

Recruitment Pack

Senior Buyer

RA

May 2025

Hello

**Thank you for your interest
in applying for the role of
Senior Buyer.**

It is our people who have made the Royal Academy of Arts what it is today — a living academy for artists, art-making and art lovers. Since 1768 the RA has been alive with artists, academicians, educators, students and visitors alike.

Today we are also meticulous technicians, imaginative storytellers, considerate caretakers and welcoming hosts.

Whether we are back of house or on the front desk, we are committed to the same belief; we are all here to share the enjoyment, and importance, of art.

**We are excited you want
to join our team.**

Job overview

Department

Commercial

Reports to

Head of Retail

Contract Type

Permanent

Purpose of Role

The Senior Buyer is responsible for developing and realising the RA's buying strategy. The role manages sourcing and developing a product offer that represents both the RA core brand and annual exhibition programme, ensuring optimal ranging and to maximise profitability. The role manages both internal and external supplier relationships and uses sales data to proactively inform decision making and drive commercial success.

Key Objectives

Shape the buying offer at the RA. Develop an updated Buying Strategy which aligns with the RA's identity, audience motivations, and financial goals to ensure a commercially viable and engaging product range

The role will use data- sales performance, customer behaviours, motivations and market trends to optimise the RA Retail offer

The role will manage supplier

relationships, product sourcing and exclusive product development to ensure brand differentiation and profitability for the RA

Key Responsibilities

Buying Strategy

Develop the RA Retail Buying Strategy to align with departmental and wider organisational priorities and goals. Shape the buying offer to embody the RA's retail proposition— 'of art and artists'

Have overall responsibility for product selection and seasonal buying direction across all RA retail channels, ensuring the offer is both commercially compelling and reputationally outstanding

Reflect the strategic aims and brand values of the RA in the creation of imaginative, original and appealing range selection and design, conscientiously and ethically sourced

Data Analysis

Utilise data driven decision making to inform buying approach and strategic objectives

Using experience in retail planning; forecasting, OTB, analytics, sales mix and report creation to maximise commercial opportunities

Collaborate with Merchandising and the wider Retail team to analyse weekly sales

performance, ensuring all Stock Keeping Units (SKUs) contribute effectively to the overall offer

Identify opportunities across categories, price points, and suppliers, integrating them into current and future seasonal planning to drive growth

Contribute analysis to range reviews and post-exhibition reporting meetings, leveraging insights to highlight potential areas of growth and opportunity

Range Planning

Lead retail range planning by SKU count, channel, department, story and price point through effective data driven analysis to budget

Identify products, suppliers, manufacturers and designers best suited to collaborating on the RA retail proposition, including for seasonal exhibition ranges

Manage the trading calendar and critical path for the supply chain, working closely with stakeholders and suppliers to ensure timely, efficient delivery and to manage stock levels and sell-through

Negotiate best terms with suppliers, driving competitive pricing/delivery/ payment terms

Work with the Merchandising team on sales and range planning, with the objective of driving maximum sales and profitability, and managing price point, gross margin and costs to optimise

revenue and meet/exceed trading KPIs as set in budgets

Manage the selection and approval process, including right pricing and optimised margin

Drive sales and KPIs via successful identification of customer types, motivations and trends

Stakeholder management and engagement

Manage the Assistant Buyer, effectively communicating seasonal trading objectives to ensure alignment with overall business goals

Define responsibilities for individual buying specialisms/areas and other tasks within team

Ensure standards for product selection and development are understood and upheld in terms of ethical and sustainable sourcing, and improving practice wherever possible

Develop the team by enhancing their understanding of the broader business landscape, identifying both formal and informal training and development opportunities

Ensure all necessary rights clearance and credits, working with Rights & Reproduction and Publishing departments

Work with the Environments & Art Display Manager and ECommerce Manager to

Job overview continued

ensure creative direction is consistently expressed in onsite retail environments and online

Identify and articulate the full potential of the RA and its programming as best translated into retail, working with all departments to ensure assets and partnerships are optimised and the RA benefitting most fully, in terms of revenue and reputation

Person Specification

Significant experience leading a buying team or function

Extensive experience of commercial buying, preferably in a cultural environment

Demonstrable personal success in Product Development, sourcing and artist/brand collaborations

Proven experience of successfully managing multiple product categories, suppliers and competing objectives

Experienced in retail planning; forecasting, OTB, sales analytics and mix, report creation

International market and brand awareness: RA positioning, competitor positioning

Commercial, entrepreneurial retailing drive: the vision and flair to derive maximum contribution from a prestigious

premium brand in a competitive market

Ability to effectively communicate with and liaise with/manage a variety of stakeholders, both internally and externally

Excellent written and verbal communication skills to cover in-person meetings, presentations and email correspondence

The ability to communicate and connect at all levels including senior management teams, to shop teams, colleagues in other fields, customers, suppliers, warehouse/shipping/fulfilment, artists, and designers

Experience of developing and maintaining critical paths and/ or project plans for Buying team but also as tool for wider teams to inform their priorities and approach

Highly organised. Ability to complete key documents, contracts with a high level of attention to detail, ensuring information recorded is correct and well maintained e.g. range plan

Can effectively plan and organise own time so key deadlines are achieved, particularly key for new range launches for exhibitions, seasons and events

Able to work unsupervised with regular check ins and team meetings

Able to build and maintain excellent relationships both internally and externally with supplier representatives, to outline business needs and negotiate best terms

and pricing to maximise GP margin, KPI's and sales revenue

Commercially aware and genuinely interested in sales and KPI data, how to maximise opportunities through buying decisions

Able to analyse data to inform decision making, approach and future buying options

Able to effectively lead meetings on sales opportunities and communicate sales and analysis to wider teams

Demonstrable project management and strategic planning experience

Experience of range planning, critical path documents

Experience working with a stock or retail ERP system

Excellent knowledge of Excel

Previous line management experience is ideal

Understanding of the priorities of trading within cultural sector: the ability to combine artistic and commercial integrity is desirable

Experience of rights clearance desirable

How to apply

To apply for this role, please follow the link below and submit your CV and Application form via the RA careers portal.

<https://royalacademyarts.current-vacancies.com/Careers/RA-vacancy-search-page-3191>

We are committed to being a truly inclusive place and welcome applicants from all backgrounds, regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, marital and civil partnership, or pregnancy.

Need support?

Here are some of the things we can do to help:

— If you would like us to talk you through the role or anything in this pack to make it clearer for you, please contact us and we can arrange to do that with you (and please do the same if you have any questions)

— If you are selected for interview, we can arrange to do the first-round interview online should you be unable to make it on site. (We usually do second round interviews in person for all candidates so that they can get a feel for the journey, the building, and the workplace)

— We can send interview questions in advance so that you have the opportunity to prepare

— We can schedule interviews for quiet times at the academy so that you don't have to navigate a busy building

On site at the RA

— We have two entrances - Burlington House (via the courtyard on Piccadilly) and also one the other side of the building on Burlington Gardens. You can enter via either of them (we may let you know the easiest but either are fine)

— All areas are accessible via lift

— We have quiet areas where you can sit and prepare for your interview

— There are two cafés and plenty of toilet facilities

— We have a welcome team who are happy to answer questions and give you directions if needed

If there is anything else that would be helpful for you, please do ask

Contact us

Should you have any questions about the role or wish to discuss your candidacy further, please contact us at

recruitment@royalacademy.org.uk

**Royal
Academy
of Arts**