theatre industry. Guildford School of Acting is home to two research centres: The Surrey Shakespeare Centre and the Centre for Performance Philosophy.

To find out more about the School and its alumni, please go to <https://gsauk.org>



Facilities

Teaching space

Students at GSA have access to purpose-built studios and tutorial rooms within the GSA building and across the University campus.

Performance space

Productions are staged in the 200 seat Bellairs Theatre, 128 seat PATS Studio Theatre, and 80 seat Rex Doyle Studio Theatre as well as in theatres and venues in and around Guildford and London, giving students the opportunity to experience a wide range of professional performance environments. These external venues include the renowned Yvonne Arnaud Theatre and The Mill Studio in Guildford, and various venues in London's West End including the Shaftesbury Theatre, The Criterion Theatre and the Soho Theatre.

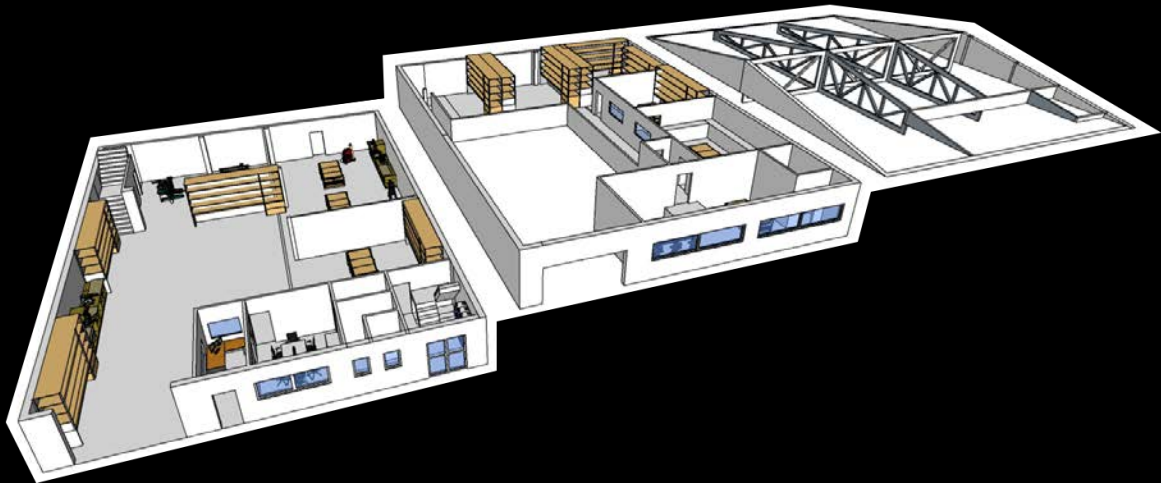
GSA is situated on the University of Surrey's beautiful campus offering students state of the art, purpose built facilities within a lively University environment just ten minutes' walk from Guildford town centre and only 34 minutes from Central London by train.



Production facilities

Production facilities at GSA include a state-of-the-art 100Gb optical fibre network fitted throughout the Ivy Arts Centre; a fully automated flying system; cutting-edge robotic cameras; professional-grade video production equipment; bespoke GDS prompt desk and wireless comms; high-end computer workstations with dedicated software; and a fully-equipped construction workshop and wardrobe department.

Our sound stock includes: Yamaha and Digico sound desks; a wide range of PA including Inspired Audio, D&B, JBL, and Meyer; Sennheiser and Shure radio equipment; industry standard microphones, and a range of instrument microphones. Lighting equipment includes ETC and MA consoles on site, as well as other console brands to explore and learn. We have a range of in house stock and also hire a wide variety of intelligent lighting fixtures.



GSA Scenic Studios

Open since October 2019, our new GSA Scenic Studios are the base for all our teaching and production work in scenic arts and design. This fully refurbished unit allows for scenic construction in both wood and metal, plus full paint facilities, and contains state of the art equipment, including a CNC machine and 3D printer, a CAD suite and dedicated studio and learning spaces for prop and model making. Our facilities put us at the forefront of conservatoire training in these creative disciplines.

Everything in one place

GSA is situated on the University of Surrey Stag Hill campus which is home to a wide range of amenities, including a laundrette, a post office, a bookshop, a health centre and our recently refurbished convenience store, SimplyFresh. There's also a large supermarket nearby, and a weekly food market is held on the Stag Hill campus.

Food and drink

The ThEATre coffee shop is situated within the GSA building and serves hot drinks and a selection of hot and cold food.

In addition, there is a wide selection of coffee shops and food outlets on the University campus.

Student focus



Christina Bennington

BA (Hons) Musical Theatre graduate

Creating the role of Raven in *Bat Out of Hell* was an exhilarating and overwhelming experience. I'm incredibly lucky to have a very solid training behind me that has allowed me to give my absolute best performance, eight shows a week, since I graduated.

I attended a GSA Summer Course and fell in love with the school. To me, GSA was a place where I could learn all the skills I needed to succeed as a performer, and also where my unique talents would be celebrated and nurtured. The teachers taught me to have opinions and be valued as a creative brain in a room, something which has proved incredibly valuable in my journey to becoming a West End leading lady.

The balance between healthy competition and a family atmosphere at GSA is perfect. I was constantly pushed in every discipline, while being equally supported emotionally. It's easy to get the best out of people when everyone is striving for excellence together, as a team effort.

If you choose to audition at GSA it's incredibly important to choose material that shows you off to your strengths. Work out what you find most interesting about yourself and play to it. Be ready to work the hardest in the room, but to also be the nicest. The industry is smaller than you think, and that rings true for colleges also. Break a leg!



Alessandro Rossetti

MA in Stage and Production Management graduate

I work now as a Senior Stage Manager in large-scale events and opera productions, with lots of experience at different companies. I have had the opportunity to work on two shows in two stadiums in Italy and Saudi Arabia with Balich Worldwide Shows – the leading company in Olympic ceremonies and other large-scale shows worldwide. It is a privilege to work in a community of professionals who constantly strive to achieve the best possible results, through the common belief that what we do is special and everlasting. In opera I have worked as an Assistant Stage Manager with English National Opera at the London Coliseum for an opera that opened the 2019-2020 season and for an important opera festival in Florence. Because of my job commitments I was awarded the Internationalisation Award from my Faculty and I could not be more honoured and proud of my achievements.

Being part of huge processes that create unforgettable memories for the audience is a privilege, but being part of cultural change is an honour, as it happened to me when I worked in Saudi Arabia as a Stage Manager. What I enjoyed

the most was also working with a whole range of event professionals, coming from all over the world with different backgrounds.

The courses are run by professionals with vast experience in their field. Separately, Guildford's proximity to London allowed me to interact with theatre professionals and employers in London's West End. One of the best things about my course was being able to improve my technical and practical skills, such as prop making, carpentry, set building and painting. I also enjoyed the ability to speak with professors about my professional development. My lecturers were always available when I asked for guidance and support.

A couple of words of advice, that I would like to share, is to make contacts and understand how the industry is structured from the first year. Secondly, be ready to adapt to a range of different theatre jobs. Any job that puts you on a stage will help you to have a holistic vision of work for your future career as a Stage Manager.



Alexandra Mardell

BA (Hons) Acting graduate

I currently play Emma Brooker on Coronation Street, ITV. I am also the co-artistic director of JunkBox Theatre Company. The most exciting thing for me in my job is meeting and working with other actors/directors/writers etc. There's always so much to learn from everyone, so many interesting stories.

I always attended dance and drama classes as a child, mainly focused on musical theatre. But as I got older I wanted to focus on acting for television. For me, the only option was drama school.

When I first visited GSA it felt homely. The other students were so friendly and supportive, rather than competitive as I had witnessed at other schools. We're all in the same boat at the end of the day. My happiest memories at GSA are all with my class mates. Back stage stories, tech day, watching the other class in their showcase. 3 years of working so intensely together, they know you better than

anyone! Although many of my friends and family would disagree, I would say I'm quite shy. Throughout my time at GSA I would often feel as though I couldn't do it. I can't be funny in comedy, can't sing the high note in mix quality, can't write my monologue phonetically. My class mates would always tell me off when I always seemed to manage it in the end. We had such a supportive year group, and over the three years, they helped me to overcome my self-doubt. But I still can't write phonetically! At GSA many of the tutors have taught for years, worked as performers themselves and really care about sharing their knowledge and experience with the students. Although they can seem intimidating in your first year, by the time you graduate, they're your friends!

GSA was the drama school for me! The perfect balance of feeling settled and under pressure! Also, Guildford is lovely!



Cletus Chan

MA Musical Theatre graduate

I made my West End debut in The King and I at the London Palladium.

I started musical theatre relatively late, at the age of 15. I always knew I liked performing as I'm also a musician. Since then, I've been taking steps towards my goal and I am so happy to be able to say I'm a professional musical theatre actor!

I chose GSA for its outstanding reputation and its incredible employment rate. It is almost impossible to open any programme without seeing a handful of GSA graduates. I also chose GSA because of its equal emphasis on all three disciplines. I felt that GSA has the most well rounded MA course and does not try to pigeon hole you into a particular discipline. Many schools are known to excel in one or two disciplines, I believe that GSA excels in all three. The sheer intensity of the MA programme at GSA really pushed me to become a better performer. GSA understands that we only have one year and they pack it with as much training as possible. After a year, it really feels like I've received 3 years' worth of training!

One of the happiest moments I've had at GSA was when we first stepped out onto the Shaftsbury stage for our showcase. After training so intensely for a year, my classmates have become a second family. It was very emotional to share a West End stage with them.

GSA has instilled a high level of professionalism and tenacity in me. The industry is so competitive, you have to be a professional and constantly work on honing your craft. The weekly professional development classes really prepared me to enter this competitive industry, giving me the skills and drive to continue despite constant rejection.

If you choose to audition at GSA make sure you are completely prepared for all scenarios you could possibly face. Arrive early, be polite, have a 16 bar, 32 bar and 2 minute cut of your songs, because you never know what curve balls they might throw at you. But most importantly, let your passion shine through. You would be surprised by how far a good personality and good manners can get you!



A beautiful place to live

At GSA we offer the best of both worlds – the benefit of a relaxed campus university set among pretty countryside with the amenities and social life you would expect from the lively town of Guildford and London on the doorstep.

Our friendly, safe community, set in the heart of Surrey, is the perfect home from home, just a ten-minute stroll into town, with a regular bus service running late into the night.

Guildford has some of the best shopping in the region where you'll find all of the high street favourites plus a great choice of independent retailers.

The town boasts over 100 places to eat and drink as well as clubs, pubs and bars.

Guildford is also the perfect base to explore from, adjacent to the A3 main road and on a direct railway line between London Waterloo and Portsmouth. It's also in close proximity to the UK's two largest international airports, Heathrow and Gatwick.

A direct train to London takes just 34 minutes from Guildford so these excellent transport links make a trip to the capital easy to enjoy, whether heading into town for a night out, a West End show or some sightseeing.





UNIVERSITY OF SURREY

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