



Royal Conservatoire  
*of* Scotland

**ADMISSIONS  
POLICY**

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# ADMISSIONS POLICY

## 1. PREAMBLE

This policy provides information to enquirers, applicants, offer holders, those who have accepted offers and advisors about recruitment, selection and admissions at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS). It is the policy framework on which all staff who are involved in recruitment, selection and admissions activity, base their approach.

The Conservatoire is committed to providing an environment for learning that emphasises the possibility of achieving potential in enabling, safe spaces. As such our admissions processes are designed to strengthen and protect the Conservatoire's community of learning.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland embraces a diverse population of students and staff. We believe that excellence can be achieved through recognising and celebrating the value of every individual, and are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all of our activities.

We are committed to developing and upholding a culture based on respect, inclusiveness, transparency and open-mindedness. We will proactively advance equity and inclusive practice in our activities and through effective and collaborative action, ensure that we all have the right to be seen, heard and celebrated.

How we undertake the recruitment and admissions process is underpinned by this statement.

## 2. SCOPE

This Policy is concerned with the admission to Conservatoire's taught academic higher education portfolio which includes full-time or part-time programmes at undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research (SCQF level 7 to level 12).

This Policy excludes short course provision where applicants register for individual modules, CPD, training provision and work-based learning courses.

Aspects of this policy will be relevant to these courses; they will be referred to in other policies and procedures as appropriate.

### 3. PEOPLE

#### The Conservatoire's Team Approach

The management of recruitment and admissions processes reflects our commitment to personalised approaches in which academic leads for programmes direct recruitment and admissions.

To do this the academics work with the Conservatoire's recruitment, admissions, and marketing teams collaboratively to ensure that those offered a place have a realistic chance of success on their chosen programme and have opportunity at application to demonstrate potential.

#### Head of Admissions

For admissions purposes, the Director of the relevant school/ directorate and the Academic Registrar and Secretary are jointly the Head of Admissions. As such they are accountable to the Principal and Deputy Principal for decisions taken.

#### Recruitment and Admissions Team

The administration of the admissions process is undertaken by the Recruitment and Admissions Teams led by the Senior International Recruitment Lead and managed by the Assistant Registrar (Recruitment and Admissions.)

This Team is comprised of the following:

ROLE/ AREA	Contact
Senior International Recruitment Lead	Mhairi Macfarlane <a href="mailto:m.marfarlane3@rcs.ac.uk">m.marfarlane3@rcs.ac.uk</a>
Assistant Registrar (Recruitment and Admissions)	Leanne Stirrat <a href="mailto:l.stirrat1@rcs.ac.uk">l.stirrat1@rcs.ac.uk</a>
Recruitment Team	<a href="mailto:Hello@rcs.ac.uk">Hello@rcs.ac.uk</a>
Admissions Team	<a href="mailto:Admissions@rcs.ac.uk">Admissions@rcs.ac.uk</a>
UKVI Compliance & International Student Experience Manager	Gillian Mackenzie <a href="mailto:g.mackenzie@rcs.ac.uk">g.mackenzie@rcs.ac.uk</a>
International Student Experience Administrator (ISEA)	Pauline McCluskey <a href="mailto:P.McCluskey@rcs.ac.uk">P.McCluskey@rcs.ac.uk</a>
Additionally, from the Deputy Principal's Office, Head of Fair Access – supports access for students from widening participation backgrounds	Jesse Paul <a href="mailto:j.paul@rcs.ac.uk">j.paul@rcs.ac.uk</a>

## 4. APPLICATION PROCESSES

### Entry Requirements

Admissions criteria, including minimum academic entry requirements, are subject to annual review by the appropriate Programme Committee. This review is based upon a comparison of the Student Success Profile of Non-Standard Entry Students and standard entry students.

The Programme Committee's report will be considered by the relevant School Management Team and the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee. Proposed amendments require the approval of the Academic Board.

All Conservatoire programmes publish minimum academic entry requirements except BA in Performance in British Sign Language and English and MA/MFA Acting/Directing Classical and Contemporary Text (CCT) which have no formal academic entry requirements (see: Appendix B: Minimum/additional entry requirements)

Admissions criteria are publicly accessible on the Conservatoire website on the individual programme webpages ([www.rcs.ac.uk](http://www.rcs.ac.uk)) and on the relevant portal for UCAS.

Details of admissions criteria, minimum academic requirements and selection processes for each programme appear in the relevant "How to Apply" section of the relevant programme webpage.

These publications are subject to annual review and the appropriate Director of School must confirm that all such material is full and accurate prior to publication.

### Open Days and Tours

The Conservatoire organises a number of Open Days each year, as well as weekly building tours. Upon request, the School of Music may organize advice lessons for prospective applicants. Wherever possible, best efforts will be made to accommodate requests from individual prospective applicants to visit the Conservatoire at a time convenient to them.

### General Information

General information requests received from prospective applicants will be dealt with through the Recruitment and Admissions team. More detailed requests will be referred to the appropriate member of academic staff.

### Application Method

Applicants to degree programmes (except BA Performance in BSL and English) apply online either through UCAS Conservatoires (<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/conservatoires>) or UCAS Undergraduate (<https://www.ucas.com>) depending on the programme of study as outlined on the website programme pages and [how to apply](#) webpage.

## Scheduling auditions and uploads for auditions

In addition to applying through UCAS, all applicants are asked to create an Accepted account (<https://getaccepted.com/>) for audition scheduling and where applicable, audition video/ portfolio upload.

## Application and Audition Fees

Application fees are administered by UCAS.

The Conservatoire is committed to ensuring fair access to a conservatoire education for students who have the talent and potential to benefit from it, regardless of their background. In support of this, audition fee waivers are offered to applicants whom financial hardship may be a barrier to auditioning. To apply for the fee waiver, applicants who meet the eligibility criteria are asked to complete the fee waiver form and provide supporting evidence.

## Scholarships (Bursaries)

Scholarships may be offered in recognition of talent and potential, and/or financial need, to enable study.

## Language of Instruction

Unless otherwise indicated, the language of instruction is English. Non-native speakers of English are required to demonstrate sufficient understanding of the English language (see: Section 9: English Language Requirements).

## International Applicants

As a world leading performing arts institution, we welcome applications from appropriately qualified international applicants. Admissions assess international qualifications and make decisions on appropriate international equivalencies. These equivalencies are based on information provided by the UK ENIC, the designated United Kingdom national agency responsible for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills. The following regulations apply to international students:

- English language requirements are assessed through benchmarking against the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or other accepted English language tests. Detailed advice is given in the RCS English Language Requirements (see: Section 9: English Language Requirements).
- Statutory regulations as set and monitored by UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI), which govern the ability to participate in learning within the UK, will be incorporated into the Conservatoire's decision-making processes. These include:
  - the ability to demonstrate an **appropriate level of written and spoken English** which enables full participation in the learning and assessment activities required by RCS: Note that UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) imposes minimum English language qualifications in respect of international applicants who require a Student Visa to study in the UK.
  - the demonstration of **academic progression**;
  - the applicant's **right to enter and or remain in the UK** for the duration of the chosen programme; and
  - the ability to demonstrate fulfilment of **UKVI's financial requirements**.
- International applicants must pay a **deposit** to secure their programme offer.



## **Applicants with Disabilities**

The admissions process takes place in the context of the Conservatoire's [commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#), its Disability Policy, and this Admissions Policy. Information on the Conservatoire's guidance on how to contact the Disability Advisor and the support available will be included in audition invitations and offer letters (also available on the [Conservatoire website](#)).

Applicants with a support need/s are invited to contact the Disability Advisor to discuss their specific requirements, which may include adjustments for the audition/interview. The Disability Advisor will, as a matter of course, contact all applicants who declare a support need on their application. Orientation visits can also be arranged directly with the Disability Advisor in advance of commencing studies.

## **Non-Standard Entry Statement**

The Conservatoire welcomes applications from individuals whose academic qualifications do not meet (in terms of equivalence) the normal minimum entrance requirements, where specified.

H. Having satisfied the audition panel that they otherwise meet the selection criteria and demonstrate that they have the capacity to pursue the proposed programme, such applicants will be considered through the Conservatoire's Non-Standard Entry Policy (see: Appendix C: Non-Standard Entry Information: direct entry / accreditation of prior learning guidance).

Note that UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) imposes minimum English Language qualifications in respect of international applicants who require a visa to study in the UK that must be met. Tailored support will be provided to all non-standard entry students on the basis of a pre-entry assessment of individual need.

Applicants who do not meet the criteria for their selected programme at the time of audition, but who are deemed to have the potential to meet the criteria at a later stage may be invited to undertake some bespoke continuing education (see below).

## **Continuing Education: School of Music**

The School of Music's Continuing Education programme, which is offered at two levels – higher and advanced – enables the creation of a bespoke programme based on an assessment of the particular needs of the individual student. Such individualised programmes may be used to facilitate access to Conservatoire programmes, transfer between programmes and as continuing professional development. Applications are made direct to the Conservatoire.

## **Alternative Programme Invitations**

Applicants who, during the selection process, are considered well or better suited for an alternative RCS programme at the same level, will be invited to apply to the programme more aligned with their skill set.

## **Applicants under 18 years of age**

We welcome applications from people of all ages and applications will be considered on their

individual merits as long as applicants will be a minimum of 16 years of age by the time they matriculate (enrolment on a programme).

Scots Law recognises that despite having full legal capacity at 16, young people aged 16 can be vulnerable in certain situations. If an offer of a place is made to an applicant who will be under the age of 18 at the time of matriculation (enrolment), certain Scots Law and UK legislative procedures may be necessary in order to fulfil our duty of care.

The Conservatoire does not consider applicants who will be aged under 16 at the point of matriculation (enrolment) for its higher education programmes. Those who fall into this category are referred to the relevant Juniors programme of the RCS.

### **Mature students**

Applications are welcomed from mature students (usually defined as applicants over the age of 21 for undergraduate degrees and over 25 for postgraduate degrees). The Conservatoire has no maximum age for admission.

### **Guidance for Applicants with Criminal Convictions**

This guidance covers relevant, unspent criminal convictions, proceedings, or investigations received by offer-holders and students in any country.

In addition, where an offer holder or student is under investigation by the Police or where criminal proceedings have been initiated, it is the responsibility of the offer holder or student to report this to the Conservatoire.

To facilitate this: following the acceptance of an offer by an applicant, we will ask the applicant to declare any relevant information relating to unspent convictions, proceedings or investigations, as detailed in Appendix E: Safeguarding Risk Assessment of Applicants Policy.

The Conservatoire is able to give specialist advice and support for student entering our community from many different backgrounds. Students coming to the Conservatoire with a spent or unspent conviction may find it useful to connect with these services and gain additional support with studying at the Conservatoire. Disclosing convictions in order to utilise a service (e.g. financial advice) is dealt with confidentially and you will only be asked for enough information required to provide the service you require. This will also allow the Conservatoire to put appropriate support in place.

Where appropriate support cannot be put in place the Conservatoire may withdraw an offer.

Applications from students who have declared a criminal conviction are subject to the same academic selection process as all applications and will be assessed using the admissions process outlined in this policy.

The declaration of live proceedings (i.e. charges made and have yet to come before a Court) or a conviction will be followed up independently by the Student Community Conduct Officer, under our: Appendix E: Safeguarding Risk Assessment of Applicants Policy regarding allegations of prior misconduct/criminal activity. The Conservatoire reserves the right to make any decisions it considers appropriate in the light of all the information provided. These may range from ascertaining appropriate levels of support to withdrawal of an offer or place.

## **Deferral**

Given the nature of the cohort recruitment approach that forms part of informing applicant selection processes, it is not normally possible for an applicant to defer a place on Conservatoire programmes.

## **Fraud and Plagiarism**

If the Conservatoire has any reason to believe that an applicant and/or their referee(s) have given false or misleading information, we will take any necessary steps to check with the applicant and other parties, including examination and awarding bodies, whether the information provided is accurate.

The Conservatoire reserves the right to cancel an application, and any offer of a place made, without refunding the application fee, if having carried out any necessary checks, we determine, or have reasonable belief, that an application contains false information.

## **Verification of the information provided by the applicant**

If an application contains information reasonably believed by the Conservatoire to be misleading and/or has left out any relevant information this may lead to it questioning the validity of the information provided to the Conservatoire and the suitability of the application.

The Conservatoire may take any necessary steps to check with the applicant and other parties declared on the application, including but not limited to previous schools, colleges and examination and awarding bodies whether the information provided is accurate or complete; this may also include the Conservatoire conducting its own research to verify the information provided in an application from publicly available sources.

The Conservatoire retains the right to cancel an application or rescind an offer without refunding an application fee if the Conservatoire has determined, having carried out any necessary checks and due diligence, or has reasonable belief, that an application contains false and/or misleading information.

If an applicant has any reason to believe that information the Conservatoire holds about an applicant is not true, complete or accurate, the applicant must tell it by writing to the Admissions Team at the Conservatoire.

## 5. RESPONSES AND COMMUNICATION

### **Service level**

The Conservatoire aims to process applications quickly and effectively. All applications are acknowledged on receipt.

Applicants are required to provide all the information requested before a decision can be made.

RCS is committed to ensuring that any interaction with an applicant is conducted in a professional, courteous and respectful manner and it expects that any communication from an applicant is conducted in the same way.

Whilst we recognize how stressful applications to RCS may be, we will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour or language towards its employees or members of the wider RCS community during the admissions process. Hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour or language, whether expressed verbally or in writing and excessive levels of contact, will be viewed seriously and may result in the withdrawal of an offer or the rejection of an application.

The Conservatoire continues to accept and process applications following UCAS' January deadline for Home/EU/RUK full-time students, where places remain available. This is indicated by the programme remaining open for applications on the relevant UCAS website.

Programmes may have different application deadlines for Home, RUK & International Students. These are listed on the RCS website. Applicants are encouraged to check the website should they receive any automated communications from UCAS which suggests default closing of the UCAS programme site.

### **Programme changes and cancellations**

Programmes, services and procedures are continually reviewed, enhanced and revised and this may result in changes to or cancellation of programmes. Where any changes or cancellations occur, the Conservatoire will notify the applicant and provide an alternative offer where possible.

Exceptionally, changes may be required to be implemented at short notice to programme content or structure. Where the changes are deemed to significantly impact on the future students' experience of the programme, the Conservatoire will write to all applicants holding offers of admission to advise of the changes and, if applicable, to offer an alternative programme of study.

## 6. SELECTION PROCESSES

The Conservatoire's admissions processes are designed to be fair, transparent, and tailored to our specialist performance arts education. These processes identify applicants best suited for our programmes based on talent, potential, and prior achievements. Recognizing that talent and potential aren't solely reflected in academic records, all on-time applicants are invited to participate in the selection process. This holistic approach ensures a comprehensive evaluation of an applicant's potential, considering their background and circumstances, and demonstrates our commitment to removing barriers to access.

Selections are typically conducted face-to-face at the Conservatoire or other UK or international venues. To accommodate applicants for whom travel to the Conservatoire is not possible, the selection process for most programmes can also be conducted via authenticated video auditions and/or online interviews.

### General principles

- All on-time applicants will be invited to participate in the selection process. For the majority of applicants, this is conducted in Glasgow and, therefore, affords the applicant the opportunity to gain a deeper insight into the nature of the programme and the opportunities offered by the Conservatoire.
- Selection processes are reviewed annually by relevant committees and, if needed, by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee and Academic Board. While specific processes may vary, the following principles apply:
  - All selection decisions will be taken in the context of the Conservatoire's Equality and Diversity Statement and Disability Policy
  - Audition/interview panels will normally comprise a minimum of two members of staff; where only one member of staff is available, the audition/interview will be recorded. All staff involved in the assessment of applicants will be prepared for that role, including staff from partner institutions.
  - In the School of Music, audition panels make recommendations to the School of Music Management Team.

### Audition Panel Decision-making

All audition panels (and, in the School of Music, the School Management Team) will arrive at their decisions in respect of each applicant taking account of the applicant's:

- performance at audition/interview;
- commitment to the particular programme;
- potential to benefit from the programme;
- academic qualifications
- English language qualifications (where applicable)
- performance qualifications;
- Performance/practical experience;
- references
- contextualized data (detailed below).

## Contextualized Admissions

RCS recognises that not all applicants have the same opportunities and is committed to ensuring fair access to all applicants. We strive to identify talent and potential, regardless of background or life circumstance and will use the following contextual information factors taken from the UCAS application and reference in assessing applicants:

Contextual Factor	Description	Evidence provision
Priority postcode area	Applicants who live in SIMD 1 postcode areas. SIMD stands for Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, and SIMD1 refers to the 20% of postcodes in Scotland where young people are most likely to face multiple barriers to their progression and embracing their potential.	Postcode from home address in applicant's UCAS application.  Postcode checker: <a href="https://simd.scot/#/simd2020/BTTTTFTT/9/-4.0000/55.9000/">https://simd.scot/#/simd2020/BTTTTFTT/9/-4.0000/55.9000/</a>
Widening Access Programmes:	Applicants who have successfully participated in a National Schools Programme or other widening access programme:  E.g. SHEP, Reach, ACES, Transitions (including WACI), Advance Higher Hub, Open Door.	Information included in the UCAS application  <a href="https://www.sfc.ac.uk/student-interests/fair-access/national-schools-programme/">https://www.sfc.ac.uk/student-interests/fair-access/national-schools-programme/</a>
Care Experienced:	Applicants who are care experienced will have spent time living with foster carers under local authority care, in residential care (e.g. a children's home), looked after at home under a supervision order, or in kinship care with relatives or friends, either officially (e.g. a special guardianship order) or informally without local authority support.	You can indicate this or your UCAS application.  You can ask your referee to include this in your reference and you may be asked to provide supporting evidence.  Examples of evidence include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from school/college</li> <li>• Letter from the relevant local authority</li> <li>• Letter from a relevant charitable organisation</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from GP or other health professional</li> <li>• SAAS Care Experience Bursary form, signed by the relevant professional</li> <li>• Court documents</li> <li>• Adoption certificates</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/individual-needs/care-experienced-students">https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/individual-needs/care-experienced-students</a></p>
Estranged:	A young person that does not have support from any parent/carer due to a breakdown in their relationship. This might be biological, step or adoptive parents, or possibly wider family members who have been involved in your care.	<p>You can indicate this on your UCAS application</p> <p>You can ask your referee to include this in your reference and you may be asked to provide supporting evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from school/college</li> <li>• Letter from student finance</li> <li>• Letter from GP or other health professional</li> <li>• Letter from the relevant local authority</li> <li>• Letter from a relevant charitable organisation</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.ucas.com/estranged-students/applying-university">https://www.ucas.com/estranged-students/applying-university</a></p>
Carer:	An applicant who gives unpaid care to a family member, partner or friend who could not cope without their support. This may be due to a long-term illness, disability, a mental health condition, or an addiction.	<p>Please contact RCS at the point of application to let us know about your circumstances.</p> <p>You can ask your referee to include this in your reference or you may be asked to provide supporting evidence.</p> <p>Examples of evidence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from school/college</li> <li>• Letter from GP or other health professional</li> <li>• Young Carers ID card</li> <li>• Letter from a carers' association</li> <li>• DWP Carers Allowance (benefit) letter</li> <li>• Young Carers Grant letter</li> </ul>

Refugee/Asylum Seeker	An applicant who is resident in the UK with refugee or asylum seeker status, or granted humanitarian protection.	<p>You can ask your referee to include this in your reference and you may be asked to provide supporting evidence.</p> <p>Examples of evidence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residence Permit (BRP card) Refugee Leave to Remain</li> <li>• Residence Permit (BRP card) Settlement Indefinite Leave to Remain</li> <li>• Asylum Registration Card (ARC)</li> </ul>
Free School Meals	Applicants who are eligible for free school meals and are resident in Scotland	<p>You can indicate this or your UCAS application</p> <p>You can ask your referee to include this in your reference or you may be asked to provide supporting evidence.</p> <p>Examples of evidence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from school</li> <li>• Letter from the council</li> <li>• Proof of payment i.e. bank statement / remittance advice</li> <li>• Certificate of entitlement</li> </ul>
Armed forces personnel, veterans and armed forces families (Service children)	Applicants who have served in the Armed Forces or whose parent(s) or carer(s) is serving in the UK Armed Forces, or has done so in the past	<p>You can indicate this or your UCAS application</p> <p>You can ask your referee to include this in your reference or you may be asked to provide supporting evidence.</p>

### **Direct Entry with Advanced Standing (beyond Year 1 of any programme)**

Applications for direct entry beyond Year One will be considered on a case-by-case basis under the category of direct entry with advanced standing.

All applicants are invited to attend an audition or interviews process (and, for some programmes, to undertake written assessments) in order that their suitability for their chosen programme(s) may be assessed. The selection procedure is a process that gives each candidate scope to demonstrate their skills and achievements and it provides evidence of potential to a panel of



experienced assessors.

All applicants are subject to the same selection process for their chosen programme/ discipline, irrespective of their academic qualifications.

Admission with advanced standing may be offered, depending on the availability of student places at any given time. This may vary on a programme-by-programme or discipline-by-discipline basis, e.g. because of the ensemble nature of the learning experience offered on the BA Acting programme, it may not be possible to offer entry with advanced standing to that particular programme.

Applicants wishing to apply for direct entry with advanced standing and mark the desired point of entry on their UCAS Conservatoires application form.

When transfer into the second or subsequent year of a programme of study is requested, this is decided by means of:

- (i) a selection procedure, similar to that for admission but geared towards determining the level of the student's achievement; and
- (ii) the accreditation of prior learning (APL).

### **Transfer between programmes within the Conservatoire**

Current students wishing to 'transfer' from one Conservatoire programme to another must apply in the normal way (i.e. through UCAS Conservatoires) and may request to be considered for direct entry with advanced standing in the manner described above.

## 7. DECISIONS

Applicants applying for full time HE courses will receive their decision on UCAS Conservatoires or UCAS Undergraduate following your audition via UCAS Conservatoires Track.

Applicants applying directly to the Conservatoire will receive the outcome of their application directly from RCS by email.

Decisions in respect of each applicant will be recorded in the manner prescribed for each programme (e.g. an audition report form) and retained in accordance with the Conservatoire's Records Retention Schedule. The outcome of all applications will be notified to applicants in writing via UCAS.

### **Replying to offers**

If you receive an offer, you must reply through UCAS Track by the date given on UCAS Track.

### **Reserve Outcomes (UCAS Conservatoire applications)**

A 'reserve' outcome indicates that RCS would like the opportunity to review its outcome to you in the light of acceptances/declines to its guaranteed offers. You will become part of a 'pool' of 'reserve' candidates and RCS may choose to make you a guaranteed offer if a suitable place becomes available. Reserve does not mean that a place has been 'reserved' for you. If RCS chooses not to make you a guaranteed offer, you will not have a place to start at RCS.

### **Offers to Undergraduate Applicants**

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) limits Scottish undergraduate student numbers by prescribing the maximum number of Scottish students that each Scottish higher education institution can enroll in any one year through an allocation of 'funded places'.

The Conservatoire will make offers to Scottish domiciled applicants within the parameters of that limit, and taking account of the number of students required within each specialist discipline to ensure a balanced cohort of students.

Additionally, the SFC agrees annually with the Conservatoire a target intake of students from the most socio-economically deprived areas of Scotland (i.e. postcodes within the lowest quintiles of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) and allocates additional funded places to accommodate that target intake.

### **Offers to Postgraduate Applicants**

For postgraduate programmes, the Conservatoire sets intake targets for UK students, and for international students. Targets are predicated on the number of students required in each specialist discipline to ensure a balanced cohort of students. This process is subject to meeting the minimum requirements for admission to the programme. (There are specific English language requirements for non-native speakers of English – see Section 9) and available estate/ teaching space.

## **Surveys**

If you are made an offer to the Conservatoire and choose to decline it, you will be sent an email inviting you to complete the online RCS Decliners' survey. These will be sent out on a rolling basis throughout the year. The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback so we can improve future applicant's experiences and we would encourage you to complete the survey with your honest feedback.

If you accept your offer to study at the Conservatoire then you will be sent an email invitation to complete the online RCS Accepters' survey. The invitation will be sent following matriculation. The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback on the application journey and to use this to improve the experience for future applicants. We would encourage you to complete the survey you're your honest feedback.

## 8. ONCE AN OFFER HAS BEEN ACCEPTED

Applicants who choose to accept their offer of a place are sent additional information prior to the start of their course, which provides essential advice and guidance to prepare students for the start of their studies. Further information regarding what happens after a student has accepted an offer and what communications to expect is below:

### **School of Music Consultation Lessons**

Offer holders for School of Music programmes will be offered consultation lessons to allow them to experience the teaching offered at RCS and help aid their decision-making process. The deadline for signing up for consultation lessons is normally the middle of January.

### **Induction Portal**

All offer holders (who have accepted their offer) are issued an email with a link to the **induction portal** for new students containing the following information:

- SU and Welcome Information
- Student Support
- Student Procedures and Initiatives
- Accommodation Information
- RCS Facilities
- Link to Facebook Fresher's Group
- Information about finances and programme costs
- Information for International students
- Pre-Arrival Checklist
- FAQs
- Useful links

### **Matriculation**

An email will be sent from the end of July advising details to all offer holders (who have accepted their offer) giving details of the matriculation process and the documentation applicants must prepare for matriculation.

### **Welcome and Induction Week**

From the end of August Induction week timetables are updated and issued to all new incoming students through the induction portal link.

### **Accommodation**

On acceptance of an offer to study with the Conservatoire, students are given information regarding accommodation in Glasgow. As part of that information, students are encouraged to consider applying to student accommodation in Glasgow designed and built with performing and production students in mind: [Base Glasgow](#).

The Conservatoire cannot, however, guarantee an offer of accommodation in BASE Glasgow to any applicant. Offer holders are advised to apply for BASE accommodation ASAP to help ensure you are considered for a space.

## **Feedback to Applicants**

Subject to the provisions of the Conservatoire's Data Protection Policy, feedback requests must be made in writing to [feedback@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:feedback@rcs.ac.uk). The email must come from the address supplied on the UCAS Conservatoires application and must contain the applicant's full name, programme and UCAS Conservatoires personal ID number. See: Appendix D: Post Audition Feedback Policy for further details.

## **Safeguarding risk assessments**

Accepted offer holders will be emailed by admissions from the end of June until the enrolment period regarding declarations related to Safeguarding. For further details see: Appendix E: Safeguarding Risk Assessment of Applicants Policy.

## **PVG Scheme and Enhanced Disclosure Checks**

Some courses (BEd (Hons) Music, Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Music), MMus (Performance and Pedagogy) and modules (e.g. Arts in Inclusive Practice, Community Music) at the Conservatoire require you to join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme or complete an Enhanced Disclosure check. This means that checks are carried out for any unspent and spent convictions and cautions. The checks also include any non-conviction data held by the police that may be relevant to course/module.

Applications for the PVG Scheme membership and Enhanced Disclosure checks are processed and assessed by Disclosure Scotland which provides this service as a means of enhancing security, public safety and protecting the vulnerable in society.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland will administer students applying to be members of the PVG Scheme and who require an Enhanced Disclosure check in accordance with prevailing Disclosure Scotland requirements and related legislation e.g. the Data Protection Act. If you would like further details of the Disclosure Scotland process please visit their website at [www.disclosurescotland.co.uk](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk).

## 9. ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

### Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS) – Procedure for International Students

#### Introduction

A Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS) is a personalised, virtual document that is issued by the Conservatoire to each applicant who requires a Student route visa to undertake their course. The CAS is issued via the UKVI Student Management System (SMS) and tied to each individual visa application. If a student requires an extension or enters a new course (even if progressing at the Conservatoire) they must get a new CAS.

When issuing a CAS, the Conservatoire confirms to the Home Office that we have completed our due diligence believe the applicant to be genuine and credible and they meet all the requirements of the Student route visa. These requirements and duties are listed in [Document 2 of the Guidance for Sponsors](#).

#### Purpose

This document sets out the Conservatoire's procedures for issuing a CAS to applicants. The conservatoire is legally obligated as a licenced student sponsor to ensure that all UKVI regulations are met and will always exercise caution when issuing a CAS not to risk our sponsor licence. The Conservatoire is not obligated to issue a CAS to all applicants and reserves the right to deny or withdraw a CAS if we suspect that an applicant fails to meet the conditions of the Student route.

#### Key Responsibilities

All staff working with applicants that require a CAS must ensure that this procedure is followed. The UKVI Compliance and International Student Experience Manager is responsible for the day-to-day oversight of the CAS allocation process and issuing. CAS preparation is the responsibility of Administrator (International & Student Experience) and these two roles will cross check the SMS and SRS systems before issuing a CAS.

In the absence of either of these staff, other Level 1 users can act in a cross-checking capacity. Level 1 users are the **Assistant Registrar (Recruitment and Admissions)** and the **Academic Registrar and Secretary**.

The applicant must provide all requested documents and information in a timely manner to allow sufficient processing time for the Home Office and RCS allowing the applicant to complete matriculation by the latest date of enrolment.

Issuing a CAS does not guarantee that a visa application will be successful, and it is the applicant's responsibility to check that all the Student visa requirements are met with their application. The Conservatoire is not responsible for any decision made by the Home Office.

The Conservatoire's Authorising Officer is the Academic Registrar and Secretary. They maintain ultimate legal responsibility for all aspects of student sponsorship.

## Issuing a CAS

The CAS will be issued by **UKVI Compliance and International Student Experience Manager** or the **Administrator (International & Student Experience)**, in their absence, by SMS Level 1 users.

A CAS be assigned no more than 6 months prior to the start date of the programme if they are applying from out with the UK and no more than 3 months if the application is to be made in the UK.

For existing Conservatoire students requiring a visa extension the CAS will be issued in a timely manner in respect to align with their programme of study.

The Conservatoire will only issue a CAS and sponsor an application where it believes that the visa application will be successful and the applicant will be able to undertake their programme of study before the latest date of enrolment. To assess this, the following will be requested from the applicant:

- Copies of academic qualification on which the offer of a place was based
- Evidence of English Language that meets the UKVI and RCS requirements (see: Section 9)
- A copy of a valid Passport that will be used to make the visa application
- A completed CAS Evidence form
- Tuition fee deposit (if required)
- Parental consent (if required)
- UCAS application
- Audition scores and feedback

The Conservatoire reserve the right to check other documents include but not restricted to the following:

- Financial evidence that meeting the UKVI evidentiary requirements
- Copies of previous visa information including CASs and Visa Refusal notifications
- Immigration History Check from the Home Office

All of the above documents must meet the current requirements stated in the [Immigration Rules](#) and the [Student and Child Student Caseworker Guidance](#).

The Conservatoire **will not** provide a CAS under the following circumstances:

- The programme of study does not meet the requirements of the Student visa route
- The applicant is believed to have submitted fraudulent documents
- The applicant has made a false declaration
- There is any reason to suspect that the applicant will not comply with conditions of their visa
- The applicant has not paid their tuition fee deposit
- The dates of the CAS will lead to the student exceeding the maximum time limits for study under the Student route (if applicable)
- There is reason to believe that sponsoring the student would put the Conservatoire's Student Sponsor status at risk

The Conservatoire reserve the right to deny or withdraw a CAS in other circumstances as deemed appropriate.

### **Time limit on study and academic progression**

The Home Office limits the time anyone can spend studying in the UK on a student visa at undergraduate degree level. This includes leave granted under a Tier 4 visa, and/or a student visa. There are currently exemptions to this rule including Music at a Conservatoire (note that the exemption is only for Music and not all courses).

The Conservatoire may request an Immigration History Check from the Home Office as part of the CAS assessment.

Academic progression applies to those who are applying for a Student visa in the UK and have previously studied on any student visa that was in place before 31 March 2009.

If an applicant is applying for a course at the same level they must demonstrate that they are making continuous academic progression. This means the new course must normally be above the level of the previous course studied on a Tier 4/student visa. If a new course is at the same level as the previous course, it can be considered to represent academic progression if the new course is related to the previous course OR the previous course and new course combined support the applicant's career aspirations. If the applicant has undertaken previous studies at the same level in the UK and, the CAS will need to include a justification of how this represents academic progression in order for you to fulfil the academic progression requirement. Wording for this is including in the CAS issuing guidance. This justification requires sign off from the UKVI Compliance and International Student Experience Manager.

Students who require a new CAS to allow them to complete their course e.g. to undertake resits, must have on campus requirements otherwise a Visitor visa may be sufficient and a new CAS will not be required.

Furthermore, applicants who have previously had leave must have successfully completed the course for which your last Tier 4/student visa was granted. The Conservatoire is required to see evidence of this before issuing a CAS. A new course at a lower level is not considered to represent academic progression and students would be required to apply for new student visa from outside the UK.

### **Sending a CAS to an Applicant or Existing Student**

Once all the conditions for a CAS have been met, a draft of the CAS will be created in the SMS system. This must then be cross checked by another member of staff before issuing. Errors in CAS may require a fresh CAS to be issued as incorrect information could lead to a visa refusal. Some errors (e.g. typographical) can be rectified by the addition of a sponsor note these are outlined in the document [Creating a CAS – guide for Student sponsors](#).

The final CAS will be emailed directly to the applicant on the email address they provided at time of application. If the applicant wishes this to go to a different address, they must confirm this in writing and this should be uploaded to the Files section on SRS.

### **Visa Refusals**



All applicants are required to provide the Home Office decision letter of any visa refusal even if it was for previous leave at a different sponsor.

If the refusal is related to a Conservatoire application, they should contact the Conservatoire for advice immediately. The Conservatoire will be able to assess if there are grounds for an Administrative Review.

The Conservatoire will only consider issuing another CAS if the applicant can demonstrate that the reasons for refusal have been mitigated. A further CAS cannot be issued for the same intake if the applicant will not be able to start their programme before the latest date of enrolment.

### **Terms and conditions of Student Sponsorship**

All students sponsored by the Conservatoire are expected to comply with their Student visa responsibilities as set out by the UKVI, as well as policies and procedures that apply to all RCS students.

RCS reserves the right to withdraw sponsorship at its discretion.

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

For further guidance and assistance, please contact:

**Gill Mackenzie**

UKVI Compliance and International Student Experience Manager

[g.mackenzie@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:g.mackenzie@rcs.ac.uk)

## English Language Requirements

The language of study at Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) is English. All applicants whose first language is not English will be required to provide evidence that their English language level meets the entrance requirements for their chosen programme.

If you require a student visa to study in the UK, UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) require a minimum of B2 standard on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in all four components (reading, writing, speaking, listening). Equivalent to an IELTS overall score of 5.5 with 5.5 in every component. RCS is required to obtain evidence of your English language ability before we can sponsor your visa application. You do not need to provide this at the point of application or audition but please ensure you leave yourself enough time to provide proof that you have met the required English language level. RCS reserves the right to ask for additional evidence if there are any concerns over your English language level.

The majority of RCS programmes have higher English language requirements than the UKVI required level (CEFR level B2) and you will also need to meet these higher requirements. Listed below are the tests we accept and the minimum scores needed for each programme. The language tests listed below are valid if they have been taken within two years of the start date of your chosen programme.

We will verify the scores you declare with the test provider.

Accepted English Language Tests:

- IELTS Academic or UKVI IELTS Academic (IELTS One Skill retake accepted)
- TOEFL iBT (TOEFL iBT home edition is not accepted)
- Pearson PTE Academic or PTE Academic UKVI (PTE Academic online is not accepted)
- Cambridge B2 First or C1 Advanced or C2 Proficiency

## Undergraduate Programmes

Programmes	Minimum Scores Required			
	IELTS Academic	TOEFL iBT	PTE Academic	Cambridge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA Modern Ballet</li> </ul>	5.5 with no component below 5.5	Overall score of 72, with minimum scores of: Reading-18, Listening-17, Speaking-20, Writing-17	Overall score of 59 with a minimum of 59 in all components (reading, listening, speaking, writing)	Overall score of 162 with a minimum of 162 in all components
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Music (Honours)</li> <li>• BEd Music (Honours)</li> </ul>	6.0 with no component below 5.5	Overall score of 80, with minimum scores of: Reading -18, Listening -17, Speaking -20, Writing -17	Overall score of 59 with a minimum of 59 in all components (reading, listening, speaking, writing)	Overall score of 169 with a minimum of 162 in all components
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA Filmmaking</li> <li>• BA Production Arts and Design</li> <li>• BA Production Technology and Management</li> </ul>	6.5 with no component below 5.5	Overall score of 88, with minimum scores of: Reading -18, Listening -17, Speaking -20, Writing -17	Overall score of 62 with a minimum of 59 in all components (reading, listening, speaking, writing)	Overall score of 176 with a minimum of 162 in all components
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA Acting</li> <li>• BA Contemporary Performance-making</li> <li>• BA Musical Theatre</li> </ul>	7.5 with a score of 7.5 in speaking and no component below 5.5	Overall score of 102, with minimum scores of: Reading -18, Listening -17, Speaking -27, Writing -17	Overall score of 76 with a minimum of 76 in speaking and 59 in all other components (reading, listening, writing)	Overall score of 191 with a minimum of 191 in speaking and no component below 162

## Postgraduate Programmes

Programmes	IELTS Academic	TOEFL iBT	PTE Academic	Cambridge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MA/MMus Music</li> <li>• Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Music</li> <li>• Artist Diploma</li> </ul>	6.0 with no component below 5.5	Overall score of 80, with minimum scores of: Reading - 18, Listening -17, Speaking - 20, Writing -17	Overall score of 59 with a minimum of 59 in all components (reading, listening, speaking, writing)	Overall score of 169 with a minimum of 162 in all components
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MA Psychology in the Arts (Music)</li> <li>• MEd Learning and Teaching in the Arts</li> <li>• PG Certificate Learning and Teaching in the Arts</li> </ul>	7.0 with a minimum score of 7.0 in speaking and no component below 6.5	Overall score of 94, with minimum component scores of: Reading - 19, Listening - 20, Speaking - 23, Writing - 24	Overall score of 66 with a minimum of 66 in speaking and no component below 62	Overall score of 185 with a minimum of 185 in speaking and no component below 176
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MA/MFA Acting/Directing Classical and Contemporary Text</li> <li>• MA Musical Theatre: Musical Directing</li> <li>• Professional Graduate Diploma in Musical Directing</li> </ul>	7.5 with a minimum score of 7.5 in speaking and no component below 5.5	Overall score of 102, with minimum scores of: Reading -18, Listening -17, Speaking - 27, Writing -17	Overall score of 76 with a minimum of 76 in speaking and 59 in all other components (reading, listening, writing)	Overall score of 191 with a minimum of 191 in speaking and no component below 162

Research Programmes	IELTS Academic	TOEFL iBT	Pearson	Cambridge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PhD/MPhil</li> <li>• Doctor of Performing Arts</li> </ul>	7.0 with no component below 5.5	Overall score of 95, with minimum component scores of Reading -18, Listening -17, Speaking -20, Writing -17	Overall score of 66 with a minimum of 59 in all components (reading, listening, speaking, writing)	Overall score of 185 with a minimum of 162 in all components

## Exemptions

You do not need to provide an English language test if you have/are one of the following:

- Are from a [majority English speaking country](#) as defined by the home office.
- A degree from a university taught in a [majority English speaking country](#) where the language of instruction was English. Students must have completed at least their final two years of study in the [majority English speaking country](#) and must have graduated within the last 4 years.
- A GCSE, A level, Scottish National Qualification level 4 or 5, Scottish Higher or Advanced Higher in English, gained through study at a UK school that you began when you were under 18.

## Other Accepted Qualifications:

The qualifications listed below are valid where they are taken no more than **five years** before the start date of your chosen programme of study.

- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma: English A: SL 5 or HL 5  
English B: SL 5 or HL 5  
For programmes requiring an IELTS of 7.0 or above: English A: SL 6 or HL 6  
English B: SL 7 or HL 6
- iGCSE: First Language English at grade C or English as a Second Language at grade B  
For programmes requiring an IELTS of 7.0 or above: First Language English Grade B. English as a Second Language is not accepted
- A-Level/AS-Level English Language; English Language and Literature; or English Literature at grade C  
For programmes requiring an IELTS of 7.0 or above: English Language; English Language and Literature; or English Literature at grade B
- HKDSE English: Grade 4 or above with grade 4 or above in each component  
For programmes requiring an IELTS of 7.0 or above: Grade 5 or above with grade 5 or above in each component
- Singapore Cambridge GCE O level English: C6 or above  
For programmes requiring an IELTS of 7.0 or above: B3 or above

## Pre-sessional English Programmes

If you are not quite at the level required for your programme, you can consider doing a pre-sessional English programme. We can only accept pre-sessional programmes from a [BALEAP accredited institution](#).

## Non-standard Entry

In exceptional circumstances we can consider applications from individuals whose English language qualifications do not match (in terms of equivalence) or fall short of the normal entrance requirements.

**Please note however that students requiring a student visa must meet the minimum [UKVI English language levels](#) equivalent to CEFR level B2.**

Having satisfied the Audition Panel that they meet the selection criteria and demonstrated that they have the capacity to pursue the proposed course of study, such applicants will be considered

through examination of contextualised data provided in accordance with the Non-Standard Entry Policy. The appropriate Head of Department/ Programme will make a case in support of the applicant for consideration by the Directors of the Schools and Convener of the Quality and Standards Committee.

**Contact Us**

If you have any questions about your English language requirements, please email [admissions@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@rcs.ac.uk)

## **Policies relating to US Federal Student Loan Funding**

### **DEFAULT MANAGEMENT PLAN – FEDERAL STUDENT AID**

#### **US Financial Aid Recipients**

This default management plan contains some of the strategies used by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to help our American Loan Students understand the responsibility of borrowing loans to fund their degree studies. The purpose is to reduce the number of students who default on loan repayments.

#### **Entrance and Counselling**

All first-time borrowers of the Direct Loan program, new students or students changing study path are required to undertake entrance counselling where students are advised about:

- how the master promissory note works,
- the importance of repaying the loan,
- the consequences of default, and
- sample monthly repayment amounts

A copy of the Entrance Counselling is retained in the student file.

#### **Early Identification and Counselling for Students at Risk of Progression/ Withdrawal**

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is responsible for monitoring borrowers who are at risk of non-progression or withdrawing and counselling students according to circumstances with a view to retaining those students.

#### **Communication**

All Federal Direct Loan students are directed to the mandatory Foreign Schools Consumer Information. Academic progress and enrolment status are held on the central student record system which is accessible by all relevant offices across campus including the office that disburses funds and authorises payments. Up-to-date contact information for both the student and next of kin is obtained from students at enrolment.

#### **Exit Counselling**

Graduating and withdrawing students are advised that they must undertake Exit Counselling as a condition of borrowing Federal Direct Loans. All students are directed to:

<https://studentaid.gov/exit-counseling/>

#### **Timely and Accurate Enrolment Reporting**

As a condition of our eligibility to certify Direct Loans, we are required to submit accurate enrolment updates to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) via Clearinghouse at regular intervals throughout the year.

#### **Analyse Defaulted Loan Data to Identify Defaulter Characteristics**

Defaulted loan data is monitored to identify defaulting borrowers and to analyse reasons the reasons for defaulting. We use this information to improve default prevention and management practices and initiatives. Internal data includes key information such as school attended, program of study, demographics, grades, etc. The Loan Record Detail Report (LRDR) is reviewed to determine if there are common characteristics among defaulters.

We make use of the recommended tools listed below to ensure data accuracy and use effective loan counselling and default prevention management techniques to aid students and the Conservatoire.

### **Where do I begin?**

FSA Assessments for Default Prevention and Management

<https://fsapartners.ed.gov/financial-aid-delivery/default-prevention-and-management>

### **Loan Counselling**

Students and Counsellors

The Student Guide and NSLDS for Students

How much will it cost?

How will I pay for it?

Will I make enough money in my chosen occupation to repay student loans I receive?

Repaying Your Student Loans

Ombudsman Office

Ensuring Student Loan Repayment Best Practices for Schools

SFA Assessments for Schools

Jump Start Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy

## **RETURN TO TITLE IV (R2T4) REGULATIONS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

US Federal Law specifies that, should a student withdraw from their programme of study, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland must complete a Return to Title IV (R2T4) calculation and arrange for any 'unearned' Federal Aid funds to be returned to the US Department of Education.

When a student withdraws or interrupts their studies during a payment period, the amount of Title IV programme assistance that has been earned up to that point is determined by a specific formula.

This policy specifies how the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland will determine the amount of US Higher Education Act Title IV programme assistance (Direct and PLUS Loans) that a student will earn if they withdraw from their studies. For R2T4 purposes, any interruption of studies (e.g., leave of absence) for longer than 180 days or an "unapproved leave of absence" is also deemed to be a withdrawal.

### **What triggers R2T4?**

This policy is to be used in the event of a student in receipt of US Federal Aid:

- Officially (notifying RCS) withdrawing fully or temporarily from a Conservatoire programme of study;
- Unofficially (not notifying RCS) withdrawing fully or temporarily from a Conservatoire programme of study;
- Changing the status of their studies in terms of early programme completion (including thesis submission); transferring to another programme of study; upgrading/down-grading the level of study; changing mode of attendance from full-time to half-time or less than half-time.



### Who calculates the R2T4?

At the Conservatoire, the **UKVI Compliance and International Student Experience Manager** is responsible for calculating Return to Title IV Funds (R2T4) by using worksheets and software provided by the US Department of Education. The Finance department is responsible for the actual transfer of the resulting funds.

All funds must be returned to the US Department of Education within 45 days of the date when the Conservatoire determines that a student withdrew/interrupted their studies.

### Contact for queries regarding Title IV program funds

If a student has queries regarding their Title IV program funds, students can call the US Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FEDAID (1-800-433-3243). TTY users may call 1-800-730-8913.

### CALCULATION OF R2T4

Students “earn” Federal Aid funds by complying with attendance regulations (see **Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**, section 2 Attendance and Absence). Under US Federal Law, the Conservatoire is required to report any changes to enrolment status (ie withdraw, suspend, or completed studies earlier than expected) within tight timescales.

Attendance (authorized and unauthorized) is reported via Asimut to the Student Records team, who will further consult with the student’s department to determine if the student attended classes or to verify the last date of attendance.

### Why is R2T4 calculated?

R2T4 is calculated when a student withdraws from, suspends from, or completes early a programme during a payment period.

### How is R2T4 calculated?

When a student withdraws during a payment period, the amount of Title IV program assistance that has been earned up to that point is determined by a specific formula. The calculation is based on the amount of attendance within a payment period. Students earn Title IV aid in direct proportion to the amount of attendance within a payment period.

Students who have been in attendance for more than 60% of the Payment Period are deemed to have earned 100% of their scheduled Title IV funds for that period. Students who have been in attendance for less than 60% are required to return unearned funds. The following calculation will be used to calculate unearned funds:

Number of calendar days completed	= Amount of Loan ‘earned’
Number of calendar dates in payment period	

**Please note:** In calculation the number of days, scheduled breaks of more than 5 days should be excluded from both the numerator and denominator in the above calculation.

The amount of assistance is determined on a pro rata basis. The payment period is the Academic Year for which the loan was certified and the percent of attendance is calculated by dividing the number of days attended by the total number of days in the payment period.

For example, if the student completes 30% of the payment period or the period of enrolment, the student has earned 30% of the assistance they were originally scheduled to receive. Once the student has completed more than 60% of the payment period or period of enrolment, all the assistance that the student was scheduled to receive for that period is considered to have been earned. If the student did not receive all the funds that were earned, they may be due a post-withdrawal disbursement. If the post-withdrawal disbursement includes loan funds, the student may choose to decline the loan funds so that additional debt is not incurred. The **UKVI Compliance and International Student Experience Manager** determines how much of the loan may be retained and how much returned.

The RCS may automatically use all or a portion of a student's post-withdrawal disbursement (including loan funds, if the student accepts them) for tuition, fees and accommodation. For all other RCS charges, the RCS needs the student's permission to use the post-withdrawal disbursement. If the student does not give permission the student will not be offered the funds. However, it may be in a student's best interest to allow the RCS to keep funds to reduce the debt at the RCS.

There are some Title IV funds that students are scheduled to receive that cannot be earned once a student withdraws because of other eligibility requirements. If the student receives (or the RCS receives on behalf of the student) excess Title IV program funds that must be returned, the RCS must return a portion of the excess equal to the lesser of:

- The institutional charges multiplied by the unearned percentage of the funds, or
- The entire amount of excess funds

The RCS must return this amount even if it didn't keep this amount of the Title IV program funds. If the RCS is not required to return all of the excess funds, the student must return the remaining amount. Any loan funds that must be returned, the student must repay in accordance with the terms of the promissory note. That is, scheduled payments are made to the holder of the loan over a period of time. Students who have received a refund of their loans proceeds before withdrawing may be required to return part or all of those funds to the lender.

### **When is R2T4 calculated?**

The date of withdrawal is determined by the Student Records team and will be the last day the student attended. The Conservatoire uses the last date of attendance to compute the R2T4 formula.

In the case where a student notifies their Programme Leader that they intend to withdraw, the Programme Leader must document the date of this notification and inform the student of the need to complete a withdrawal form.

Should the student fail to complete a withdrawal form or there is a lag between the notification and the completion of a withdrawal form, the earlier date of notification will be used in calculating the R2T4 formula. Students who do not attend even one class, are ineligible for Title IV funds and all of the loans proceeds will be returned to the lender.

### **WITHDRAWAL AND SUSPENSION OF STUDIES PROCEDURES**

Please refer to Appendix G: Withdrawal and Suspension of Studies statement below.

### **REFUND POLICY**

The amount of Title IV funds due for return following a withdrawal is calculated independently of the tuition fee liability charged by the Conservatoire. Therefore, the student may still owe

funds to RCS to cover unpaid institutional charges or may indeed be entitled to a refund in accordance with regulations found here (but only after any Title IV funds owed have been returned to the US Department of Education (if applicable)). The Conservatoire may also attempt to collect from the students any Title IV funding that RCS is required to return to the US Department of Education.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Suspension of Study**

A suspension of study is a temporary interruption in a student's programme of study. It refers to the specific time period during a programme of study when a student is not in attendance. This is a temporary period of time which a student has requested with the intention to return or complete their programme. Students returning from a suspension of study are not required to re-apply for admission.

### **Official Withdrawal**

A withdrawal refers to a student's intent to permanently terminate studies at the RCS with no expectation of return.

### **Unofficial Withdrawal**

An unofficial withdrawal is one where the RCS has not received notice from the student that the student has ceased or will cease attending the RCS.

### **Early completion of the programme**

In some cases, students may submit their final thesis before the maximum deadline date. If there ARE no further programme teaching or assignment requirements, it will be considered that the student has completed their studies, their student record will be closed, and the student will no longer be eligible to receive Federal Aid.

### **Upgrading or downgrading your level of study**

Following successful or unsuccessful progression points (i.e., examinations, annual Thesis Advisory Panel meetings, etc.), a formal recommendation to upgrade or downgrade the level of study may be made by the programme leader. This change in study may affect the length of a course, which in turn may affect the amount of Federal Aid a student is entitled to and/or any visa restrictions.

### **Changing mode of attendance**

Mode of attendance relates to the amount of time that a student is completing their studies, i.e., full or part-time. Students must be continuously enrolled for at least half-time at the Conservatoire to be eligible for Federal Aid. If students are considering a change to their mode of attendance, they must follow the procedures outline in section 3 above to seek the appropriate advice before the change is made to their student records.

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Students receiving US Federal Loans must demonstrate Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) throughout the loan period to receive all the instalments of their loans for that period and to continue receiving loans in subsequent loan periods, where applicable.

Programmes relating to SAP are governed by the regulations set out in our **Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules** [referred to as **Regulations**]. These are:

- the overarching regulations of the Conservatoire and all matriculated students must abide by these regulations and any specific programme regulations which will be confirmed in their individual programme handbooks and/or degree level general handbook (ie undergraduate studies handbook);
- fully validated by Academic Board and reviewed on an annual basis;
- issued to all students of the RCS on an annual basis.

### Who is this policy for?

Requirements relating to attendance, time to completion, and assessment outlined in this policy apply to all students on the same programme whether they are in receipt of US Federal Aid or not.

Students in receipt of Title IV Federal Aid are, however, subject to the following **additional regulations**:

- Additional checks on their progress prior to disbursements during the academic year;
- Fulfilling Federal regulations relating to the pace of completion;
- Where relevant to their UK Immigration visa status, regular attendance monitoring in accordance with the UK Government’s immigration rules (including additional face-to-face check points with the UKVI Compliance and International Student Experience Manager).

### Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP): What do we mean?

Satisfactory Academic Progress is the term used to describe what a student must demonstrate to remain in ‘good standing’ to receive and continue receiving student loans from US Federal Aid.

Good standing at the Conservatoire for those in receipt of a US Federal Loan is composed of two categories of regulation – those regulations specified by the US Department for Education and those, where relevant, required by the UK’s government’s visa and immigration rules.

### SAP-related good standing is assessed two times per year.

The approaches used by RCS to assess a student’s continued eligibility for their Title IV US Federal Loan as set out under US Federal Law (34CFR 668.16) are as follows:

<b>Quantitative, time-based measures: (Pace)</b>	<b>Qualitative outcomes-based measures: (Grades/ Pass/Fail)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Full attendance</b> at all lessons, classes, rehearsals and performances. Unauthorised absences are considered within the disciplinary procedures outlined in the <b>Regulations</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Timely Academic Progression:</b> Progressing / completing a programme within the timescales established by the</li> </ul>	<p>Evidence of successful assessment outcomes (as relevant to the programme – those measures which an exam board use to determine successful progression through and completion of studies), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertaking the programme of study’s requirements and assessments as</li> </ul>

<p>Conservatoire’s <b>Regulations</b> and <b>fulfilling Federal regulations</b> relating to the pace of completion (ie students must complete within 150% of the published length of the programme as measured in credits and including any repetitions or periods of suspension).</p>	<p>stipulated in the appropriate <b>Programme Handbook</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (and/or) Undertaking the programme of study’s equivalent credit requirements as stipulated in the appropriate <b>Programme Handbook</b> in another Conservatoire programme or at another institution, provided that every candidate whose attendance or attainment is thus recognised shall attend an appropriate qualifying programme of study and shall pass the appropriate assessments.</li> </ul>
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Table 1: Assessing SAP at the Conservatoire

### RCS Qualifications

In common with all other Scottish Higher Education Institutions, all programmes at the RCS are designed in accordance with the **Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)**.

Before any student can have an award conferred, the student must have successfully completed an approved programme of study at the RCS.

### Credit Definition

All modules delivered by the RRCS have an SCQF credit rating. The SCQF Framework is an integral part of the national framework that covers all forms of programmes and qualifications (for further information see: [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk))

One SCQF credit equates to 10 hours of notional student effort (including classes, performances, independent study, research etc).

One year of undergraduate study equates to 120 credits (1200 hours of notional student effort).

### REMAINING IN GOOD STANDING UNDER THIS POLICY

Fuller details of the requirements for students to remain in good standing for Title IV funding are described below.

### Attendance and absence

Students are required to attend all lessons, classes, rehearsals and performances as set out in the programme handbook.

Authorised non-attendance (ie in the event of ill-health) is monitored through the Conservatoire’s timetabling system: ASIMUT. Students who need to be absent as a result of ill-health, must record this via ASIMUT in the **‘declare absence’** section. This will automatically mark absence for the timetabled classes they are registered to attend that day. RCS uses ASIMUT records to confirm whether there have been unauthorized as well as authorised absences.

Absence for good reason must be notified no later than 9.30am via ASIMUT or to the Academic Administration and Support Office. In case of illness, absence for a period of seven days or more must be supported by a medical certificate.

Leave of absence for any reason is granted only on the written authority of the Director of the appropriate School. Requests for such leave must be submitted at least one week beforehand, in writing. When leave is granted, it is the responsibility of the student to inform those teachers whose classes will be affected. Students who have been absent for any reason must, on return, report to their Head of Department or Head of Programme as appropriate.

The attendance of all Financial Aid students is continually monitored to ensure that the Conservatoire meets both the Financial Aid obligations and can evidence to the United Kingdom Visa and Immigration (UKVI) that all its student visa holders are continuing to engage with their studies. This monitoring will be incorporated into the existing policies and systems for the attendance monitoring of all other students. If a student on a UK immigration visa has stopped engaging with their studies, evidenced by being absent for ten consecutive expected points of contact, the Conservatoire must cease sponsorship of this student and report this decision to the UKVI within ten working days.

Unauthorised absences are not permitted and may be considered within the disciplinary procedures outlined in the **Regulations**.

#### **Timely Academic Progression:**

The maximum period allowed for the completion of a 4 year undergraduate programme of study (480 credit hours) shall normally be the normal duration of the programme of study plus two years (720 credit hours).

The maximum period allowed for the completion of a 3 year undergraduate programme of study (360 credit hours) shall be the normal duration of the programme of study plus one and a half years (540 credit hours).

The maximum period allowed for the completion of a postgraduate programme of study shall be the normal duration of the programme of study plus two years.

#### **Academic Progression**

Normally a student may progress on the programme of study provided that:

- they attend classes regularly and complete all of the work of the programme of study;
- they achieve a minimum pass mark (see below) on all assessment requirements to the satisfaction of the appropriate Progress Committee or Board of Examiners.

To obtain a pass in a component of the programme of study a student must normally complete all prescribed assessments to the satisfaction of the Board of Examiners. Where a component has a final examination, a student shall be permitted to sit this only if there is evidence that they have attended regularly and completed the work of the component.

All assigned and assessable course work which contributes to a final grade in any given component of a programme of study must be completed by the due submission date, unless prior permission has been given. Non-submission or incomplete assessment of any assessable element of a component of a programme of study will automatically lead to a failure being recorded in that component by the Board of Examiners. Assessments which remain outstanding after the first diet Board of Examiners (without prior permission having been given), will require to

be submitted by a specified date prior to the resit Board of Examiners (which normally meets in late August) and such assessments will receive a mark no higher than a minimum pass. Failure to submit outstanding assessments prior to the resit Board of Examiners may affect progress to the subsequent years of the programme of study or graduation.

Work submitted late (up to five working days late) will be penalised two increments on the Common Assessment Scale per day (e.g. an essay assessed as C1, submitted two days late, will be penalised down to D2). The penalty will not turn a pass mark into a fail, therefore, a grade of D2 will become D3 and D3 will remain unchanged. Work submitted more than five working days late will not be accepted and will be recorded as a failure due to non-submission (necessitating the submission of new assignments as resits).

Failure to satisfactorily complete all required modules and achieve the minimum number of SCQF credits by the end of the academic year (following the resit diet if appropriate), may lead to termination of studies.

The minimum number of SCQF credits required in each academic year to permit progression to the next year of study is 120 (for undergraduate programmes and two year postgraduate programmes). On achieving the required number of credits, the Board of Examiners will confirm a progression status of “pass proceed”.

At the discretion of the Board of Examiners, a student may be allowed to progress to the next year of study having achieved less than the required 120 SCQF credits. This would be in exceptional circumstances and will take the overall student profile into account. In these cases, the student will progress with a “pass and carry” status.

### **Pass Mark**

All students will be required to achieve the minimum pass mark to be deemed to have successfully completed the module.

For modules using a pass/fail outcome, the requirement will be Pass.

For modules using the RCS 17 point assessment scale the minimum pass mark is a D3.

### **Resit and Retake**

All students shall be permitted to resit individual components of a module once although failure to achieve 60 SCQF credits or more, within any level of study, will normally lead to termination of studies. If a student fails a module at resit, there may, in exceptional circumstances, be one further opportunity to resit within the resit diet or to retake the whole modules in the following academic session.

In all cases of resit, the method of re-assessment shall be the same or, as far as is practicable, equivalent to that for the original assessment. No additional teaching of any component of any programme of study is allowed between the first sitting of an examination and the resitting of that examination.

In certain circumstances the Board of Examiners may determine that a student needs to retake a module before being re-assessed. In these circumstances the student will be notified that they must retake that module.

Students may be permitted to retake module(s) up to a maximum of 30 credits in a single year and 60 credits over a whole programme. Students may be permitted only one opportunity for retake of any module. Students may not normally progress between levels of study, carrying a fail of more than 30 credits (i.e. failure of more than 30 credits would necessitate suspension of studies, normally for one year).

In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, a student may be offered the opportunity to retake an entire level of study.

If a student is receiving financial aid and has to resit or retake any components of a module, they will be placed on Financial Aid Warning.

The Code of Appeals is described in section D (Code of Procedure for Academic Appeals) of the **Regulations**.

### **FAILURE TO MAKE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

If a student fails to make satisfactory academic progress, the student will receive a Financial Aid Warning. This warning will last for one payment period (i.e. until the next disbursement), during which time the student can still receive financial aid.

If the student regains satisfactory academic progress by the next disbursement due date, the next disbursement will be released and the student will be removed from the Financial Aid Warning status.

If the student fails to regain Satisfactory Academic Progress by the next disbursement due date, they will no longer be eligible for Financial Aid (unless the student appeals) and funds will not be disbursed.

The student can appeal the decision within 14 days of being notified that their aid has been suspended by submitting a letter to Academic Administration and Support explaining why they did not meet SAP (e.g. injury, health, family reasons etc.) and what has changed that will allow them to meet the requirements.

The student should specify the exceptional circumstances that led to the poor academic performance and state the reasons why those circumstances will not affect future academic progress. Each case will be individually reviewed and the Director of School who will use their professional judgment to determine if the original situation has been resolved to the point where the student can reasonably be expected to succeed and issue a one-time waiver of SAP for the next term. If the student still does not make satisfactory progress, then they will be ineligible for future aid.

Academic Administration and Support will discuss this with the school and/or adviser of studies and a decision and response will be sent to the student within 14 days.

If the appeal is unsuccessful, the student is no longer eligible for federal financial aid with immediate effect.

If the appeal is successful, the student is placed on Financial Aid Probation. They will be required, by the end of one payment period to meet the Conservatoire's SAP standards or meet the requirements of an academic plan (if applicable) developed by the Conservatoire to qualify for



further Title IV, HEA program funds. Specific requirements may include resitting and passing exams/submitting dissertations/making up lost module time. Eligibility for Financial Aid will continue.

### **Temporarily Withdrawn Students**

Those students who temporarily withdraw or are withdrawn from a programme of study in good standing and with the permission of the Director of School/Directorate, must confirm in writing their intention to re-commence their studies. All suspended students will be contacted prior to the end of the academic year in which they have suspended their studies.

Students who are unable to meet the requirements of the programme may be required to suspend their studies. These students must confirm in writing their intention to re-commence their studies. All suspended students will be contacted prior to the end of the academic year in which they have suspended their studies.

If a student's suspension has been approved on the basis of medical evidence then, prior to re-commencement of their programme, the student will be required to submit a medical report to the Academic Registrar which confirms that they are medically fit to resume their programme. Additionally, a student will normally be required to re-audition prior to re-commencement of their programme in order that an assessment of their skills and needs might be made.

Students who have not completed examinations and who are either eligible or permitted to sit outstanding degree examinations must confirm to the Director of the appropriate School/Directorate their intention to do so not less than six weeks before their examination date.

If the above specific appeal requirements are not met then the student will again become ineligible for financial aid.

**Please note:** Regardless of the above, students who exceed 150% of the published length of their programme are no longer entitled to receive Federal Aid.

### **Re-establishing Title IV Funds**

Where a student has failed to achieve the required standard of academic progress and subsequently becomes ineligible to receive US Federal Aid, they may once again become eligible providing they have met the required standard of academic progress for the subsequent period of payment. The student will remain eligible providing the required standard of academic progress is maintained. Should the student fail to achieve the required standard of academic progress in future payment periods, they will be subject to the Financial Aid Warning process as described above.

## 10. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

There may be occasions where an applicant considers that the Conservatoire has failed to meet its high standards in the consideration of their application.

Disagreement with the academic judgement of the audition/interview panel in reaching their decision based on aspects of the applicant's profile does not constitute grounds for an appeal by an applicant. Appeals will only be considered in relation to non-adherence to policy and procedure.

All appeal requests should be made in writing, providing full name, admissions ID or UCAS Personal ID and the programme of study applied for and sent to the Admissions Team ([Admissions@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:Admissions@rcs.ac.uk)) within 10 working days after receipt of feedback if this has previously been requested.

The Assistant Registrar (Recruitment and Admissions) will then make the necessary investigations, and where relevant will include a review of the admissions decision and include discussion with the relevant Programme Team. The Assistant Registrar (Recruitment and Admissions) will respond to the applicant, in writing with the outcome of the appeal normally within 10 working days.

If it is found that the outcome of an application was affected by either non-adherence to a policy or defective procedure, the applicant concerned will be offered a re-audition.

Applicants or their representatives who are dissatisfied with the service provided by Admissions should refer to the Conservatoire's Complaints Procedure. This procedure cannot be used to change an admissions decision.

Complaints regarding non-appeal matters can be made in person, by phone, in writing, by email at [complaint@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:complaint@rcs.ac.uk) or by completing our Complaints Form at <https://www.rcs.ac.uk/complaints/>

### **Data Protection**

Applications will be processed in accordance with the Conservatoire's Data Protection Policy. Application forms and related documents will be kept in accordance with the Conservatoire's Retention of Records Policy. <https://www.rcs.ac.uk/privacy-policy/>

## APPENDICES

- A. Terms and Conditions following Acceptance of an Offer
- B. Minimum /additional entry requirements
- C. Non-Standard Entry Information: direct entry / accreditation of prior learning guidance
- D. Post Audition Feedback Policy
- E. Safeguarding Risk Assessment of Applicants Policy
- F. Student Tuition Fees, Conditions, and Refund Statement
- G. Withdrawal and Suspension of Studies Statement

## APPENDIX A:

### Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Terms and Conditions (following an acceptance)

Once you have accepted your offer, you are considered as having entered into a mutual relationship with the where they expect to enrol and we expect them to enrol. These expectations are held in good faith.

These Terms and Conditions apply following your acceptance of an offer of a place at the Conservatoire.

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Terms and Conditions of Admission and Matriculation describe the principal rights, duties and obligations of applicants and enrolled students (hereafter “you”) and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (hereafter “RCS”) both during the admission process and after enrolling on a course of study.
- 1.2 This agreement is governed by Scots Law and is subject to exclusive jurisdiction of the Scottish courts as regards any claim or matter arising under this contract.
- 1.3 RCS will aim to provide the learning opportunities advertised at the point an applicant accepts an offer of a place to study. These learning opportunities will be based on information RCS publishes on its website. RCS will endeavour to ensure that this information is an accurate reflection of what you will study.
- 1.4 In practice, programmes will change over time for reasons such as subject advancements, programme revalidation or staff changes:
  - a) If a course’s content is to change substantially from that advertised, prior to you starting the course, RCS will contact you to advise accordingly. In the unlikely event that the RCS is unable to offer you the advertised programme then it will endeavour to provide you with an alternative programme at RCS (where applicable).
  - b) If, during your period of study, your course’s content is to change substantially from that originally advertised RCS will communicate these changes to you accordingly.
- 1.5 Some courses may require you to agree with the terms and conditions of professional, statutory and/or regulatory bodies or third-party providers and by accepting these terms and conditions you agree to be bound by their requirements (Details of these requirements are available on the programme web pages).
- 1.6 These terms and conditions, together with the RCS’s policies and regulations, form the contract between you and RCS (hereafter “the Contract”).

By accepting the terms and conditions you are agreeing to:

- a) Produce proof of identity and documentary evidence that you meet the entry requirements for the course or programme or have qualifications considered equivalent by RCS and that you meet any requirements set by the UK immigration authorities.
- b) Pay the tuition fees and any additional charges prescribed for your course or programme, in accordance with the published payment schedules.

- c) Abide by RCS Rules, Regulations, Policies, Procedures and Codes of Conduct, issued under the authority of The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Board of Governors and the Academic Board.

1.7 When accepting the terms and conditions RCS agrees to:

- a) Provide access to the range of learning opportunities within each module/component appropriate to the level of the qualification, as described in the relevant Programme Handbook.
- b) Apply its policies, procedures, and regulations fairly and consistently.
- c) Give you adequate notice of any substantial change to a course of study which might affect you.
- d) Take reasonable steps to keep you informed of any issues which may affect your studies. This may be via the website, student portal, email, or text.

1.8 Any queries or concerns relating to these terms and conditions should be directed by email to Admissions at [admissions@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@rcs.ac.uk)

## 2 APPLICATIONS

2.1 You must ensure that all information supplied to RCS for entry to a programme of study, for professional, statutory and/or regulatory body entry or for immigration purposes is true, accurate and complete. Applications found to include false, incomplete, or misleading information may be withdrawn by RCS or the offer amended.

2.2 False Authorships: Any submission of written work presented in support of your application, such as a personal statement, portfolio of work, audition task responses or research proposal, must be your own work; authored by you and should not be attributable to third party/ generative AI and/or other software tools.

**All submissions are subject to verification and authentication checks by the Admission Service. Any submission assessed as false authorship may lead to the withdrawal of your application or offer.**

2.3 All qualifications must be verified by an official source, such as UCAS, or by acceptable copies thereof presented to RCS upon request. If, following enrolment, it is identified that you have failed to declare such information then RCS shall implement misconduct proceedings in accordance with the **Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules**.

2.4 RCS will not accept applications from students who owe RCS money for any reason. The amount due must first be cleared before the any application can proceed.

2.5 Your offer may be issued as a 'conditional' or 'unconditional' offer. A conditional offer letter will state the conditions you must fulfil to be admitted to the course of study. The offer of a place may be withdrawn if the conditions are not met by the date stated in the offer letter.

2.6 Applicants applying via UCAS are responsible for adhering to application and acceptance deadlines together with UCAS terms and conditions.

2.7 To accept an offer of admission you must follow the guidance given in your offer letter. If you are a UCAS applicant this will be done via your UCAS Track.

2.8 If RCS suspects that an application is fraudulent, it will contact you asking for an explanation. If it is confirmed that the application is fraudulent, and RCS deems your

explanation inadequate, or no response is received from you, then RCS will cancel the application and/ or revoke any offer which may have been made to you whether conditional or unconditional.

- 2.9 If, following enrolment, RCS suspects that an application has been fraudulent then RCS shall implement misconduct proceeding in accordance with the Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules.

### **3 DECLARATION OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS, INVESTIGATIONS AND PROCEEDINGS**

- 3.1 By accepting the RCS offer, you are confirming that:

- a) You have declared, or will declare, any relevant criminal convictions or pending criminal charge/case in accordance with the Criminal convictions section of the Admissions Policy as may be amended from time to time.
- b) You accept that your offer may be withdrawn, or you may have your enrolment terminated if you have any conviction or pending charge that prevents you from being able to undertake your course (as determined by RCS or the relevant professional, statutory, or regulatory body).
- c) As an offer-holder or a student, if you come under investigation by the Police or criminal charges or proceedings are initiated you have a duty to immediately submit a disclosure form to report this to RCS without delay.

### **4 CANCELLATION OF ADMISSION**

- 4.1 If you accept our offer of a place conditional or unconditional you have the statutory right to cancel within 14 days of the date, we receive formal notification through UCAS of your offer acceptance. You must notify RCS of your decision in writing via email to admissions.ac.uk

- 4.2 RCS may cancel your contract prior to enrolment at anytime in accordance with Academic Regulations or the Tuition Fee Policy. RCS may also cancel its contract with you, with immediate effect by contacting you in writing, if between accepting an offer and enrolling on the programme:

- a) There is a change in your circumstances which RCS deems makes it inappropriate for you to study on the programme; or
- b) RCS becomes aware of information, which it was not aware of previously, makes it inappropriate for you to study on the programme.

### **5 Matriculation** - the administrative process for becoming a registered student

- 5.1 You are required to matriculate at the time of initial admission to your course and at the start of each subsequent academic year during the period in which you undertake the programme. This process reaffirms your acceptance of RCS terms and conditions. Students who are in debt to RCS for their tuition fees will not be allowed to matriculate. Students will not be prevented from matriculating if they have non-academic debt.
- 5.2 Matriculation must be completed by the commencement of the programme and only by prior arrangement will late arrivals be accepted onto the programme of study and matriculation permitted.
- 5.3 If you fail to matriculate with the given timeframe RCS reserves the right to withdraw you from your programme and you are not entitled to attend classes or participate in assessments.

- 5.4 Exceptionally, where there are conditions of admission outstanding post-matriculation , for example a Disclosure Scotland check, that you subsequently fail to meet, then your offer of admission will be withdrawn.
- 5.5 If you are subject to immigration controls, you will need to demonstrate your immigration status at matriculation. If you fail to demonstrate that you have a valid immigration status, or you are refused a visa to study in the UK, RCS will not allow you to matriculate

## **6 IMMIGRATION**

- 6.1 In applying to RCS, you are confirming, where required, that you are eligible to apply for a Student route visa. If you fail to demonstrate that you have a valid immigration status to undertake the proposed course of study, or you are refused a student visa, you will be withdrawn from RCS.
- 6.2 For students requiring a visa, you must declare any prior visa refusals from the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) division of the Home Office on CAS evidence form
- 6.3 By accepting these terms and conditions you consent to the RCS contacting the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) division of the Home Office to verify your previous immigration history and current application status as necessary.
- 6.4 If you require a visa to study in the UK, you must comply with RCS requests for additional information and documentation in order to enable RCS to issue a Certificate of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) where appropriate.
- 6.5 It is your responsibility to provide RCS with evidence of supporting financial resources as required for a CAS to be issued.
- 6.6 RCS reserves the right to refuse to issue a CAS when it is not satisfied the visa application will be successful or when it will be too late for you to enrol on the course. RCS also reserves the right to close a late application when there is a significant risk that the remaining time for processing is insufficient.
- 6.7 All students subject to visa regulations are required to re-register with RCS at points throughout the academic session and will be advised accordingly. These will be called “Checkpoints”
- 6.8 It is your responsibility to comply with the conditions of your student visa whilst enrolled at RCS.
- 6.9 RCS is required to withdraw sponsorship of your Student route visa if you do not comply with UKVI rules, including but not limited to:
- a) A sponsored student does not arrive for their course either following a refusal of entry clearance or leave to remain, or where leave is granted but the student fails to matriculate.
  - b) A sponsored enrolled student is absent without permission and contrary to attendance requirements.
  - c) A sponsored student chooses to suspend their studies, is no longer actively studying and RCS cannot fulfil its sponsor duties.
  - d) A sponsored enrolled student leaves their course earlier than expected.
  - e) A sponsored enrolled student changes the course they are studying; or
  - f) RCS discontinues a sponsored enrolled student’s studies.

## 7 FEES

- 7.1 Tuition fees are reviewed annually and increase from year to year.
- 7.2 The tuition fees for all courses are published on the RCS website.
- 7.3 You are liable for the full payment of tuition fees for your course including accepting responsibility for securing any sponsorship, and payment thereof, or reduction in fees due to recognition of prior learning.
- 7.4 If you are sponsored for your studies, you must provide Student Finance with proof of sponsorship at the start of each academic year.
- 7.5 You are responsible for notifying RCS should there be any change to the arrangement for the payment of your tuition fees for your course.
- 7.6 By accepting RCS's offer of a place, you agree to the assessment of your fee status as stated in your offer letter.
- 7.7 At matriculation, if you have not paid your tuition fees or set up a payment plan by the due date, RCS will refuse to allow you to matriculate on your chosen programme of study and terminate your enrolment and this Contract.
- 7.8 International students are required to pay a deposit to secure the offer as advised at point of offer and should do so by the stated deadline.
- 7.9 You are responsible for your own living expenses throughout the duration of the course. If you are an international student, it may be a requirement of your visa to ensure that you have sufficient financial resource to support yourself throughout your studies.
- 7.10 Continued non-payment of tuition fees will result in your account being passed to an external debt collection agency.

## 8 RULES, REGULATIONS & BEHAVIOURS

- 8.1 In addition to UK and Scottish legislation, RCS is governed by internal policies, procedures, and regulations. A summary of those specifically relating to matriculated students is provided in the **Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules Handbook**. An annually updated version of this is provided to a student as part of the matriculation process.
- 8.2 The internal policies, procedures and regulations are put in place by RCS to govern and effectively manage academic and non-academic matters of RCS. **You should familiarise yourself with RCS policies, procedures, and regulations both before accepting an offer of a place to study at RCS and as part of the matriculation process.** You must adhere to all RCS policies, procedures and regulations following matriculation.
- 8.3 RCS expects students to behave with due regard to others and to contribute positively to the learning process by applying themselves to their studies for the duration of their time at RS, from application through to graduation, as per the **Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules**.

## 9 DATA PROTECTION

- 9.1 RCS will comply fully with the provisions of the current Data Protection legislation when processing your personal data. RCS privacy notices, which give full information on how your personal data will be used, can be found on the RCS [website](#).



## **10 APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS**

- 10.1 Whether during the application process or as an enrolled student, you feel that you have been unfairly treated, that RCS has not adhered to its own policies or you wish to appeal against a decision of RCS then there is a fair and equitable Complaints and Appeals Procedures in place, full details are on the RCS [website](#) Where a complainant or appellant has exhausted the internal processes, they are then entitled to take the complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

## **11 LIABILITY**

- 11.1 RCS will take all reasonable steps to ensure your safety whilst on RCS property.
- 11.2 RCS does not accept responsibility and excludes liability for damage to your property or intellectual property other than through the negligence of its staff and agents. RCS shall not be held responsible for any injury or damage to property caused by another student or by any person other than a RCS employee or representative.
- 11.3 You are advised to insure your property against theft and other risks.
- 11.4 In the event of an activity or action occurring which RCS cannot control - such as a civil emergency, on-campus emergency, industrial action by its own staff and concern regarding the transmission of serious illness, 'acts of god' - RCS will cooperate with internal and external organisations and agencies to do everything to avoid disruption to studies and services so far as is reasonably practical. RCS will endeavour to keep you informed and do all it reasonably can to mitigate any effects that the action may have. However, RCS cannot guarantee to maintain its services to the level normally expected if there is prolonged disruption to its campus and services.

## **12 WITHDRAWAL**

- 12.1 You may withdraw from studying at RCS at any time after matriculation. By cancelling the contract in this way you may lose all or part of your tuition fee in accordance with the fee regulations in the **Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules Handbook**.

## **13 COMMUNICATION WITH RCS**

- 13.1 RCS will assume that the last home address, term-time address and email address that you told us about are your current contact details. You must inform promptly if any of the details change.
- 13.2 Once you have started your programme RCS will use your RCS email address to contact you. It is important that you check your RCS email account regularly.

## **14 TERMINATION**

- 14.1 RCS may terminate your contract following matriculation at any time in accordance with **Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules** or the **Tuition Fees Policy**.
- 14.2 If your contract is terminated by RCS, then you:
- Are not entitled to matriculate on your programme of study.
  - Will have your sponsorship withdrawn if you are an international student on a Student Route visa.
  - Must pay all outstanding fees, charges, and debts immediately.

## APPENDIX B

### Minimum /additional entry requirements by programmes

#### UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

The general academic entrance requirement for all Royal Conservatoire of Scotland undergraduate programmes are (further specifics are stated where applicable):

- passes in 3 subjects at Higher Level or
- passes in 2 subjects at GCE Advanced Level or
- International Baccalaureate (minimum score of 24 with 3 subjects at Higher Level) or
- Recognised equivalences

We welcome the Scottish Baccalaureate and will accept combinations of Highers and Advanced Highers held.

*We offer a flexible approach to students taking Highers over more than one academic year and/or who achieve their qualifications in more than one sitting.*

#### Entrance Requirements for BA Modern Ballet

- 5 passes at a minimum of National 5 or equivalent such as Standard Grades (Grade 1-3) or Intermediate 1 or 2.
- passes in 5 GCSE's – Grades A\*-C or equivalent
- Knowledge of ballet vocabulary to a minimum of Intermediate level (or equivalent)
- Appropriate physical qualities for a career in professional classical dance

#### Entrance Requirements for BA Performance in British Sign Language/English

There are no formal academic entrance requirements for this programme. Applicants will be asked to:

- self-assess their language competency at point of application using the European Common Framework of Reference (ECFR);
- compose a personal statement explaining their background, motivation and experience either in written English or filmed BSL;
- supply references (either in English or BSL)

#### Entrance Requirements for BMus

A strong indication of potential is sought at the entrance audition for this Programme. Successful applicants will normally be of a standard at least equivalent to Grade 7 or 8 with Distinction of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music in their Principal Study.

Within the minimum academic entrance requirements (listed above in 1.) the subjects recommended are:

- Music at Higher, Advanced Higher or Advanced Level or equivalent
- English at Higher, Advanced Higher or Advanced Level or equivalent

#### Entrance Requirements for BEd Music

A strong indication of potential is sought at the entrance audition for this Programme. Successful applicants will normally be of a standard equivalent to Grade 8 of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music in your Performance Study.

In addition, applicants are expected to have experience of playing piano. For the audition applicants will be asked to prepare a short piano piece and a keyboard harmony exercise that will be sent out in advance.

The academic entrance requirements candidates need to achieve:

- **Highers:** A in Higher Music plus three others at BBC, one of which must be Higher English; and Maths at either National 5 (Grade C) or Intermediate 2 at grade C or above.
- **A-levels:** B in music plus two additional A-levels at C. English Language and Literature at GCSE level grade 4 (formerly Grade C), and Maths at GCSE level Grade 4 (formerly Grade C).

The **General Teaching Council for Scotland** sets the minimum entry requirements with regard to the qualifications in English and Maths and may change these requirements. Normally several years' notice is given of impending changes. It is the responsibility of applicants to be aware of current minimum requirements.

### **Entrance Requirements for Artist Diploma/Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Music**

Candidates are normally expected to hold a Masters degree in Music, or its overseas equivalent.

### **Entrance Requirements for Master of Music / Master of Arts in Music**

Candidates are normally expected to hold an honours (at least 2:2) degree, or its overseas equivalent, in a subject area relevant to the demands of the programme.

### **Entrance Requirements for Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Music)**

Candidates must hold a degree (preferably Honours) in which they have studied music for at least three years. The degree should contain a minimum of 80 credits relevant to the subject. In addition, they must hold a national qualification in English at SCQF level 6 (Higher) or equivalent and a national qualification in Maths at SCQF level 5 (National 5) or equivalent.

## **POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES**

Candidates are normally expected to hold an appropriate undergraduate degree, or its overseas equivalent, in a subject area relevant to the demands of the programme.

## **RESEARCH/DPERF POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES**

1. The essential qualification for admission to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland as a research student is the possession of a good honours degree or the attainment of a level of professional achievement equivalent to that of a good honours degree.
2. Within the processes laid out above, a student who possesses a research Master's degree, or has attained a level of achievement equivalent to that of a research Master's degree, may be permitted to enter the Conservatoire as a second-year research student.
3. The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is committed to the principles of the Accreditation of Prior Learning, including experiential learning, and will bring those to bear on the admissions process for its research students.
4. Applicants for whom English is a second language must demonstrate an IELTS score of 7.0.

## **LIMITATION OF ADMISSION FOR INDIVIDUAL MODULES**

The Academic Board reserves the right to refuse admission to any module or unit of study because of restricted accommodation or teaching facilities or any other such justifiable reason.

## APPENDIX C

### Non-standard entry: APL and APEL Processes

1. Applications for the accreditation of prior learning (APL) and for the accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) will always be decided prior to the applicant's admission to the Conservatoire.
2. Following the appropriate selection procedure (including audition/interview), an applicant may be given a condition offer. The offer will be conditional upon the confirmation of APL or APEL.
3. APL is confirmed by reference to the applicant's transcript and an evaluation of the modules on which the application is based. Staff must identify a match between the level, the learning outcomes and the volume of credit associated with the module(s) passed by the applicant and the corresponding Conservatoire module(s). The award of credit through APL should be reported to the appropriate Board of Examiners/Progress Committee and the appropriate External Examiner should be invited to comment.
4. APEL is confirmed through performance at audition and the production of an appropriate portfolio of work that demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Audition Panel that the applicant has, through experiential learning, met the learning outcomes of certain corresponding Conservatoire modules. The award of credit through APEL should be reported to the appropriate Board of Examiners and the appropriate External Examiner should be invited to comment.
5. For (i), all candidates are auditioned or interviewed, and they may be asked to undertake written assessments at the appropriate level or to submit examples of project work. The criteria used for the assessment(s) are the same as those used for the various levels of the degree programme.
6. For (ii) in the context of the SCQF, recognition may be given for all relevant forms of assessed achievement gained in higher education, further education, or at other levels, and appropriate specific credit awarded. Account will also be taken of the time which may have elapsed since the recorded achievement and of any subsequent use or updating of an award. Normally, the maximum volume of credit which may be acknowledged through APL is 240.
7. In arriving at a final decision on selection and APL, the greatest weight will normally be given to demonstrated ability and potential in practical/performance components (or musical composition), with credit equivalence being accorded to other relevant components.
8. The Assistant Registrar (Recruitment and Admissions) is available to support applicants and staff throughout the process of application and assessment for recognition of prior learning.

## APPENDIX D

### Post-Audition Feedback Policy

1. Programmes at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland are very competitive and attract high numbers of applications. In line with the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts, we have put in place a process for the provision of feedback where possible.

2. Feedback requests must be made in writing to [feedback@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:feedback@rcs.ac.uk). The email must come from the address supplied on the UCAS Conservatoire application and must contain the applicant's full name, course and UCAS Conservatoires personal ID number.

3. Feedback requests will only be accepted from the applicant themselves. Requests from third parties will not be acknowledged.

4. Feedback requests must be received within eight weeks of the audition/ interview date. Requests received after eight weeks will not be dealt with.

5. Feedback will usually take the form of a scanned copy of the audition decision sheet (assessment criteria). This will be emailed directly to the applicant. Feedback may take up to six weeks to process from the date of the request.

6. The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland will not enter into a dialogue with applicants regarding the provision of feedback. Our courses are highly competitive and applicants need to recognise that feedback may simply state the fact that other applicants were stronger or that the course is not, in our opinion, suitable for them.

7. Applicants should not consider the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland as arbiters of their ability. Feedback given is based on performance in the audition/ interview and suitability for a particular programme of study. Applicants who are unsuccessful in their application to us, may go on to gain places at other conservatoires, and similarly, applicants whom we accept, may have been unsuccessful elsewhere.

8. There may be occasions where an applicant considers that RCS has failed to meet its high standards in the consideration of their application. Disagreement with the academic judgement of the Audition/Interview Panel in reaching their decision based on aspects of the applicant's profile does not constitute grounds for a complaint by an applicant. Complaints will only be considered in relation to nonadherence to policy and procedure.

8.1 Complaints can be made in person, by phone, in writing, by email at [complaint@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:complaint@rcs.ac.uk) or by completing our Complaints Form at [www.rcs.ac.uk/complaints](http://www.rcs.ac.uk/complaints).

8.2 The following information will be required when making a complaint: Your full name and address

- As much as you can about the complaint
- What has gone wrong
- How you would like the matter to be resolved
  - Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:  
ire's The event/issue you want to complain about
- Finding out that you have a reason to complain. In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

8.4 We will give you our decision in five working days or less. Should the complaint

- need to be investigated, a full response to the complaint will be given to you within
- 20 working days. If the investigation is likely to take longer, you will be informed.
- 8.5 Please refer to the Complaints Handling Procedure Guide for more information
- <https://www.rcs.ac.uk/complaints/>

## APPENDIX E:

### **Safeguarding Risk Assessment Policy (Applicant and Offer Holders) regarding allegations of prior misconduct/ criminal activity**

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. Entering into the RCS means becoming part of a community based on trust. The policy below sets out how we manage situations where an applicant is looking to matriculate at the Conservatoire but there are reasons for us to consider that there are safeguarding risks associated with their entry.

Where the Academic Registrar and Secretary considers that there is a need to convene a pre-matriculation risk assessment panel (see section 6 below), this will normally take place in **mid-August prior to matriculation opening**. This is to ensure that there is time to consider and plan adjustments where these are deemed necessary.

Should an applicant feel that they may fall within this policy and decide to disclose during the Recruitment and Admissions process, the Conservatoire may undertake a risk assessment earlier than mid-August.

#### **1. PREAMBLE**

- 1.1 The Conservatoire takes the safety of all its community seriously. RCS uses a risk assessment process to ensure that applicants coming into the community will be fully able to engage in their studies and work collaboratively with their cohorts. One area of risk we manage tightly with regards to this is risk assessing offer holders who have a record of prior criminal conduct. This is not to deny the candidate but, where possible to make sure that we can mitigate any risks to both them and the rest of the community.
- 1.2 Disclosures of other forms of misconduct about a specific applicant may also fall under this guidance depending on the nature of the allegations and the risk assessment process that might be required following such allegations.
- 1.3 For the purposes of the Admissions Policy, relevant offences include the following non-exhaustive list of offences and/or the equivalents in other worldwide jurisdictions:
  - Any kind of violence including (but not limited to) threatening behaviour, offences concerning the intention to harm or offences which resulted in actual bodily harm;
  - Offences listed in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 or the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 or the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016;
  - The unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking;
  - Offences involving firearms; Offences involving arson; Offences involving fraud or embezzlement;
  - Offences involving theft;
  - Offences listed in the Terrorism Act 2006;
  - Offences listed in Schedule 1 to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007;

- Offences listed in the Bribery Act 2010;
- Offences listed in the Criminal Finances Act 2017;
- Offences listed in the Computer Misuse Act 1990. 5.7.6.

1.4 Any information received from declarations will be used to undertake a risk assessment to understand if any mitigating measures need to be put in place during the period of the student's studies.

1.5 This guidance sets out clearly how and when we progress with such risk assessment procedures.

1.6 Applicants and offer holders are not formally members of the RCS community and under no contractual or legal obligation with respect to RCS's regulations, policies, and procedures as they relate to students who have formally enrolled in the institution.

1.7 Applicants and offer holders, retain certain rights, including those regulated by consumer law pertaining to higher education, including but not limited to a fair and transparent application process.

1.8 Offer holders who have accepted their offer are considered as having entered into a mutual relationship with RCS where they expect to enrol and we expect them to enrol. These expectations are held in good faith.

## 2. BASIS OF ADMISSION

2.1 RCS takes all applications on merit, assessing them, through audition, portfolio and interview, as appropriate, without prejudice and without undue influence of information which has no material bearing on the application.

2.2 This obligation means:

- RCS *cannot* require that an application be withdrawn nor can it *reject* an application as a consequence of an allegation of misconduct.
- RCS may only decline to give consideration to an application as a consequence of risk assessment, in which case, full a rationale will be given.
- Likewise, if the application process has concluded, and an offer has been made, RCS *cannot* withdraw that offer, except as a consequence of risk assessment, in which case, full rationale will be given.
- Where an **offer has been accepted**, RCS cannot rescind the offer, **except** in a situation where it identifies, as part of a formal risk assessment process, that the good faith basis of the mutual relationship has in some way been undermined and that trust in the applicant is below a standard that we would expect for someone to join the community.

2.3 RCS is obliged to consider the impact of any decision to admit an applicant/offer holder to its community. In this RCS, bases its offers on trust. The principles underpinning this trust and any action by RCS where a disclosure of prior misconduct has been received about an applicant or offer holder are:



- 2.3.1 **Community safeguarding** - includes the requirement to consider the impact of any outcome decision on students and staff, bearing in mind that RCS is an education establishment for children and young adults as well as a higher education institution;
- 2.3.2 **Community reputation** - includes the requirement to consider the impact of any outcome decision on the reputation of the RCS, the responsibility for which sits with the Board of Governors.

2.4 As part of due diligence prior to enrolment, there are circumstances in which RCS may undertake a process of risk assessment. These circumstances are normally initiated because the institution has reason to believe that:

- 2.4.1 There has been dishonesty or with-holding of relevant information on the part of the applicant or offer-holder during the recruitment and admissions process;
- 2.4.2 There is reason to believe that admission to the Conservatoire places risk on the RCS in terms of its commitment to a sense of mutual trust within and across its community of staff and students and/ or external reputation.

### **3. DEFINITIONS OF MISCONDUCT PERTAINING TO THIS GUIDANCE**

An alleged act will be regarded as misconduct which undermines our trust in an applicant, and therefore the subject of this procedure:

- 3.1 if it constitutes or is likely to constitute improper interference with the proper functioning and activities of the Conservatoire; or
- 3.2 if it in any way interferes with, or is likely to interfere with the work, study, or life of members of the Conservatoire; or
- 3.3 if it damages or is likely to damage the reputation of the Conservatoire.

### **4. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING APPLICANT/ OFFER HOLDER RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The Conservatoire upholds the following principles for risk assessment relating to applicants/offer holders:

- to work from a position of sensitivity and duty of care for all parties;
- to maintain, where possible, confidentiality;
- to safeguard all parties involved from harm, including risk of harm;
- to ensure procedures are able to manage proportionality;
- to base judgements on balance of probability.

## 5. PROCEDURES

### **Receipt of Allegation**

5.1 On receipt of an allegation of prior misconduct against an applicant or offer holder a Risk Assessment will be instigated. The Academic Registrar and Secretary will lead the risk assessment and will establish a **Risk Assessment Panel**.

### **Allegations which may also be a criminal offence**

5.2 The Conservatoire expects that allegations of a criminal offence will previously have been reported to the police and that where available, the outcome of that is included in any application made to one of our programmes.

5.3 As part of the Risk Assessment process, RCS reserves the right to forward any allegations of potential criminal activity to the authorities, if risk assessment concludes that this is necessary or desirable.

5.4 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places a statutory duty on educational establishments to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. A child is anyone under the age of 18. Allegations relevant to this statutory duty will be reported to the police.

### **Verifying disclosures of misconduct**

5.5 RCS recognises that people who report disclosures of misconduct do so from a place of good intention and desire to protect the community of the Conservatoire. However, RCS cannot accept an allegation of misconduct entirely based on a single anonymous report.

5.6 The identity of individuals who make allegations against others will be kept confidential to the extent that this may be practical. However, those accused of misconduct have the right to answer, which in most cases will mean that the identity of those making the allegation will be made known to the accused.

5.7 Following any disclosure of prior misconduct to RCS, the Academic Registrar and Secretary will undertake an investigation to ascertain the veracity of the disclosure. This will include but is not limited to:

- Checking applicant references;
- Due diligence checks including requesting further references where the available reference is considered inadequate;
- Asking for additional witness statements.

### **Impact of non-disclosure by an applicant at application/ acceptance of an offer**

5.8 Whilst the RCS recognises an applicant's right to privacy, not disclosing prior misconduct that might also constitute a crime for which an applicant/offer holder is under police investigation may be considered a breach of trust and will be taken seriously as part of any risk assessment.

5.9 This is particularly the case for the following forms of misconduct:

- (a) bullying, sexual harassment, sexual assault, online harassment, hate crimes, hate incidents, stalking or discrimination related to any of the following:

- race, nationality and/or culture
  - religion and/or belief (for example, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism)
  - gender and Gender Identity (for example, misogynistic abuse, transphobia)
  - sexual orientation (for example, homophobia, biphobia)
  - disability including learning disabilities, mental health, physical disabilities
  - age
- (b) possession or use of drugs which are prohibited in law; and
- (c) falsification and/or misrepresentation of any aspect of an application to RCS, including personal information, personal experience, qualifications and references.

5.10 In addition to the above, any allegation relating to potential criminal activity (of any nature) may be considered to be misconduct. However, RCS will neither investigate alleged criminal activity, which ought properly to be reported to the authorities, nor will RCS discriminate against applicants within the application and offer process who have previously discharged convictions. Allegations of this nature may still be subject to risk assessment within this procedure.

## 6. RISK ASSESSMENT PANEL

6.1 The Panel shall comprise:

- Deputy Principal
- Director of Human Resources
- The Academic Registrar and Secretary (or nominee)
- The President of the Students' Union
- A member of academic staff (normally, the Course Leader or Study Area Leader of the applicant)

### Consideration of Allegation and Evidence

6.2 The Panel will first consider the nature of the allegation and the evidence submitted. If sufficient evidence is presented, it may choose to make its decision based solely on the nature of the allegation and that evidence;

6.3 If evidence is inconclusive, or if the Panel considers it appropriate, it may invite further oral evidence, by means of meetings with those making an allegation, and the subject of that allegation.

6.4 The Panel will be mindful of, and will give consideration to such policies and procedures of RCS which may have a bearing on the case, including but not limited to **Admissions Policies, the Safeguarding Policy, and the Prevent Policy.**

### Conduct of Evidential Meetings

6.5 Where meetings have been arranged, they may be with the whole Panel or with select members of the Panel, but a minimum of two, one of whom will record the meeting in writing.

6.6 Students and applicants/offer holders invited to such meetings are permitted to be accompanied to the meeting, in a non-legal capacity. Applicants and offer holders who are

under the age of 18 at the time of the meetings will be invited to be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or supporting adult.

6.7 A note of the meeting will be made and will be shared with the participants who will be asked to agree its accuracy, in writing.

### **Issues for Risk Assessment**

6.8 The Risk Assessment Panel will consider the following substantial matters:

- Whether, in light of all evidence submitted and collated, the allegation of misconduct is proven or is otherwise credible on the balance of probability;
- Whether, in light of the above, the issue has a bearing on the studentship of the subject of the allegation, the studentship of another member of RCS, the general delivery of a course or aspect of a course, and/or the reputation of RCS.
- Whether any decision previously taken with respect to an application or offer should be reviewed.

### **Outcomes Available to the Risk Assessment Panel**

6.2 The following outcomes are available to the Risk Assessment Panel, which will record both its decision and a full rationale for its findings (– proforma):

- (a) That the allegation is not proven or is not credible and that the application may proceed;
- (b) That the allegation is proven or is sufficiently credible, but that it has no material bearing on the studentship of the applicant, of other members of RCS, on the delivery of the course or on the reputation of RCS and that consequently the application may proceed;
- (c) That the allegation is proven or is sufficiently credible and that it has a material bearing on the studentship of the applicant, of other members of RCS, on the delivery of the course or on the reputation of RCS to such an extent that it is unreasonable to admit the applicant.

6.10 In the event of the Panel determining above, the Panel shall further consider:

- (a) Any action which may be taken to mitigate against the impact of the allegation, such as reasonable adjustment to the course or its delivery, or other aspects of the student experience at RCS and would facilitate permitting an application to proceed; or
- (b) That no action presents itself to mitigate against the impact of the allegation, in which case it will recommend to RCS that the application cannot proceed. If an offer has been made, it will be rescinded.

## **7. INFORMING PARTIES OF THE OUTCOME AND RIGHT OF APPEAL**

7.1 The applicant against whom the allegation has been made will be informed in writing of the outcome of the Risk Assessment and the recommendation of the Panel, normally within 40 working days. A full rationale for the outcome decision shall be given.

7.2 Where the allegation has been made and has been considered with 40 working days of the first day of the Academic Year (or other first date of registration), the applicant will receive an interim outcome which suspends the invitation to register as a full-time student, and without other prejudice, will not be permitted to embark on the course until the Risk Assessment has been completed.

7.3 Where the Risk Assessment Panel has recommended proceeding with the application, but with mitigation, the applicant will be invited to accept or decline the basis of that mitigation (see also right of appeal below).

7.4 Where the Risk Assessment Panel has recommended that the application cannot proceed, or that an offer be rescinded, the applicant shall retain the right of appeal, but may not register as a student if the course begins during the period of appeal.

#### **Right of Appeal**

7.5 An applicant who is unsatisfied with the decision of the Risk Assessment Panel may appeal in writing to the Principal, within 28 days of communication of the Risk Assessment decision. The Letter of Appeal may address any matters of fact or of interpretation.

7.6 The Principal will consider the Appeal together with one other member of the Senior Management Team not previously involved in the case. With respect to the Appeal, the decision of the Principal is final.

7.7 The student, member of staff or member of the public who first made the allegation of misconduct will be informed of the outcome of the Risk Assessment (6.9 above) but will not be informed of the rationale nor will any evidence presented by other parties be shared. However, in the event that the application is to proceed or proceed with mitigation, RCS will also offer support to any students or staff who may perceive themselves to have been affected by the decision.

## APPENDIX F

### Student Tuition Fees Terms, Conditions, And Refund Statement

To be read in conjunction with section 6.10-6.18 of **Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules** (known as the Regulations). This statement both includes the section on tuition fees in the Admissions Policy (Terms & Conditions, section 7) and clarifies the rules outlined in summary in the **Regulations** (particularly section 6.10)

#### TUITION FEES

1. Tuition fees are reviewed annually and increase from year to year.
2. The tuition fees for all courses are published on the RCS website.
3. You are liable for the full payment of tuition fees for your course including accepting responsibility for securing any sponsorship, and payment thereof, or reduction in fees due to recognition of prior learning.
4. If you are sponsored for your studies, you must provide Student Finance with proof of sponsorship at the start of each academic year.
5. You are responsible for notifying RCS should there be any change to the arrangement for the payment of your tuition fees for your course.
6. By accepting RCS's offer of a place, you agree to the assessment of your fee status as stated in your offer letter.
7. At matriculation, if you have not paid your tuition fees or set up a payment plan by the due date, RCS will refuse to allow you to matriculate on your chosen programme of study and terminate your enrolment and this Contract.
8. International students are required to pay a deposit to secure the offer as advised at point of offer and should do so by the stated deadline.

#### Deposit refunds/wavers

- If a student has paid a Deposit, a refund of for this Deposit will be granted where application for a Student Visa is refused (documentary evidence of refusal will be required).
- However, no refund will apply where:
  - a) a visa application is refused due to submission of fraudulent documents/deception, or
  - b) incomplete or incorrect information has been provided as part of the admissions process.
- US Federal Loan recipients that are borrowing full Cost of Attendance can request to have their tuition fee deposit waved.
- You are responsible for your own living expenses throughout the duration of the course. If you are an international student, it may be a requirement of your visa to ensure that you have sufficient financial resource to support yourself throughout your studies.
- Continued non-payment of tuition fees will result in your account being passed to an external debt collection agency.

#### TUITION FEE REFUNDS (For self-funding fee students)

##### Eligibility and coverage

- Students who may be paid a refund under this statement must:
  - a) Be a matriculated student of the Conservatoire.
  - b) Have paid the tuition fees themselves. Tuition fees should not be paid by someone other than the matriculated student (for example a third party such as a funding body or sponsor). Typically, such students are classified as "self-funding".

- c) Must not be a student under a partnership or collaboration agreement.
  - d) Have or be in the process of formally withdrawing from their programme.
- This policy covers any Student who voluntarily applies for withdrawal, suspends indefinitely, or otherwise discontinues their studies on their academic programme after they have matriculated.
  - This policy relates to refunds of tuition fees only and does not apply to refunds of any other costs and/or expenses associated with a student’s academic programme including but not limited to accommodation fees, travel expenses and/or other fees associated with the course.
  - This policy only applies where a student has paid tuition fees as a lump sum to the Conservatoire. If a student pays in instalments, then the refund will be calculated in proportion to the amount paid in accordance with the percentages narrated below. If the student withdraws on or after the commencement of term 2, the full amount due under any instalment plan will be payable.
  - Except as provided in this statement, payments are non-refundable including fees and other charges.

**Application for discretionary partial refund:**

- Self-funded students who **officially withdraw** from the Conservatoire during the session may apply to the **Academic Registrar and Secretary** for a partial refund of tuition fees paid. To do this, a student must apply by email to [studentfinance@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:studentfinance@rcs.ac.uk). A response will be made as soon as practical and normally within 10 working days.

**Maximum Refund Amounts following early withdrawal**

<p><b>Undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes</b></p>	<p><b>Programmes of 45 weeks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MA Music (all specialisms)</li> <li>• MEd L&amp;T</li> <li>• MA Musical Theatre and Musical Directing</li> <li>• MA/MFA Classical and Contemporary Text</li> </ul>
<p>The maximum amounts which may be refunded to a student following <u>early withdrawal</u> are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the beginning of a programme of study: for a withdrawal within 28 days of the start of the session, a student can receive a tuition fee refund of 90%.</li> <li>• During the academic session:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) For a withdrawal after 28 days of the start of the session, but at or before the end of the first term, a student can receive a tuition fee refund of 66% (two thirds);</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The maximum amounts which may be refunded to a student following early withdrawal from 45 week programmes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the beginning of a programme of study: for a withdrawal within 28 days of the start of the Session, a student can receive a tuition fee refund of 90%.</li> <li>• During the academic session             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) For a withdrawal after 28 days of the start of the Session, but at or before the end of the first term, a student can receive a tuition fee refund of 75% (three quarters) of the fee</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>b) For a withdrawal after the end of the first term but on or before the end of the second term, a student can receive a tuition fee refund of 33% (one third);</p> <p>c) There are <u>no</u> tuition fee refunds following a withdrawal after the second term.</p>	<p>b) For a withdrawal after the end of the first term but on or before the end of the second term, a student can receive a tuition fee refund of 50% (half) of the fee;</p> <p>c) For a withdrawal after the end of the second term but on or before the end of the third term, a student can receive a tuition fee refund of 25% (one quarter) of the fee;</p> <p>d) There are <u>no</u> tuition fee refunds following a withdrawal after the third term.</p>
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### Students on suspension:

- Students granted a suspension on medical or other grounds are due to pay tuition fees from the start of the Academic year up to the date of suspension. Fees owed will not be actively pursued during the period of suspension.

### International students

- The following is extra information relevant for International Students (those in receipt of a CAS).

**The University retains the right to withhold tuition fee refunds until such time as it has evidence that an International Student has returned to their home country or been granted a new period of leave by the Home Office (documentary evidence may be required).**

Please send confirmation of this to: [international@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:international@rcs.ac.uk)

### Exclusions

- The following circumstances (which are non-exhaustive) will not qualify for a tuition fee refund:
  1. No tuition fee refund will be provided where the student is in breach of the Conservatoire's policies and procedures and is disciplined by the Conservatoire by being withdrawn from their academic programme or in serious cases has their studies terminated.
  2. No tuition fee refund will be provided for Temporary Withdrawals. Students who temporarily withdraw their studies remain liable to pay any outstanding fees due to the Conservatoire and re-enrolment will not be permitted until outstanding fees have been paid. If a temporarily withdrawn student decides to fully withdraw, the temporary withdrawal date will be effective as the full withdrawal date.
  3. No tuition fee refund will be provided to research students who seek a suspension from their studies.
  4. No tuition fee refund will be provided where a student has been awarded an alternative award or qualification. For example, a Masters student who for reasons of academic progression graduates with an alternative Postgraduate award.
  5. No tuition fee refund will be provided where the student defers a year voluntarily through no fault of the Conservatoire but at the Conservatoire's discretion the payment may be paid to account for the following year.



6. No tuition fee refund will be provided where a student completes the academic programme earlier than advertised or expected. For example, an early submission of a thesis.

**Additional terms and conditions**

- The following terms will apply to payments of any refund of tuition fees made under this policy:
  1. No refunds are applicable for any previous or part month's payments should a student be withdrawn from the Conservatoire due to non-payment of fees.
  2. Any credit balance pertaining to tuition fees (or if applicable deposit or other balance) will be used to offset any debt on the student's account, thereafter a refund will be issued.
  3. Approved refunds will strictly be paid in the same method and to the same account as the money was originally received. This is to comply with Money Laundering Regulations 2017. Evidence of payment and copy bank statement will be required to verify details.
  4. Refunds will be calculated and issued in UK Pounds Sterling. In all cases, the risk stemming from currency fluctuations/conversions will be borne by the student.
  5. Refunds will not be made in cash.
  6. Refunds will be made as soon as practically possible and normally be processed within 28 working days from the date of approval of the refund.

## APPENDIX G

### Withdrawal and suspension of studies statement

To be read in conjunction with the **Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules** (known as the **Regulations**).

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy is to ensure that the RCS is informed by students, in a timely fashion, of their wish to withdraw or to suspend their studies.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the current Terms and Conditions of the relevant programme. All outstanding fees, including Library fees, have to be paid and all outstanding items have to be returned to Library at withdrawal or suspension.

#### 2. PROCEDURES

The key people involved in a withdrawal/ suspension are the Programme Lead and/or Director of School, the Deputy Registrar (Student Experience), the Assistant Registrar (Student Records), and the Finance Assistant (Finance Dept).

##### **Student-led withdrawal/ suspension of studies (official withdrawal)**

If a student is intended to withdraw or suspend the procedure outlined in Table 1 must be followed.

<p>On considering a possible withdrawal or suspension, students <b>must</b> meet with their <b>Programme Lead</b> and/or Director of School to discuss their intention.</p>	<p>In the process of considering withdrawal or suspension, the student is advised to contact the <b>Deputy Registrar (Student Experience)</b>, should they require any additional support prior to making the decision.</p>
<p>Following this discussion, should the student continue to wish to withdraw and suspend, their Programme Lead and/or Director of School will notify the <b>Assistant Registrar (Student Records)</b>.</p>	
<p>Once the Assistant Registrar (Student Records) has confirmed withdrawal or suspension, the Conservatoire's <b>Finance Department</b> in conjunction with the <b>Deputy Registrar (Student Experience)</b> will determine student's tuition fee liability using the date that the Assistant Registrar (Student Records) is notified.</p> <p>They will also determine, if appropriate, whether or not the student is entitled to any refund, using the <b>Tuition Fee Terms, Conditions and Refund Statement</b> to direct their decision.</p>	

Table 1 Student-led withdrawal or suspension process

The date when the relevant notification is received by the Assistant Registrar (Student Records) will determine the student's fee liability and whether or not a full or partial refund of the tuition fee is possible.

Students will be ultimately liable for all tuition fees even if a third party is paying a part or the full amount.

**Non-compliance with the student-led procedure (Unofficial withdrawal)**

If a student who does not continue with their studies fail to comply with this procedure and are thus registered as having unauthorised absences, the next Progress Board or the Board of Examiners (whichever occurs first) will agree termination of studies on academic grounds.

The student who has their studies terminated by the Progress Board/Board of Examiners, has seven days to request a revocation of this termination. After seven days, if no request has been received, the Assistant Registrar (Student Records) will formally withdraw the student.

Termination of Studies will be notified via the student facing **Student Records System** under the **Student Outcomes** (formerly Student Contract) tab.

If students have their programme terminated by the relevant Board, there is no refund of tuition fees.

**Temporarily Withdrawn Students (those on a suspension of studies)**

Those students who temporarily withdraw or are withdrawn from a programme of study in good standing and with the permission of the Director of School/Directorate, must confirm in writing their intention to re-commence their studies.

All suspended students will be contacted prior to the end of the academic year in which they have suspended their studies.

Students who are unable to meet the requirements of the programme may be required to suspend their studies. These students must confirm in writing their intention to re-commence their studies. All suspended students will be contacted prior to the end of the academic year in which they have suspended their studies.

If a student's suspension has been approved on the basis of medical evidence then, prior to re-commencement of their programme, the student will be required to submit a medical report to the Deputy Registrar which confirms that they are medically fit to resume their programme.

Additionally, a student will be required to re-audition/interview prior to re-commencement of their programme in order that an assessment of their skills and needs might be made.

If a student's suspension has been approved on other grounds then, prior to re-commencement of their programme, the student will be required to re-audition/interview prior to re-commencement of their programme in order that an assessment of their skills and needs might be made.

Students who have not completed examinations and who are either eligible or permitted to sit outstanding degree examinations must confirm to the Director of the appropriate School/Directorate their intention to do so not less than six weeks before their examination date.

The maximum period allowed for the completion of a programme of study shall normally be the normal duration of the programme of study plus two years.

#### **International Students (Tier 4/ Student Route)**

Any Tier 4 or Student Route student who withdraws from or suspends their studies will be reported to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) as having ceased their studies.

This will be done within ten working days of the decision being formally noted and as a result the Conservatoire's sponsorship of the student will end.

The student will be issued with a curtailment notice by the Home Office which will state the date by which they need to leave the UK (usually sixty days from the reported date of their suspension of studies).

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

#### **Suspension of Study**

A suspension of study is a temporary interruption in a student's programme of study. It refers to the specific time period during a programme of study when a student is not in attendance. This is a temporary period of time which a student has requested with the intention to return or complete their programme. Students returning from a suspension of study are not required to re-apply for admission.

#### **Official Withdrawal**

A withdrawal refers to a student's intention to permanently terminate studies at the RCS with no expectation of return.

#### **Unofficial Withdrawal**

An unofficial withdrawal is one where the RCS has not received notice from the student that the student has ceased or will cease attending the RCS.