



**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
PRELIMINARY SCREENING**

Department	Academic Administration & Support
Date	2 April 2013
Name of Policy¹	
Mental Health Policy	

What are the aims, objectives & projected outcomes?

Aims

To support students with mental health issues, acknowledging that everyone's mental health may fluctuate according to a variety of factors.

Objectives

To specify the responsibilities of staff members regarding care of students with mental health issues.

Outcomes

To enable staff to feel confident in supporting students who have mental health issues. This includes who to refer students on to e.g. Conservatoire Counsellor, GP, Accident & Emergency Department and the limits regarding confidentiality. To provide a robust framework for supporting students with mental health difficulties at RCS, so that they are not disadvantaged in their studies.

This is a new policy	N
This is a change to an existing policy	N
This is an existing policy	Y

Will the policy have an impact on students, staff or members of the public?	Y
Are particular communities or groups likely to have different needs, experiences and/or attitudes in relation to the policy?	Y
Are there any aspects of the policy that could contribute to equality or inequality?	Y

Senior Manager sign-off	N/A
Date	

¹ The term 'policy' incorporates all Conservatoire procedures, processes, guidance documents & practices

FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Department	Academic Administration & Support
Date	2 April 2013

Name of Policy
Mental Health Policy

What are the aims, objectives & projected outcomes?
<p>Aims To support students with mental health issues, acknowledging that everyone's mental health may fluctuate according to a variety of factors.</p> <p>Objectives To specify the responsibilities of staff members regarding care of students with mental health issues.</p> <p>Outcomes To enable staff to feel confident in supporting students who have mental health issues. This includes who to refer students on to e.g. Conservatoire Counsellor, GP, Accident & Emergency Department and the limits regarding confidentiality. To provide a robust framework for supporting students with mental health difficulties at RCS, so that they are not disadvantaged in their studies.</p>

1 SCOPING THE EIA

1.1 Scope of the EIA work
<p>This is the first EIA to be carried out relating to this policy and associated practices.</p> <p>The policy was drawn up by the late Kevin Kelly, Business Manager, and Jane Balmforth, Counsellor and Disability Adviser with reference to the DDA, 1995; SENDA, 2001 and the AMOSSHE publication: Responding to student mental health issues: 'Duty of Care' responsibility for student services in HE.</p> <p>The policy was drawn up in 2002, before the Equality Act 2010 and is in need of review.</p> <p>Beneficiaries of the policy are all students at RCS.</p> <p>Support for mental health issues will be asked about in the annual disability questionnaire.</p>

2 COLLECTING DATA

2.1 What relevant quantitative and qualitative data do you have?	
Race	Students from some backgrounds may feel reluctant to disclose mental health issues.
Religion or belief & non-belief	<i>n/a</i>
Disability	The policy aims to reassure staff/students that mental health issues are a disability and they will be supported.
Gender	<i>n/a</i>
Gender Identity	<i>n/a</i>
Sexual Orientation	<i>n/a</i>
Age	<i>n/a</i>

2.2 What are the overall trends/patterns in this data?

Anecdotal evidence suggests there may be some students who find mental health difficult to discuss. However, the number of students who have disclosed mental health as a disability has increased from no students in 1998 to 24 students in 2013. This includes one international student.

The increase may be due to a number of factors: DDA legislation specifying mental health difficulties as a disability; RCS actively encouraging disclosure and offering support; changes in wider society towards mental health issues decreasing the stigma and being supportive instead.

2.3 Please list the specific equality issues and data gaps that may need to be addressed through consultation and/or further research?

Students from some backgrounds may find it difficult to disclose mental health difficulties. The RCS could consider running a campaign with the SU to overcome these difficulties.

Mental health issues will be specifically asked about in the annual disability questionnaire.

3 INVOLVING AND CONSULTING STAKEHOLDERS

3.1 Internal consultation and Involvement:

In planning, carrying out and recording internal consultation and involvement, the following should be considered:

Staff need to feel confident in supporting students who have mental health issues e.g. knowing where to signpost students who disclose depression. The policy needs to be reviewed and its content made clear to stakeholders to ensure this aim is being met.

Students need to feel comfortable disclosing mental health difficulties to staff, and the policy should take account of what students need staff to know. For example, where to get further support.

Students from some backgrounds may feel uncomfortable disclosing mental health difficulties due to cultural issues. Staff can help create a positive atmosphere by increasing their own knowledge about mental health and being supported in order to do this.

3.2 External consultation and involvement:

The AMOSSHE group (Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education) produced an important report and guidelines for the policy.

4 ASSESSING IMPACT

4.1 Assessment of the impact

There may be some students who find mental health difficult to discuss.

Staff need to feel confident in supporting students who have mental health issues e.g. knowing where to signpost students who disclose depression. The policy needs to be reviewed and its content made clear to stakeholders to ensure this aim is being met.

Students need to feel comfortable disclosing mental health difficulties to staff, and the policy should take account of what students need staff to know. For example, where to get further support.

5 ACTION PLANNING AND SIGN OFF

Date of completion of EIA	02/04/2013
Compiled by	Jane Balmforth, Counsellor and Disability Advisor
Senior Manager sign-off	Maggie Kinloch, Vice Principal
Date to E + D Officer	3/4/2013
Date of EIA publication	April 2013
Review date	March 2014

ANNEX B - Consolidation of Royal Conservatoire Equality Impact Assessment Report – April 2013

ACTION / ACTIVITY	OWNER AND INTERESTED STAKEHOLDERS	DEPENDENCIES / RISKS / CONSTRAINTS	COMPLETION DATE	PROGRESS UPDATE
Review policy in light of new legislation	Students who have disclosed mental health issues. Staff Counsellor & Disability Advisor	Resources: RCS Counsellor's time	January 2014	
Consider RCS ethos in relation to playing a more pro-active role in promoting mental health issues	Senior Management Equality & Diversity Forum Student Union Human Resources		tbc	
Consider ways of increasing support take-up from international students	Counsellor & Disability Advisor Assistant Registrar: International & Student Experience International students		tbc	
Include mental health issues in the annual disability questionnaire	Counsellor & Disability Advisor		May 2013	