



My Mad Fat Diary

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My Mad Fat Diary is a BAFTA-nominated British comedy-drama television series that debuted on E4 on 14 January 2013. It is based on the novel *My Fat, Mad Teenage Diary* by Rae Earl.^[1]

The second series started on 17 February 2014 and ended on 31 March 2014, with each episode posted on 4oD a week prior to the television release. In November 2014, it was announced that a final three-episode third series would be made, set in 1996.^{[2][3]}

After three series and sixteen episodes, *My Mad Fat Diary* broadcast its final episode on 6 July 2015.

Plot

Set in Stamford, Lincolnshire in the mid-1990s, *My Mad Fat Diary* follows the story of 16-year-old, 16 stone (102 kg) (224 lb) girl, Rae Earl, who has just left a psychiatric hospital, where she has spent four months.^[4] She begins to reconnect with her best friend, Chloe, who is unaware of Rae's mental health and body image problems, believing she was in France for the past four months. Rae attempts to keep this information from her while also trying to impress Chloe's friends Finn, Archie, Izzy and Chop.^[5]

Cast and characters

Main cast

- Sharon Rooney as Rachel 'Rae' Earl, a 16-year-old who has spent four months in a psychiatric hospital. She struggles to hide her mental health and body image problems from her new friends and finds it hard to fit in. She becomes romantically involved with Finn Nelson, whom she dates in the second series.

My Mad Fat Diary



Genre	Comedy-drama
Based on	<i>My Fat, Mad Teenage Diary</i> by Rae Earl
Written by	Tom Bidwell <div>George Kay</div>
Directed by	Tim Kirkby <div>Benjamin Caron</div>
Starring	<div><div>Sharon Rooney</div><div>Claire Rushbrook</div><div>Ian Hart</div><div>Nico Mirallegro</div><div>Jodie Comer</div><div>Dan Cohen</div><div>Jordan Murphy</div><div>Ciara Baxendale</div></div>
Theme music composer	The Charlatans

- Claire Rushbrook as Linda Earl-Bouchtat, Rae's mum.^[6] She marries Karim Bouchtat in the finale of series 1. She becomes pregnant during the second series and gives birth to a girl in the series finale.
- Ian Hart as Dr. Kester, Rae's therapist who helps her deal with her issues.
- Nico Mirallegro as Finley "Finn" Nelson, a boy whom Rae clashes with at first, but who later becomes her main love interest. Finn and Rae are in a relationship for most of the second series, before breaking up. They reunite after the birth of Rae's baby sister at the end of Series 2. In Series 3, they separate again, although Rae says to Finn that it "could happen again one day".
- Jodie Comer as Chloe Gemell, Rae's attractive, popular best friend from childhood.
- Dan Cohen as Archie, Rae's close friend. He is later revealed to be gay and is victim of homophobia and bullying.
- Jordan Murphy as Arnold "Chop" Peters, the party animal of their group of friends. He begins a relationship with Izzy at the end of series one. Initially uncomfortable with Archie's homosexuality, but the two reconcile when Chop stands up for Archie when the latter gets picked on at the pub.
- Ciara Baxendale as Izzy, the sweet but ditzy girl of the group. Often cheerful and optimistic, Rae describes her as never having a negative thought. She is in a relationship with Chop.
- Darren Evans as Danny Two Hats, a resident of the psychiatric hospital and later, due to the death of Tix at the end of series one, Rae's friend.
- Sophie Wright as Tix (series 1 & 3), a resident of the psychiatric hospital and Rae's other best friend. In the series 2 opener, it is revealed that she died due to over-exercising and refusing to eat at the end of the previous series. She makes a cameo appearance in the final episode of series 3 as Rae reflects on her teenage years and when Rae sees everyone in the reflection of the train window.
- Turlough Convery as Liam Owen (series 2 & 3), Rae's new friend/love interest who attends group therapy with her in Series 2. He makes a cameo appearance in the final episode of series 3 When Rae sees everyone in the reflection of the train window.
- Faye Marsay as Katie Springer (series 3), a former student at Rae's school who comes back to Stamford to speak about her experiences at university

Recurring cast

- Bamshad Abedi-Amin as Karim Bouchtat, the Tunisian illegal immigrant boyfriend, and later husband, of Rae's mum.
- Shazad Latif as Dr. Nick Kassir (series 1), a doctor at the psychiatric hospital.

Opening theme	" <u>One to Another</u> "
Country of origin	United Kingdom
Original language	English
No. of series	3
No. of episodes	16 (list of episodes)
Production	
Executive producers	Roanna Benn Jude Liknaitzky Will Gould <u>Greg Brenman</u>
Producers	Marianne Buckland Matthew Bouch Jules Hussey
Cinematography	David Marsh Giulio Biccari Suzie Lavelle
Editors	Tom Hemmings Adam Bosman
Running time	45 minutes
Production company	<u>Tiger Aspect Productions</u> Drama Republic
Original release	
Network	<u>E4</u>
Release	14 January 2013 – 6 July 2015

- Eliot Otis Brown Walters as Big G (series 1), a bully who often picks on Rae, calling her Jabba.^{[7][8]}
- Keith Allen as Victor Earl (series 2-3), Rae's father.
- Sacha Parkinson as Stacey Stringfellow (series 2), a popular girl who used to date Finn and bullies other girls.
- Susie Potter as Amy Malone, a tough girl in Stacey's clique. She falls out with Stacey after she said she looked 'proper rough'. She later ends up dating Liam, and even threatens Rae whenever she sees her with Liam.
- Jodie Hamblet as Vicky, a popular girl in Stacey's clique. She has a skin condition, although she dislikes talking about it. She later becomes an enemy of Rae and Chloe, regularly insulting them at school.
- Kirsty Armstrong as Lois, a sweet girl in Stacey's clique. She is revealed to be Archie's 'girlfriend'. After Rae "outs" Archie to Lois, she threatens to tell her friends that Archie is gay if he doesn't tell everyone first.
- Cameron Moore as Stephen Carrisford, a PE Teacher in Rae's school.

Episodes

Critical reception

Throughout its run, *My Mad Fat Diary* received critical acclaim, particularly for its accurate and honest portrayal of mental illness and Sharon Rooney's performance. *The Guardian*'s Sam Wollaston called it a "lovely drama – honest and painful, real, and very funny," going on to say "Sharon Rooney's performance in the lead is natural, effortless and utterly believable; she should win something for it."^[9] *The Stage* called it "a comedy drama that actually satisfies the criteria of both genres, *My Mad Fat Diary* offers a unique and uncompromising perspective on adolescent angst that distresses and delights by turns. Visual gimmicks – flashbacks, fantasies and animated squiggles leaping from the page – are used sparingly but effectively, allowing the focus to stay fixed on Rae and Rooney's commanding and engagingly natural central performance."^[10] *The Art Desk* said "the first episode of this six-part comedy drama is touching, hilarious and perfectly cast." Claire Webb of the *Radio Times* said the plot is "as uplifting as it is moving, although the banter and gimmicks won't be to everybody's taste."^[11]

The show also received praise for its honest portrayal of mental health. Brian Semple of *The Independent* calls the show "surprisingly honest, funny and even moving account of what it's like for a teenage girl to live with serious mental health problems, free of many of the clichés that often inform how mental illness is portrayed on TV," going on to say that Rae "has a mental illness, but it doesn't define her. It's just something that she has to deal with and try to manage on a daily basis, just like the one in ten young people in the UK who have a mental illness." Semple refers to *My Mad Fat Diary* as a "breath of fresh air and will do a lot to change the way young people think about mental health."^[12] The mental health charity *Mind* praised the *My Mad Fat Diary*, with the show's depiction of mental health leading it to win the Drama category at their annual Media Awards in both 2014^[13] and 2016^{[14][15]}.

In a more mixed review, Robert Epstein of *The Independent* criticised E4 for relating the programme to its other teen shows: "If such comparisons are unfair, blame it on E4, whose continuity announcer declared: 'If you like *Skins*, *The Inbetweeners* and *Misfits*, you'll like this.' Well, sorry, I do like those three shows, but, even with a great soundtrack (if only the Mack really would return ...) and the odd nice line, *My Mad Fat Diary* is a long way from the equal of that trio in invention, edge or humour."^[16]

My Mad Fat Diary star Sharon Rooney was chosen as one of the first group of BAFTA "Breakthrough Brits" in 2013.^[17]

Ratings

The first episode of the third and final series attracted 548,000 viewers on E4, whilst the second episode attracted 537,000 viewers. The final episode of the series attracted 450,000 viewers. All viewing figures exclude those who watched on All 4 and on E4+1.

American remake

Tom Bidwell, the writer of the show, mentioned in April 2014 in an interview with the *Chorley Guardian* that MTV has commissioned him to work on an American remake of the show.^[18]

Awards and nominations

Year	Award	Category	Recipient	Result
2013	British Academy Scotland Awards	Best Actor/Actress - Television	Sharon Rooney	Nominated
2014	British Academy Television Awards	Best Drama Series	My Mad Fat Diary	Nominated
		Best Supporting Actress	Claire Rushbrook	Nominated
	British Academy Scotland Awards	Best Actress - Television	Sharon Rooney	Nominated
	Broadcasting Press Guild Awards	Breakthrough Award		Nominated
	Mind Media Awards	Drama	My Mad Fat Diary	Won
	Royal Television Society	Best Drama Series		Nominated
		Best Actress	Sharon Rooney	Nominated
2015	British Academy Scotland Awards	Best Actress - Television	My Mad Fat Diary	Won
	International Emmy Awards	Drama Series		Nominated
2016	Mind Media Awards	Drama		Won

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- <https://twitter.com/MyMadFatDiary/status/537568975467847680>
- <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/my-mad-fat-diary-to-return-for-third-and-final-series-in-summer-2015-10017743.html>
- Epstein, Robert (20 January 2013). "TV Review: My Mad Fat Diary" (<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/reviews/tv-review-my-mad-fat-diary--whoever--said-that-fat-was-funny-8458664.html>). *The Independent*. London. Retrieved 22 January 2013.
- "My Mad Fat Diary - Series 1 - Episode 1" (<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/my-mad-fat-diary/episode-guide/series-1/episode-1>). Retrieved 23 January 2013.

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17. "Bafta unveils list of 'Breakthrough Brits' " (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-24271856>). *BBC News*. 25 September 2013.
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External links

- *My Mad Fat Diary* (<http://www.e4.com/mymadfatdiary>) at Channel 4
 - *My Mad Fat Diary* (https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2407574/?ref_=sr_1) at IMDb
 - My Mad Fat Diary On Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/mymadfatdiary>)
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