



Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland

Mainstreaming Equality Report 2025

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MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY REPORT 2025

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Our Purpose and Values

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (henceforth referred to as the Conservatoire) is a national and international centre of excellence for the performing arts, with a student and staff community from more than 60 countries. We are regarded as world-leading and have ranked consistently in the global top 10 of the prestigious QS World Rankings for performing arts education. Through our innovative curriculum, we offer a highly specialised education in and across the art forms of music, drama, dance, film, production, and education, as well as through our world-leading research.

We recognise the power and potential we have through our learning, teaching and our art-making to contribute to achieving greater equity and inclusion in society through the arts. We are aware of our responsibilities and continue to listen, learn and respond as we develop our practical understanding of anti-racism as well as the intersectionality of this work with so many other areas of institutional responsibility, including work on gender-based violence, disability and economic disadvantage.

The current Strategic Plan¹, which will take us to 2030, recognises the central importance of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in defining the future of the institution and the creative industries we can help to innovate. It has never been more important for individual artists, communities and institutions such as our own to engage with diverse ways of thinking and practising, to enable the performing arts and the artists and creative producers within them to thrive and drive positive change.

At the Conservatoire, we are committed to these ambitions and are on a journey to understanding and responding to the central importance of equality, diversity and inclusion in defining our future as an institution as well as that of the emerging artists who train here.

Our focus and commitment are to embed, both in culture and values and in process, our aspirations for equality, diversity and inclusion. Our goal continues to be to advance our understanding while providing a solid platform for ambitious work we envisage, both in terms of organisational infrastructure and the student and staff experience here at RCS now and in the future.

1.2 Legal Background

Under the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) introduced in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012², the Conservatoire is required to report on how it is mainstreaming equality. The General Duty of the Equality Act 2010 requires all public authorities, including higher education institutions, to have due regard in the exercise of their functions to the need to:

¹ [RCS-STRATEGY-2030-1.pdf](#)

² [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)

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- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, considering the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics.
 - Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Conservatoire is also required to meet the Specific Duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty, which require us to:

- Report on our progress on mainstreaming the General Duty into all functions.
- Develop and publish a set of equality outcomes that cover all protected characteristics. Please read our **Equality Outcomes 2025-2029** which provides details of our new equality outcomes for the next four years, together with a review of our achievements and learning points arising out of our Equality Outcomes 2021-2025.
- Assess the impact of all our policies and practices against the needs of the General Duty.
- Gather and use information on employees and students in a way that advances the General Duty.
- Publish gender pay gap information and occupational segregation information in terms of gender, disability and race. View our **Equal Pay Review 2025**.
- Publish our policy on equal pay in terms of gender, disability and race. Our **Equal Pay Statement** can be viewed at the front of our Equal Pay Review 2025.
- Pay due regard to the General Duty in terms of the procurement of specified goods and services.
- Publish all information in accessible ways.

This report meets the first of these specific duties, in that it reports on progress made on the mainstreaming of equality and diversity into all our activities and functions.

1.3 Evidence Base – information gathering and action learning

In preparing this report, we refer to the ‘relevant protected characteristics’ as defined in the Equality Act (2010). We also consider our Scottish context under the Fairer Scotland Duty³ by including care experienced and estranged students and those from lower socio-economic background (**SIMD20 postcode**).

As part of evidence gathering, we continually involve staff and students to conduct monitoring and evaluation exercises on an anonymous basis on all our activities and practices.

³ [The Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance for Public Bodies - Easy Read Version - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-duty-guidance-for-public-bodies/easy-read-version/pages/1.aspx)

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We also employ an action learning approach in this process, which enables us to reflect our staff and students' experiences and aspirations for equality and to identify any shortcomings and barriers to staff and student participation and inclusion. We use the generated insights as learning points to improve the teaching-learning experience and practice of staff and students, programme development and employment relations. Additionally, we utilise the knowledge gained to strengthen the robustness of subsequent data collection on each of the protected characteristics to enable us to improve our mainstreaming equality reporting.

Our data gathering include:

- **Curriculum reviews**, alongside module and programme evaluation that assess the relevance, effectiveness and alignment of our pedagogic, performing and production arts, and research practices to our equality and non-discrimination values and goals.
- **Survey results** on equality specific themes among staff and students relating to their experiences within the workplace and in the teaching-learning, performing, production, and research environments.
- **Focus group consultations** among staff and students on policies, strategies, procedures and practices to identify opportunities to improve the promotion of equality, anti-discrimination and inclusion.
- **Feedback** from staff and students participating in forums, committees, meetings, and teaching-learning activities.
- **Audience analysis** of RCS performances and productions and other events (as well as those of others hosted in RCS venues) in relation to the participation of protected characteristics.
- **Statistical analysis** of staff and student data on profiles, recruitment and retention, and pay gaps – **see sections 3.0 and 4.0.**

Additional evidence in support of these data collection exercises that inform our reporting is presented in sections of and in the Appendices to this report.

2.0 MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY: structures, processes and practices

Through this mainstreaming equality reporting process, we lay out the ways we embed equality, diversity and inclusion in our practices and how we achieve our equality outcomes. It also provides some key data on the diversity of our staff, students and governors. Additionally, we reflect upon the intersectionality of experiences and aspirations of protected characteristics within the Conservatoire and identify any barriers to participation and inclusion, and opportunities for improvement.

2.1 EDI Governance and Strategic Planning

The subject of equality, diversity and inclusion continues to be actively considered and discussed at every level of the Conservatoire. It is a regular agenda item at key meetings and committees, including School Management Meetings, Conservatoire Senior Management Team, the People and Culture Committee, and the Board of Governors meetings:

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- **The Board of Governors** – It identifies a board member as an Equality Champion. EDI features in every Board meeting, giving Board members visibility of equality issues and good practice and ensuring that they have the opportunity to question the Conservatoire on EDI issues.

Since 2019, we have continued to meet our Board's objective of achieving a minimum representation of 40% for either gender amongst Lay Governors. There are currently 6 female Lay Governors and 8 male Lay Governors, with a female as Chair. Two identified as either BPOC⁴ or having an ethnicity that is not White. Half (7) of our Board membership did not disclose their ethnicity, with a similar number (7) also not disclosing in each of the category of disabled and sexual orientation status.

Board of Governors data

Gender	No	Ethnicity	No	Disability Status	No
Male	8	Not known	7	Not disabled	7
Female	6	Other White background	1	Not known	7
Grand Total	14	White - Scottish	5	Grand Total	14
		White and Black African	1		
		Grand Total	14		
Sexual Orientation	No	Religion or Belief	No	Age	No
Heterosexual	7	Agnostic	2	30 - 39	1
Not known	7	Atheist	1	40 - 49	1
Grand Total	14	Christian - Church of Scotland	2	50 - 59	3
		No religion	2	60+	9
		Not known	7	Grand Total	14
		Grand Total	14		

- **The Conservatoire Senior Management Team (CSMT)** - are members of the Equality and Diversity Forum, a group of committed and passionate staff and students who meet four times a year to progress all matters relating to equality, diversity, access and inclusion. Members of the Conservatoire Senior Management Team have also continued to champion equality by participating in activities such as the Conservatoire's "It Gets Better" video, which provides hope and inspiration to young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary and/or queer. A second iteration of this promotional and awareness raising video featured both staff and students who identify as transgender, with the Principal providing the preface to the video to emphasise the importance he personally places upon diversity and inclusion within and beyond the Conservatoire.
- **People and Culture Committee** - This group has been two years in existence and continues to oversee the development of our people strategies across the Conservatoire. It has a specific focus on the employee and student life cycle. The committee provides quarterly report to the Board of Governors which includes EDI activities, and oversees and monitors agreed performance indicators in terms of recruitment, development, absences, and staff health, safety and wellbeing – including review of:

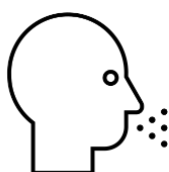
- Staff turnover statistics
- EDI statistics and statutory / regulatory reports

⁴ A note on terminology: The term BPOC (Black and People of Colour) has been used throughout this report, in place of terms such as Black and minority ethnic, following consultation with the Black Union, our students and staff.

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- Dignity at the Conservatoire survey / other staff survey data
- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Forum** - The Principal chairs the quarterly meetings of this forum, which is very active and brings together staff and students to discuss and review all matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Deputy Principal and Director of Human Resources, together with other members of the Conservatoire Senior Management Team, are also regular attendees of the forum. The work of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Forum oversees initiatives including the *Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Creative Fund* each year. The Forum also provides a focus for consultation with staff and students, both with and without protected characteristics, on the development and implementation of policies and actions that affect us all.

2.2 Widening Access for Protected Characteristics



'If you live in an area where there's barriers that means it's a bit more difficult to get opportunities to go where you want to go in life, so WACI/Transitions can bridge that gap for you.'
[BPOC student]

Our commitment to fair access is strongly aligned to the Scottish Government's Commission on Widening Access ([COWA](#)), helping us to take tangible actions to make access to higher education fairer. We employ a broad range of fair and widening access approaches and programmes within the Conservatoire to advance the diversity of our studentship and equality of opportunity for disadvantaged groups throughout the student lifecycle. These programmes help us address issues of access, retention and success for protected groups:

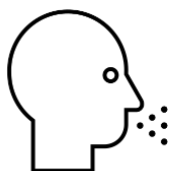
- Our **Fair Access** award-winning performing arts initiative, [Transitions](#) continues to facilitate access for everyone with creative potential to train in performing and production arts at the Conservatoire regardless of their background. Through this programme we specifically target people without an undergraduate degree, but especially those aged 16-21 who are one or more of the following:
 - Living in a SIMD20 postcode
 - Care experienced.
 - Estranged from parents or carers with no support.
 - A refugee.
 - Black and/or a Person of Colour (BPOC⁵) and living in a SIMD20/40 postcode.
 - Deaf and living at an SIMD20/40 postcode.
 - Living in a remote or rural area and SIMD20/40 postcode.

[Transitions](#) students receive:

- Funded tuition on part-time programmes in your chosen art form through RCS Junior Conservatoire or RCS Short Courses

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- Masterclasses, workshops and creative conversations with some of Scotland's leading artists
 - Coaching to identify personal goals
 - Performance trips
 - Personal development experiences and skill-building workshops
 - Collaborative performance opportunities
 - Financial support towards the costs of attending activity at RCS
 - Support with applications, auditions and interviews and, where an offer is made, support into degree programme at RCS.
- The **Musical Theatre** department together with the Fair Access and Recruitment teams have been working on the [Get Into Musical Theatre](#) initiative. This is a 24-week course over three terms designed to encourage specific groups, namely, Black and People of Colour (BPOC), those from rural regions, and SIMD20 to study in the performing arts including musical theatre. So far, 10 young people aged 14-20, with seven of these identifying as BPOC and three who identify as rural have participated in this initiative. The initiative is also an avenue for eliciting the views on anti-racism and inclusive practices among current students in the BA musical theatre programme.

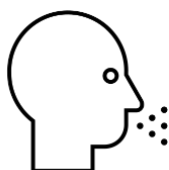


'This girl came up to me at my school awards ceremony and mentioned that she had gotten into Juniors Musical theatre, and she wanted to tell me that I was the reason she'd gone for it. That's someone who is going into the next chapter of their life, and I've had some part to play in that.'

[SIMD20 Ambassador]

- Another **Fair Access** initiative, "Come and Try" is a series of activities that is organised throughout the academic year. It targets pupils and teachers that the Conservatoire does not normally connect with. It also offers teachers working with young people in areas of multiple deprivation the opportunity to bring their pupils into the Conservatoire to learn about some of the degree programmes being offered. Additionally, it provides professional development opportunity for secondary school teachers with an interest in the performing and production arts. In all, masterclasses, workshops, residencies, performance trips and taster sessions and conversations have been delivered to 419 participants.
- The **Composition department's** staff and students have also been engaging with creative activities for young people around Scotland. This has helped the department to identify a number of potential applicants with diverse backgrounds, so that they can be provided with additional support where this might be required.

—



'My teachers at school didn't tell me about the RCS. They didn't tell me about Transitions or WACI. When I applied for the course [BA Composition] they said, 'it's very hard to get into' they obviously didn't think I had a chance.'

[SIMD20 participating student & Access Ambassador]

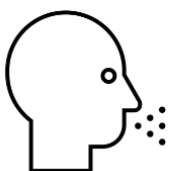
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Resultantly, the department have received applications from a number of schools across Scotland from which they have not previously had applicants.

2.3 External Engagements and Collaborations

We forge collaborative partnerships with performing arts organisations both in HE and creative industry sectors to identify and share insights to help us address barriers that disadvantaged certain groups including those relating to socio-economic status, disability and race. This is especially in areas where such groups' access to opportunities to pursue performing arts training and career pathways are likely to be disproportionately challenging.

Through collaborations we have been able to develop mentoring and networking opportunities, share resources, expertise and best practice to address the needs and aspirations for equality of our learners including those with protected characteristics -



'I'll be able to tell them more about career opportunities in this area that they probably don't know exist and about Fair Access/Transitions.' Another said, *'Session was great! Will definitely look into WACI and Transitions opportunities for pupils.'*
[participating teacher]

Examples include:

- **The Widening Access to the Creative Industries (WACI)** initiative continues to offer tailored support to secondary school pupils in participating schools who are interested in the performing and production arts –



'I'd always thought, 'Oh, no, it's not realistic. I can't'... but even just being in the building, just like thinking I could actually end up going here, and it could all be possible, and meeting people who are in the industry. I feel this has already given me a much more stable pathway into the future that makes sense. I kind of have a better idea how to get into things and how to go about getting into the industry.'
[participating BPOC student]

WACI is funded by the [Scottish Funding Council](#) and offers advice, guidance and support in line with the [National Schools Programme](#) (NSP). Our funding means we can provide free training for Scottish widening access people aged 15 – 19 who wish to pursue the [performing and production arts](#) at college, university or conservatoire level, literally widening access to the creative industries. Its 'Come & Try' sessions offer out of school hours online and community-based in-person options to suit the needs of young learners. The sessions include:

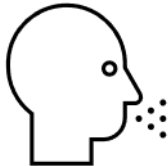
- [Short Courses](#)
- [Music, Film and Theatre Trips](#)
- [Mentoring](#)
- [Fair Access Expo](#)
- [Summer School Scholarships](#)

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- Masterclasses
- Meet The Maker

The programme also provides additional support to young adult learners, and those from a lower socio-economic, care experienced, refugee or other protected characteristics wishing to study at the Conservatoire. The support includes help with applying and preparing for interviews and auditions -

'I was able to learn what sort of writing methods I could use to put in my personal statement, whilst getting useful feedback from a professional.'
[Student attending prep with applications]

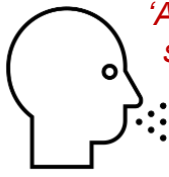


'Getting information from someone who had previously auditioned for a jazz course, and getting tips for the audition was very helpful.'
[Student Attending 1:1 Music Audition Prep]

- Our **Fair Access** and **BA Performance** programmes partnered with Eden Court & Dingwall Academy in the Highlands and St Roch's school in Glasgow to provide learning experiences for **D/deaf and hard of hearing** pupils attending low progression-rural schools. This successful collaboration was shaped by the voices and experiences of participants, artists and gatekeepers.
- The **Fair Access** team delivered the [Get Into](#) outreach series designed to encourage pupils, teachers and community workers to engage with the following artform:
 - **Production**
 - **Singing**
 - **Performance**
 - **Arts with Community**

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Sessions were delivered among pupils and students, teachers and community workers.

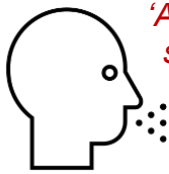


'As my school is aiming to present pupils at Nat 5 level in production skills such as props, this will help me more efficiently teach and support them. They will benefit as they will have opportunities to explore theatre roles outside of acting and not shoehorn them into a role they don't enjoy or want to do.'

[participating teacher]

In 2023/24, the sessions had around 40 participants. More *Get Into* activities have been planned for 2025/26 targeting 40 participants alongside the introduction of a hybrid version of the course for up to 12 of the 40 people across Scotland. The hybrid session is aimed at those who live more than 2 hours away from the Conservatoire and have Fair Access eligible (postcode SIMD20/40 or care experience / estrangement). The *Get Into* provides a pipeline into our new Access courses, BA Arts with Community and other courses across our institution.

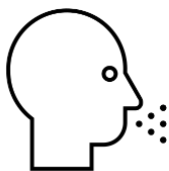
- The **Production** department and the **Fair Access** team delivered the [Get Into Production](#) outreach series designed to encourage pupils, teachers and community workers to engage with the production arts. Sessions were delivered at the conservatoire, Ayr Gaiety and Ayr College reaching 71 pupils and 28 teachers and community workers. More *Get Into* Production activity has been planned in partnership with the Beacon in Inverclyde and Eden Court in Inverness -



'As my school is aiming to present pupils at Nat 5 level in production skills such as props, this will help me more efficiently teach and support them. They will benefit as they will have opportunities to explore theatre roles outside of acting and not shoehorn them into a role they don't enjoy or want to do.'

[participating teacher]

- [Curious About Film](#) is a monthly workshop jointly delivered by the Conservatoire's **Production** department with Film and Television industry professionals through *GMAC Film*. It is targeted at people living in SIMD20 backgrounds, refugees and asylum seekers and BPOC. To date, 39 people aged 16-30 have engaged with these sessions –



'I got great insight into the film field, how people begin their film writing and video editing processes, and how these skills are taught.'

[participating student]

2.4 EDI in the Curriculum

As a performing arts HEI, the core of our work to embed EDI in the curriculum is focussed around incorporating ethical considerations; student voices, experiences and aspirations; anti-racist and decolonial approaches; and a diverse workforce in the teaching-learning, performing and production environments.

Each School delivers a broad range of UG and PG programmes with specific requirements to have bespoke strategies that are aligned with the Conservatoire's commitment to provide an equitable and ethically driven inclusive environment for a diverse range of students and staff.

• Including student voices and aspirations –

- The **School of Stage and Screen (SoSaS)** has its own annually updated Anti-racism strategy and a monthly SoSaS EDI subgroup meeting composed of a selection of heads of programme, permanent SoSaS staff, the Conservatoire EDI team and guest contributors from particular areas of specialism. It also set aside an EDI budget to enhance its ability to engage with practitioners and artists from under-represented groups and to provide events and speakers that can offer additionality to the core programme. The EDI week curated by the **BA Acting** programme is an example of one such initiative.
- The **BA Acting** programme continues to have EDI Student representatives for each year group, which was introduced in the previous reporting period. The representatives liaise with a designated member of staff on students' experiences, concerns, suggestions and aspirations on matters of equality, diversity and inclusion especially in relation to subject content, repertoire and pedagogy. The representatives regularly relay information to and from their peers to the staff team. There is also an anonymous feedback/suggestion/concern form to allow sensitive matters to be expressed confidentially, if needed. This ongoing support mechanism has proven invaluable to both staff and students.
- The **Fair Access** programme holds regular targeted focus groups meetings and consultations with students, potential applicants and organisations working with disadvantaged groups including SIMD 20, Tier 1 schools (nationally), Care Experienced, D/deaf communities, BPOC communities, estranged students and asylum seekers/refugees to get their views. These are fed into developing targeted outcome-driven initiatives, programme reviews and equality and inclusive interventions to enrich the teaching-learning experience.

• Ethical and Inclusive programming –

- In response to a student request for a teaching approach to centre issues of identity, the **MA/MFA Acting/ Directing Classical and Contemporary Text** programme have developed an 'identity informed dramaturgy' as a taught activity. This approach looks at the intersection of the actor's identity and that of the character they might be playing. Doing so, enables an ethically supportive creative process where dramaturgical conversations about possible character identity can be had ('what if this character was trans?', for example). It also enables the sharing of the responsibility for that dramaturgy among everyone so that the burden of additional labour doesn't fall only onto individuals. Additionally, students have the opportunity to apply this teaching

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- approach in many of their programmes directly themselves, rather than working with staff.
- Since August 2023, the Head of Programme for the Contemporary Performance Practice (CPP) programme has introduced inclusive creative practices for their students:
 - ✓ Initiated a system of practical module mentorship which includes BPOC staff. For example, Dr Trent Kim has been mentor to year 3 and 4 students since October 2023 and has also provided EDI specialist workshops in design and lighting for the past two years.
 - ✓ Organised a placement for 3rd year students with Amit Vamanacharya <https://sound-scotland.co.uk/profile/amit-anand-vamanacharya> from September 2023 - December 2023.
 - ✓ Between 2023 and 2025, organised three workshops for 3rd year students, which were delivered by Alyson Woodhouse, an artist who is blind; Muhammad Bin Abdul Karim, a hard of hearing student on BA Performance; and Jamie Rea, an artist who is deaf <https://www.imagine.org.uk/artists/artists-working-with-imagine/jamie-rea/> . led a workshop on creative access and acted as creative access consultant for the Into the New Festival providing students with written feedback for the duration of this module.
 - ✓ Employed practice and lectures to induct students on Dialectical Collaborative Theatre, a methodology to facilitate equity in the rehearsal room and in performance.
 - The **Learning Agreement** system has been reviewed to respond to emerging experiences among staff and students. Recently, it has been updated to allow for the capture of greater detail and to enable clarity on how to support students. It also now allows for support, advice and awareness to be provided to students who are yet to have a formal medical diagnosis.
 - **BA Muscal Theatre** season programming processes continue to allow for more scrutiny and consultation with student groups and production teams, including critical reading and identification of any problematic language, themes, content or casting assumptions. Longer lead-in times through planning allows for interrogation of and consultation around these challenges.
 - **BA Production Arts & Design** and **BA Production Technology & Management** have a skin tone lighting workshop annually for second year BPOC students as paid participants to ensure that they have the knowledge and experience of providing appropriate lighting for all skin tones, which has not always been the case.
 - Additionally, each year, first year students in the **BA Production Arts & Design** and **BA Production Technology & Management** undertake a protected characteristics project. Within this project in small teams, they explore a specific issue within the production arts and how it impacts upon individuals with various protected characteristics. In 2025, two groups chose to do presentations on *Inclusion for disabled performance staff and audiences* and *Inclusive Performance*.
- **Diversifying the teaching staff pool** – All programmes remain committed to engaging and inviting external practitioners from currently under-represented groups to reflect the demographics and needs of our students as artists in training. These visiting guest staff have continued to add depth to the student experience.

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For example, **BA Acting, Musical Theatre, BA Production Arts & Design** and **BA Production Technology & Management** have continued to engage mentors, casting directors, directors, choreographers, movement lecturers, intimacy coordinators, and guest speakers with protected characteristics to deliver training that is anchored and modelled on their lived experiences.

- **Anti-racism and decoloniality programming** – We continue to pursue an inclusive and anti-racist curriculum by initiating decolonial perspectives and approaches in some of our programmes:

- The School of Stage and Screen's **BA Contemporary Performance Practice** has undertaken a curriculum review to introduce Black studies, Black performances and a series of practices (call and response procedures, coolness, sampling) in the programme. In contextual studies, areas such as black feminism and decolonial thought are covered with a series of books and materials (Estream video content) available to students to research and understand these perspectives. The expanded materials add diversity and inclusive perspectives, content, repertoire and practice that were missing such as: Black feminism, gender identity, Black performances, Black studies, Black British artists, decolonial thought, critical race theory, queer theory, gender theory and posthumanism.
- **Musical Theatre** has also broadened its resources through all areas of teaching by including Latinx work within Acting/Greek Theatre modules that promotes non-western dance styles.
- The **Postgraduate learning and teaching** programmes are currently reviewing the dominance of Western-centric research methodologies in the field of teacher education in the arts. Staff members are particularly looking into how the prevailing values and practices of the wider global research community may be suppressing valuable, rich and useful knowledge from non-Western cultures operating with different epistemologies and methodologies. We recognise that any evidence of impact is likely to be gradual, however, we see this as an ongoing line of enquiry.

- **Programme development** – the Conservatoire is responsive to changing trends in the worlds of education and the creative industries, and continues to consult on, grow and develop our offer, tailoring it specifically to cater to the needs of the modern learner. We are also focussed on widening access and advancing equality in opportunities in HE for disadvantaged individuals and groups interested in the performing and production arts.

We have developed the **BA Arts with Communities** programme. This three-year undergraduate degree programme welcomes students interested in using a wide range of artforms in community contexts. This is the only interdisciplinary arts programme in the UK that prepares students for a professional career in a wide variety of formal and informal contexts. The programme is community focussed, upholding strong equality, diversity and inclusion values.

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2.5 EDI in Library Collections

We know that sometimes library users can encounter barriers to access, often due to a disability, learning difference, neurodiversity or a health condition. We are therefore committed to promote equity of access to our spaces and resources as well as to counter contemporary and historic racism in our collection:

- We have created dedicated Library Support Contacts (LSCs) for anyone who might need additional support for any purpose in the library. Support pages on the Portal have been created to direct users to additional services that we offer, which include:
 - RNIB BookShare service
 - Library Induction Video in BSL/Captions/Voiceover
 - Loanable pen reader for text to audio
 - Accessibility software as standard
 - Alternative format service
 - One-to-one support for searching, researching, retrieving items, and using e-resources.
- Our work on increasing diversity within our Library collections and supporting the work in diversifying the curriculum across the Conservatoire is continuing and achievements include:
 - Continuing to support the production of inclusive resource lists: this involves the library team analysing current reading lists to review the dominant voices and narratives in subject areas, and recommending resources, publishers, performers, creators and makers in support of building inclusive collections.
 - The creation of a Zine collection to highlight diverse voices and perspectives. The intention is to create a space for our student and staff community to see themselves within our collection. The collection includes Zines focusing on the performing art disciplines as well as wider curricular areas such as equality, diversity and inclusion, climate change, discipline related sub-cultures, mental health and institutional specific content.
 - Hosting events throughout the year that promote inclusivity, such as international student events and curating displays and exhibitions to highlight specific celebrations such as Black History Month and South Asian Heritage Month using materials in our collections
 - The Conservatoire's librarians are involved in sector leading SCURL EDI network. Through the creation of an EDI toolkit, the network embedding good practice in EDI consistently across Scottish Library services.
- The library also offers a service that evaluates the diversity of current reading/resource lists. The library staff take the list and check the gender and ethnicity of authors and editors listed, place of publication and publication date. The results are presented in a report with visuals to show the percentage of diversity within the lists. Within the report links are included to the following pages that have been built on the portal to support the next steps of creating more diverse reading/resource lists.

These are:

- [Diversifying Reading Lists](#)

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- [Diversity – DDPF Collections](#)
- [Diversity – Music Collections](#)

2.6 Tackling Gender-based Violence (GBV)

The RCS will not tolerate GBV in any form and are committed to providing a learning and teaching and work environment which are safe and supportive for everyone. Our GBV Guidelines provide clear details of what can constitute GBV, our expectations of acceptable conduct, how to report incidents of GBV and sources of support among others. You can find here our [GBV Guidelines](#), our [Dignity at Work and Study Statement](#). We continue to tackle GBV in multiple ways:

- **Reporting GBV:** We have put in place different GBV reporting methods for students and staff so that victims can use whichever method they feel most comfortable with. All reporting can be done anonymously, and are treated with sensitivity, confidentiality and timeously.

Student can report by completing an online form via a secure inbox [Report GBV](#), monitored only by the Student Community Conduct Officer (SCCO) and the Deputy Registrar (DR), via email and asking to speak to a First Responder (FR), or the Student Community Conduct Officer or a trusted member of staff.

Staff can also make a report using any of the following methods in addition to completing an online form via the GBV Guidelines or through the HR department.

- **First Responders (FRs)** – We have put in place a dedicated team of First Responders who provide a confidential contact point and space for a disclosure to be made and to signpost to appropriate support services. They can also act as a companion and attend meetings if the discloser wishes to take the matter further.
- **GBV Training** - We are partners with a number of national organisations to share expertise on preventing, tackling and dealing with GBV. We have provided training delivered by Glasgow & Clyde Rape Crisis to a number of members of staff from across the RSC to serve as First Responders.

Emily Test has delivered the *LISTEN workshop* to staff who may be the recipients of GBV disclosures. Additionally, we are committed to achieving the [Emily Test Charter](#). Additionally, mandatory **Consent Training** has been delivered for all new students during their induction week by Glasgow & Clyde Rape Crisis. The Student Union has also organised further training from Glasgow Women's Aid and White Ribbon to raise awareness about informed consent and GBV, and men's responsibility to stand up against violence against women and girls.

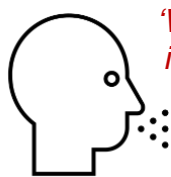
- **Support provision** - We provide mental health, accommodation, welfare and financial support to victims of GBV where these are required. This is to enhance the victim's emotional and mental health, and physical safety and wellbeing. Students and staff who has been impacted by GBV can also get help with suspending their studies or time-off work.

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- **Monitoring and Transparency** - We try to be as transparent as possible about the prevalence of GBV at the Conservatoire. Each year, we will publish anonymised data on GBV relating to types and patterns of GBV. The insights gained will help us combat GBV with targeted prevention and intervention strategies. We will begin publishing GBV reports in the 24/25 academic year.

In 2023/24, the Conservatoire introduced Gender-Based Violence Guidance, which sits within our Safeguarding Policy. Support and reporting information can be accessed on the Safeguarding page of both the student and the staff portal.

2.7 Welfare, Health and Wellbeing



'When you work [study] in the RCS, it has the atmosphere of the industry. It's professional but not stressful. You get to feel everything in that environment, and you can be freely creative. You meet people that are nice, everyone has been lovely, and I've made so many friends, learning alongside other people who are similar to me. But you also meet people who've had different experiences, from different cultures and you find out about the stuff they been though. The arts help you to bond.' **[student in Yr 1]**

In addition to the support provided to staff impacted by GBV, the Conservatoire provides staff and students with a variety of support to suit their specific circumstances:

- **Employee Assistance Programme:** Staff have access to a full Employee Assistance Programme provided by Spectrum Life. This includes free, confidential counselling and wellbeing support service available to all employees, their partner/spouse and dependent children over 16 still living at home. Full details of the service can be viewed [here](#). Additionally, employees can access support via *Togetherall* (formerly known as Big White Wall) www.togetherall.com
- **Corporate Parenting:** Under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, we have a duty to promote the wellbeing of care experienced and estranged learners. We do this by listening to and communicate and connect with our care experienced learners in a meaningful way to build trust. The Conservatoire therefore participate in the **Corporate Parenting** scheme. The scheme enables us to work with an extended family of care experienced young people, organisations and caregivers, to provide tailored support and a safe environment with good access to services and support for those who need it. We have a Corporate Parenting website and Corporate Parenting Plan, both of which can be accessed via our website.
- **Financial and logistical support:** We provide a range of financial and logistical support to our students who need it:
 - Estranged students at the Conservatoire currently benefit from priority consideration for financial assistance from our HE Discretionary Fund, have access to monthly Estranged Student Drop-in Sessions with other estranged students and support staff.

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- Our Effective Learning support provides specific learning and teaching needs of all students, including disabled students, d/Deaf students and those with dyslexia.
 - We provide English language learning for our international students or those who wish to improve their language skills.
 - Our **Short Courses** programme continue to offer bursary and scholarship support to our students. The programme has recently reviewed the criteria for bursary support in relation to the cost of living and energy crisis. It has also changed its bursary approval system to a monthly panel, and this has been beneficial in ensuring that students are provided with a timelier system of approval. Additionally, the programme provides a clear signposting of the link to information about financial support on all promotional materials.
- In Scotland, Curriculum for Excellence places the responsibility of Health & Wellbeing on all teachers. The **BEd and PGDE (Music)** programmes, therefore, have compulsory classes which prepare students for their school placements to explore relevant issues depending upon the focus of the placement – Primary, Lower Secondary (BGE) or Senior Phase. In addition, all students are expected to develop a deep understanding of professional values, knowledge and skills that will enable them to engage fully with the complexities of a school-based education and to develop their expertise and experience in learning and teaching in line with the Standard for Provisional registration (GTCS, 2012).
- **Counselling support:** We provide a variety of in-house and out-source welfare, mental health and wellbeing counselling services to meet the specific needs of people with a disability, and from a BPOC, transgender and other protected characteristics. These include:
- **The Togetherall Online Support** - is a free online counselling support community for RCS students to access anonymously throughout the year and at any time of the day or night can join for free.
 - **Mental Health First Aiders** - a trained pool of members of staff that support, listen and signpost those in need to mental health services within and outside the Conservatoire. Full details of their role, and an up to date list of Mental Health First Aiders can be seen [here](#).
 - **The Stand Alone Pledge** - the Conservatoire has also signed up to the [Stand Alone Pledge](#) for students estranged from their families, to ensure that we are better supporting the needs of estranged students. Estranged students are young people studying without the support and approval of a family network. Young people in this position have removed themselves from a dysfunctional situation and often have no contact at all with their family. These situations can be caused by emotional abuse, mismatched expectations about family roles and relationships, and a clash of personality or values including social and cultural expectations.
- **Neurodiversity:** We have introduced Neurodiversity Networks for both staff and students and are reviewing how to make them sustainable. The EDI team are working with colleagues at the BBC to benefit from their knowledge and experience in developing positive environments for neurodivergent individuals to flourish, through their ENIGMA programme/ network (Empowering Neurodivergent Minds).

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- **Accessibility Audits:** We undertake periodic accessibility audits of our premises to identify and address any areas to help make our venues, events, and services more accessible and inclusive. More importantly, it ensures that the Conservatoire is doing what it can to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Following the recommendations of the accessibility audit conducted in 2024, changes have either been implemented or are planned to support the requirements of students and staff with diverse disabilities and maternity needs.

2.8 The British Sign Language (BSL) Plan

In accordance with the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015, the Conservatoire continues to review its BSL plan on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are still relevant and fit for purpose. An iteration of this review is our BSL Plan 2024-2030. The plan follows the [Scottish Government's National BSL Plan](#), published on 6th November 2023, which sets out a range of government actions to tackle barriers faced by British Sign Language (BSL) users to help make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work, visit and learn.

The plan lays out our seven key commitments to developing and enhancing our BSL support to students, staff and the public, and will be updated annually. It enables us to meet our commitment to progressively mainstream the needs and rights of British Sign Language users through all activities, structures and practices. These include:

- **The Audience Experience** - we ensure that our artistic output is more accessible to students, staff and customers who use BSL, with either BSL interpretation or captioning of an increasing number of performances. We have also improved the provision of signed performances and audio descriptions, sign language or audio-described interpretation services as advertised.
- **BSL skills development** – we continue to organise training to enable staff and students to become BSL users including:
 - Skills classes held online for international applicants who were interested in the BA Performance in BSL & English programme.
 - Provision of training to all incoming students on basic BSL and deaf awareness.
 - Customised training is provided for staff teams to ensure it meets specific needs.
 - Introduction to Basic BSL and Deaf Awareness workshops are available to staff on a regular basis and can be customised for specific staff teams as required (e.g. a workshop was designed especially for front of house staff to equip them to meet the needs of our d/Deaf patrons more effectively).
 - During the 2023/34 academic year, a 2-hour drop-in BSL Learning Café was piloted in the library over lunchtimes, to provide an opportunity for staff and students to practice and maintain their level of BSL skills and hopefully develop them further.
 - Pre-application workshop held for BSL users to provide more information about what is expected when invited for an audition.

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- **Monitoring and audit** – We collect and monitor data to capture key intersectional information of our BSL user including whether BSL is an individual's primary or additional language:
 - Introducing a new field for both staff and students that is captured at staff employment and student matriculation.
 - Undertaking an audit of all staff and students to identify number of BSL users, whether as primary or subsequent language.
 - We undertake periodic accessibility audits of our premises to identify and address any areas to help make our venues, events, and services more inclusive especially for BSL users.
- **Practice-based initiatives** – We continue to support BSL accessible creative practice:
 - We developed a collaborative opportunity between students on the BA Performance programme and other programmes across the School of Stage and Screen.
 - We have an expanded pool of interpreters who work on the BA Performance programme and have added to the number of interpreters who work on productions.
 - Supported student-led projects that explored and developed the integration of BSL, music and sonic interpretation, through the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion creative fund
 - This is an exciting and developing area of where the role of sign-mimer or sonic-visual performer, convey the music expressions, allowing the performance to be accessible to audiences with varying levels of hearing, whilst allowing the sonic-visual performers to contribute without the necessity to learn music notation.
- **BSL student participation** - We ensure that consideration is given to BSL provision in the planning and delivery of student events and activities offered within the Conservatoire are fully accessible to students who use BSL:
 - Communication Facilitator Interpreters (CFIs) are provided for all student council meetings and on request for all other SU activities, including Freshers Week.
 - There is BSL provision in the provision of counselling and support services (including the availability of a counsellor who is a BSL user).
 - There are regular information and update sessions for students who are BSL users by Student Union, Library, Health & Safety, Department Heads etc., to ensure students are completely involved and aware of what is happening within the RCS community.
 - Short Courses have increased the number of BSL translated documents which the department offers to potential and current students. This includes bursary/scholarship application guidance, course welcome information and the Pre-HE Online Teaching Policy.

2.9 EDI and the Student Union (SU)

The SU proactively champions and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion in all its activities and works closely with the Conservatoire EDI Officers to continually enhance the

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student experience for all its members. It also has a dedicated SU EDI Officer, who along with the SU President and Vice President attends all EDI open forums to ensure that the voices, needs and aspirations of students are represented in EDI related matters.

The Student Union proudly supports affiliated student-led EDI focussed groups within the Conservatoire, including,

- Black Union
- LatinX Union
- Asian Association
- Disability Committee
- LGBTQIA+ Association
- Trans Union
- Feminist Society
- Palestinian Solidarity Society

Since the last Mainstreaming Equality Reporting round, the SU has undertaken the following initiatives to advance an improved student experience of equality and anti-discriminatory practices:

- **BSL users** - The SU provided the necessary support in order to help prospective candidates from the BSL community to run for executive positions within the SU. Examples include providing advice and logistical support towards BSL candidate's effective campaigning, publicity, and communication and information sharing. This culminated in having three BSL users on the SU Council at one stage when there was a cohort of BA Performance in BSL students.
- **Training and awareness raising events** – The SU in collaboration with specialist organisations delivered training for its student membership on gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination:
 - Consent training sessions during Induction Week for all incoming students, and White Ribbon sessions for male students to raise awareness around violence against women.
 - Freshers Fairs targeted at external organisations and internal societies and departments within the Conservatoire.
 - Visit for members of the Black Union to the Black History Month archive that was coordinated by the Conservatoire UK Students Network (CUKSN). The archive focussed on the colonial past of Glasgow and attempt to demystify how this era of history influenced the establishment of the Conservatoire.
 - A display of slides on the TV screens in RCS during LGBT History Month. The slides were created by a student and covered a history of LGBTQ+ rights in Scotland, with a short description of queer composers, playwrights, and authors.
 - The 'Choc & Chat' and the 'Open Mic in BASE' events to celebrate International Women's Day. The events were in collaboration with the Feminist Society, an organisation consisting of the Conservatoire's students.
- **Monitoring and engagement** – The SU also organise a series of student surveys and consultations to better understand the student experience of support services, particularly counselling and disability, and concerns of the GBV Reporting process

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and the use of language on the GBV posters in the toilets. The insights generated from these student engagement activities have been used to inform equality, inclusive and dignity and respect interventions.

2.10 Equality Impact Assessment

As part of its mainstreaming approach, the Conservatoire undertakes Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) when reviewing and developing strategy, policy and process. As required by law, this is to ensure that our policies and practices do not disadvantage or discriminate against anyone. We are also required to demonstrate how we use policy and procedure to advance equality. Our EIA process underpins the Conservatoire's vision and commitment to provide our staff and students a positive and rewarding learning experience and to make a positive difference to the wider society.

Through EIA, we monitor, review and deliver evidence-based process that helps the Conservatoire to design effective policies and practices to support equality of opportunity and inclusion for those with protected characteristics and care experienced students and staff. Our EIA is available at: [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion | Royal Conservatoire of Scotland \(rcs.ac.uk\)](https://www.rcs.ac.uk/equality-diversity-and-inclusion)

We recognise that not all staff are involved in the EIA process, and that we have still more to do in terms of expanding the pool of trained staff. We have committed to auditing all formal Conservatoire policy statements/regulations, with a view to producing a definitive register which sets out: policy owner, date of approval/last review and date of EIA.

2.11 Artistic Planning and EDI Programming

The Conservatoire's **Artistic Planning** programming has continued to promote access and curation opportunities for marginalised artists:

- Compositions written by female artists, and performances with all-female artists and concerts featuring the works of only female composers including *Beyond Twilight: Music for Cello & Piano*, performed by cellist **Alexandra Mackenzie** and pianist **Ingrid Sawers**.
- Programming in **Orchestra and Ensembles** also included works by living female composers such as **Errollyn Wallen, Gabriela Ortiz, Helen Grime, Thea Musgrave, Julie Giroux, Caroline Shaw** and **Jennifer Higdon**.
- Compositions by other minoritised and historically excluded composers from a BPOC background and the Global South such as **Mbeki Mbali, William Grant Still, Cecil Mack, Wes Montgomery, Joe Sample, Wynton Marsalis, Valerie Coleman, Wayne Henderson, Sibusiso Njeza, Charlie Parker, Florence Price**. Artistic Planning has also introduced an *Evening of Indian Classical Music*, as an annual programme.
- In *Orchestra and Ensembles*, we have worked with in recent years, **Teresa Riveiro Böhm, Ellie Slorach** and **Karen Hendrickson** and looking forward to

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working with Jessica Cottis in 2026. Additionally, we are committed to booking at least one female conductor for one of our three Symphony Orchestras.

- A lecture recital by gay and Asian pianist **Hiroaki Takenouchi** in which he explored the music of five female composers across the 19th and 20th centuries: **Caroline Reinagle, Dorothy Howell, Madeleine Dring, Doreen Carwithen**, and Scotland's own **Helen Hopekirk**.
- Enhancing our students' experience in performing arts education by providing them with opportunities to collaborate and learn from internationally renowned accompanist and teacher **Julia Lynch** that culminated in planning and programming a concert for **International Women's Day** (IWD).
- Featuring accessible performance in our **Fridays at One** series. We hosted **Formidability Opera** for a staged concert that was fully accessible, with British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation, audio description, and captions. Additionally, two opera singers, a pianist, and two signing actors collaboratively created a feast for the senses, joyfully merging Song and Sign. The concert was followed up with a workshop session for our staff and students on how artists can incorporate access needs into their creative processes when planning their work.

2.12 EDI in Audience Development

As a performing and production arts HE, we have a long-term commitment to ensure that our creative productions are accessible to a diverse audience including those with protected characteristics or who may be underrepresented or marginalised. We continue to engage with organisations, groups and communities to gain insights that will enable us build relationships, attract and increase our reach among diverse audiences:

- We work in partnership with **Nimbus Disability** to be part of the UK wide *Access Card* scheme. The *Access Card* acts as a photo ID that can be used to easily communicate access requirements to events and venues, thereby enabling the venues to provide tailored accessibility or reasonable adjustments to the needs of their visitors. It also has an online facility that allows online disabled customers to easily book wheelchair spaces and free companion tickets, without having to call the Box Office. Additionally, the *Access Card* app provides a personalised directory of venues, with accessibility information.
- Throughout the year we offer BSL interpreted/integrated and captioned performances. BSL users can access these for a discounted price of £5. As well as being advertised on our website, we also list these in the **Access Scottish Theatre** website and magazine.
- We are in the process of putting together a BSL awareness and vocabulary project. Working with **Irina Vartopeanu**, we are designing a programme of BSL

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signs which **Aud Ops** staff may find useful when helping BSL users. These will be rolled out as a 'word of the week' activity.

- We are in partnership with **Tickets for Good** project, which offers free discounted tickets to NHS, charity sector workers and cost of living payment recipients.
- Additionally, we work with '**Fanzclub**' who work to bring inclusivity and accessibility to events by providing tickets for asylum seekers, refugees, unaccompanied children, and destitute people to access cinemas, theatres, films festivals, live gigs and other events such as sporting games. We offer a number of free tickets to each of these initiatives.

3.0 STUDENT EQUALITY PROFILE

The following section provides information about the composition of our student membership in terms of numbers and protected characteristics, where that information is available.

When viewing percentages in this report, please note that percentage calculations exclude unknown values⁶, with the HESA methodology being applied throughout⁷. Throughout this release, counts (of student numbers) and totals have been rounded to the nearest five. In addition, counts will be marked as '<5' if the counts are less than five. Additionally, in circumstances where the combination of study and student characteristics applies to fewer than 23 individuals, then neither the count nor proportion is presented.

3.1 The Conservatoire Student Population

This section provides an overview of the composition of the students who attend our HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency)-reported courses at the graduate and postgraduate levels.

The Conservatoire has a total of 1,240 students of which 70% are studying at the Undergraduate level, 26% at the Postgraduate taught and 4% at the Postgraduate research level.

The diversity profile of students indicates that the Conservatoire has:

- 60% Female, 39% Male, <1% Other sex.
- 22% of students are BPOC and 78% of students are White.
- 26% of students identify as having one or more disabilities.
- 60% of undergraduate students are under 21 years old.
- 58% of the students indicated they had no Religion. 28% of students stated they were of Christian faith.
- 23% of students are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Other Sexual Orientation.

3.2 Students by Sex/Gender

⁶ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/about/regulation/data-protection/rounding-and-suppression-anonymise-statistics>

⁷ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/about/regulation/data-protection/rounding-and-suppression-anonymise-statistics>

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In 2022/23, 60% of students identified as female and 39% identified as male. Although the 'Other' category is included, numbers are small and were <1%. Use of the term 'Other' is for people who associate with the terms intersex, androgyne, intergender, ambi-gender, gender fluid, polygender and genderqueer.

At the undergrad level, 59% of the Conservatoire's students identify as female and 40% identify as male. 63% of postgraduate students identify as female and 36% identify as male, which is a slight increase in the number of female postgraduates students in 2021/22:

Sex		Undergrad		Postgrad		RCS total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2021/22	Male	365	42%	145	39%	510	41%
	Female	490	58%	230	61%	720	59%
	Other	<5		0		<5	
	Total	860		370		1230	
2022/23	Male	350	40%	135	36%	485	39%
	Female	510	59%	230	63%	740	60%
	Other	10	...	5	...	15	...
	Total	870		370		1240	

The GAP outlines the SFC's headline ambition 'that by 2030 the proportion of male students studying at undergraduate level at university will be at least 47.5% (or to put it another way, the gap between male and female participation will be reduced to 5%) and that no college or university subject will have a gender imbalance of greater than 75% of one gender'³.

The table below includes undergrad and postgrad students in the JACS-coded departments:

School & Dept-2022/23	Dance		Stage & Screen (SSS)		Research		Music		Learning & Teaching	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	10	17%	150	40%	25	41%	280	43%	20	23%
Female	50	83%	225	60%	35	58%	370	56%	70	77%
Other			5	...	<5	...	5	...		
Total	60		380		60		655		85	

The two largest schools, Stage and Screen and Music, had 60% and 56% of students identified as female, respectively. Both Dance and Learning & Teaching had a larger female proportion but within 85% of one gender. The Research department had a more balanced gender rate, with 41% identifying as male.

Research, Stage and Screen and Music were schools that had students identify their sex as being other than female or male.

3.3 Student by disabilities

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HESA statistics for 2021/22 (most recent statistics when the report was made) show that 25% of the RCS student body disclosed a disability. Amongst the nine listed conservatoires (RCSSD - The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, LAMDA - London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art, TLCMD - Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, RADA - Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, RAM - The Royal Academy of Music, RCM - Royal College of Music, RNCM - Royal Northern College of Music, GSMD - Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and LC - Leeds Conservatoire)⁸.

Disability CUK 2021-22

Conservatoire data produced from HE student data for AY21/22. Data may be different from HEIDI plus due to rounding and timeframe.

Institution	Known disability (%)	No known disability (%)	Total (%)
RCSSD	32	68	100
LAMDA	33	67	100
TLCMD	24	76	100
RADA	20	80	100
RAM	15	85	100
RCM	13	87	100
RNCM	19	81	100
GSMD	22	78	100
LC	30	70	100
RCS	25	75	100

LAMDA reported 33% of students with disabilities, which was the highest rate for known disability among the other conservatoires; The RCSSD reported 32% and LC 30%. RCM, RAM or RNCM all reported less than 20%. 1 in 4 of our students reported themselves as having a disability, which is at a similar level to GSMD and TLCMD.

The Conservatoire recorded 11% of students (140 students) with a specific learning disability, and 8% of students reported they were concerned about their mental health. In other categories of disability, the Conservatoire reported the highest number of students with social communication problems and long-standing conditions (20% and 15% respectively).

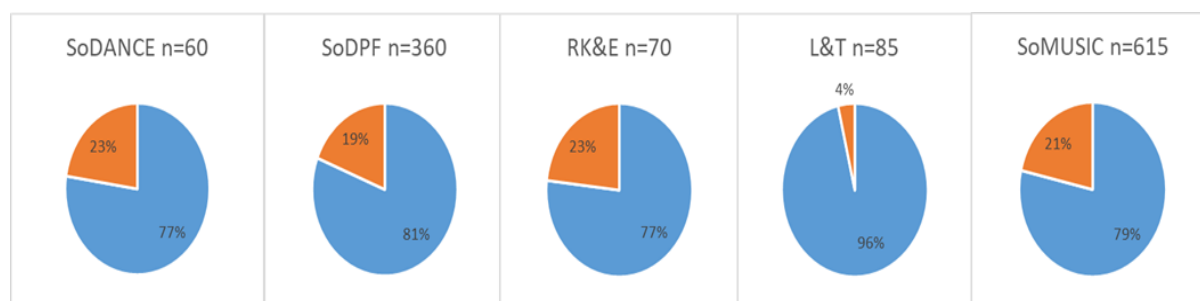
3.4 Student by ethnicity

There has been an increase in the number of students from BPOC backgrounds; this includes students from Scotland, the rest of the UK, Europe and Internationally. 95% of all RCS students disclosed their ethnicity. Of those whose ethnicity information was known, 20% identified themselves as BPOC or from an ethnic minority background.

⁸ HE student enrolments by HE provider and disability marker 2014/15 to 2022/23
<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/table-4>

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Ethnicity	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
White	980	85%	1015	83%	990	83%	970	80%
BPOC	175	15%	205	17%	210	18%	240	20%



The pie charts include undergrad and postgrad students in the four Schools and the Research Department. These charts illustrate the proportions of ethnicity in each school. The student count in each school is represented by “n=”: Please note that students with unknown ethnicity will be counted in the pie charts.

Note: **Blue** = White
Orange = BPOC

4.0 EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY INFORMATION

4.1 Staff Profile

Please note that our analysis is based on data as of 31st July 2024 and focuses on salaried staff members. However, we will make comparisons to data collected as of 31st July 2022 and the conjoining Mainstreaming Equality Report of 2023.

Gender

As of 31st July 2024, the number of full-time and pro rata staff continues to expand from 379 in 2022⁹ to 448. The gap between the proportion of male and female full-time staff remains broadly similar, whilst still retaining an overall majority female workforce.

⁹ As of 31st July 2022.

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As at 31st July 2024

Legal Gender	Headcount	%
Male	189	42.19%
Female	259	57.81%
Grand Total	448	

As at 31st July 2022

Legal Gender	Headcount	%
Male	163	43.01%
Female	216	56.99%
Total	379	

If we look where male and female colleagues are located within the institution, both in terms of grade and occupational role, a significant proportion of our female staff are located within the middle ranges.

Grade	Male	Female	Grand Total	Male	Female
Grade 1	10	11	21	47.62%	52.38%
Grade 2	13	40	53	24.53%	75.47%
Grade 3	29	20	49	59.18%	40.82%
Grade 4	17	38	55	30.91%	69.09%
Grade 5	20	43	63	31.75%	68.25%
Grade 6	22	28	50	44.00%	56.00%
Grade 7	48	48	96	50.00%	50.00%
Grade 8	13	15	28	46.43%	53.57%
Grade 9	10	10	20	50.00%	50.00%
Grade 10	<5	<5	<5	50.00%	50.00%
CSMT	5	<5	9	55.56%	44.44%
Grand Total	189	259	448	42.19%	57.81%

The highest proportions of female staff are on grades 4, 5, 6 and 7. These roles are predominantly either administrative or front-line managerial roles across the full range of our Professional and Academic Services teams. These roles tend to offer the greatest flexibility and range for both hybrid and flexible working. We are also aware from our ongoing research into occupational segregation that these are fields that men are less likely to apply to work. We remain committed to undertake whatever means are appropriate and proportional to address this imbalance.

Please see our Equal Pay Review 2025 for further details, even though numbers of staff will not correlate with those referred to within the Equal Pay Review as different dates were used for data collection.

The number of females at the highest level within the Conservatoire has remained consistent over the two years. There is almost an equal split between males and females sitting on both Grade 10 and the Conservatoire Senior Management Team. This is particularly worth celebrating within a small and specialist HE institution (HEI), where there can be limited opportunities to make major changes within a short

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timescale. Additionally, it demonstrates that the Conservatoire's drive to recruit women in highly paid senior roles is on a positive trajectory.

Ethnicity

As of 31st July 2024, we recognise that BPOC staff members continue to be under-represented in all Grades within the institution. However, the number of our salaried staff who identify as BPOC has increased slightly in both numbers and percentage terms.

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As at 31st July 2024

Ethnicity	No	%
Asian	11	2.46%
Black	7	1.56%
White	358	79.91%
White and Asian/White and Black African/Caribbean	<5	0.89%
Other	17	3.79%
Not known	51	11.38%
Grand Total	448	

As at 31st July 2022

Ethnicity	No	%
Asian	5	1.31%
Black	7	1.84%
White	325	85.30%
Other	17	4.46%
Not known	27	7.09%
Grand Total	381	

BPOC staff and those who do not identify their ethnicity as White now represent 8.7% of the Conservatoire's salaried workforce. This figure is above the 6% of the proportion of staff who identify as BPOC across all Scottish HEIs reported in 2023 and continues to progress towards the 16.3% of BPOC staff employed in all HEIs in the UK reported in 2023¹⁰. We have also made gains in the recruitment of BPOC staff members in the academic/teaching category of Grade 8.

Whilst actions we have taken to attract individuals who identify as BPOC into our workforce are yielding dividends, we fully acknowledge that our current representation of BPOC in the Conservatoire's salaried workforce is low, and there are still challenges of self-disclosure with an increase from 27 as of 31st July 2022 to 51 in this reporting cycle. We remain committed to undertaking appropriate activities to achieve higher disclosure rates and representation at all levels of the workforce. We are also working with external agencies to develop positive initiatives to enhance our performance in this area over the coming two years and beyond.

Disability

The overall number of staff who identify as having a disability continues to increase, rising from 26 in 2022 to 46 as of 31st July 2024. This represents about 10% of our salaried workforce, which is about 3% higher than in 2022. The rate of disclosure is also higher than the 6% (for England) and 5% (for Scotland) recorded for staff working in HEIs in 2021/22¹¹.

Of those who declared a disability, 33% relates to a mental health condition, and 46% is not mental health related. There is 22% of whom we do not know if their disability is related to mental health.

¹⁰ See - <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/17-01-2023/sb264-higher-education-staff-statistics>

¹¹ Advanced HE's Equality and HE: Staff statistical report 2022.

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As at 31st July 2024

Disability Status	No	%
Disabled - mental health condition	15	3.35%
Disabled - not mental health related	21	4.69%
Disabled - unknown	10	2.23%
Not disabled	277	61.83%
Not known	125	27.90%
Grand Total	448	100.00%

As at 31st July 2022

Disability Status	No	%
Disabled - mental health condition	6	1.57%
Disabled - not mental health related	20	5.25%
Not disabled	190	49.87%
Not known	165	43.31%
Grand Total	381	100.00%

The increase suggests that the introduction of a range of confidence building measures to encourage better disclosure are achieving some progress. However, much needs to be done as we recognise that a significant number of staff members (125) did not declare whether or not they are disabled. While this represents a reduction from the 2022 figures, we will continue to employ confidence building measures to encourage more disclosure including communicating about the benefits and achievements of disability monitoring in removing barriers to employment, and for advancing the wellbeing and dignity of staff.

4.2 Recruitment and Retention

The following section reviews data relating to the recruitment of staff during the academic years 2022/2024¹². Overall, 2196 people applied with 201 new members of staff being appointed to a wide range of academic and professional support posts, which is a slight increase of 10 to the previous reporting cycle.

The Conservatoire will continue to regularly revise its recruitment procedures including the use of simple and accessible language in job adverts, skill-based recruitment tasks and structured interviews. We are also looking into piloting the provision of interview questions (or some of the interview questions) to candidates prior to interviews taking place. Anecdotal evidence generated from professional networks suggest that doing so could reduce bias and constitute proactive reasonable adjustments for candidates who are disabled and neurodivergent. It also enables a more equitable and inclusive employment practice that is aligned to our EDI values.

Gender

During this period, 70 successful candidates identified as male, and 112 as female. 19 applicants who were successful did not identify their gender.

¹² Please note that the statistics within this report contain data that is dependent upon how fully applicants completed the anonymous monitoring forms from which the data has been generated.

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We will continue to strengthen our data gathering to better understand what people's experiences of applying and being recruited to the Conservatoire feels for them relating to their protected characteristics.

Legal Gender	Appointed	Candidate withdrew	Offer withdrawn	Vacancy withdrawn	Unsuccessful after interview	Unsuccessful after application	Grand Total
Female	112	40	21	5	180	837	1195
Male	70	28	8	<5	131	601	839
Not known	19	4	<5	<5	16	121	162
Grand Total	201	72	30	7	327	1559	2196

Disability

Out of 232 applicants who self-identified as having a disability at the recruitment stage, 46 were successful in securing an interview. Of these 46, 18 were appointed to positions

As part of the recruitment process all applicants are asked to provide information on whether or not they consider themselves to be disabled. The table below shows the stage of the recruitment process broken down by candidate responses to this question.

This shows that 10.6% of applicants to the Conservatoire during the period self-identified as having a disability. In terms of how these candidates progressed through the recruitment process they made up, 8.7% of all candidates invited to interview and 9% of all candidates appointed to roles within the Conservatoire.

Whilst this is a positive development, a significant number of successful applicants (20) did not declare a disability. We are also aware that 167 of applicants did not declare whether or not they are disabled. This is an area that needs monitoring as we want to be able to identify any trends at every stage of the recruitment process and to inform further action as specified in our Equal Pay Review 2025.

Number of applicants for jobs during academic years 2022/24 by disability:

Disability Status	Appointed	Candidate withdrew	Offer withdrawn	Unsuccessful after application	Unsuccessful after interview	Vacancy withdrawn	Grand Total
No, I do not consider	163	62	24	1268	273	7	1797

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myself disabled							
Yes, I consider myself disabled	18	<5	6	176	28	0	232
Not known	20	6	0	115	26	0	167
Grand Total	201	72	30	1559	327	7	2196

Ethnicity

Out of all 327 unsuccessful applicants at interviews, 58 were BPOC¹³. 38 out 201 applicants who were successful are BPOC. This increase is more than double the 2023 reporting cycle that recorded 14 successful BPOC applicants. Whilst this is a significant improve in the success rate and a dramatic rise in BPOC applicants overall, we are mindful that there is a ratio of nearly 1:3 in favour of successful applicants who self-describe as White.

We are also mindful that there continues to be a significant number of applicants who did not declare an ethnicity. We are therefore actively reviewing opportunities for broadening our range of advertising job opportunities with the aim of encouraging the widest and most diverse selection of applicants.

Number of applicants for jobs during academic years 2022/24 by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	Appointed	Candidate withdrew	Offer withdrawn	Unsuccessful after application	Unsuccessful after interview	Vacancy withdrawn	Grand Total
Asian	9	<5	<5	94	12	0	120
Black	5	<5	<5	85	13	<5	107
Not known	43	15	8	354	84	<5	505
Other	9	<5	<5	114	18	0	147
White	131	44	14	886	197	<5	1276
White and Asian/White and Black/Caribbean	<5	<5	<5	26	<5	<5	41
Grand Total	201	72	30	1559	327	7	2196

¹³ This include those who identify as other (who are of Chinese ethnicity and White and Asian/Black/Caribbean).

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Sexual Orientation

The Conservatoire continues to have an increase in Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual applicants during this period, rising from 320 (in 2023) to 484 in this reporting cycle.

More importantly, there has been a significant increase in the number of applicants who declare as bisexual – from 184 in 2023 to 257. There is a slight difference between applicants who declare as gay from those that declare as lesbian. 42 of those appointed identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual, an increase from 26 in 2023.

Number of applicants for jobs during academic years 2022/24 by sexual orientation:

Sexual Orientation	Appointed	Candidate withdrew	Offer withdrawn	Unsuccessful after application	Unsuccessful after interview	Vacancy withdrawn	Grand Total
Bisexual	28	9	<5	257	46	<5	346
Gay man	9	<5	<5	56	11	0	81
Gay woman/lesbian	7	<5	<5	58	14	0	57
Heterosexual	124	43	18	941	207	<5	1336
Other	10	<5	0	79	15	0	108
Not known	23	13	<5	168	34	<5	244
Grand Total	201	72	30	1559	327	7	2196

Age

As in our last three reports, the majority of applicants to posts within this period fall within the age category 19 – 29. 107 applicants in this age group were appointed out of 201 successful applicants, which translates as more than half (53%) of the population of appointed candidates. It is worthy of note that the number of new colleagues who have been aged 50+ continues to remain the same in the past two reporting cycles.

Number of applicants for jobs during academic years 2022/24 by age:

Age	Appointed	Candidate withdrew	Offer withdrawn	Unsuccessful after application	Unsuccessful after interview	Vacancy withdrawn	Grand Total
18 years or less	<5	0	<5	15	<5	0	22
19 - 29 years	107	34	15	863	133	<5	1155
30 - 39 years	41	20	8	389	91	0	549
40 - 49 years	30	12	<5	141	59	<5	246
50 - 59 years	9	<5	0	66	32	0	108
60 years or more	<5	<5	0	18	<5	<5	24
Not known	9	<5	<5	67	9	<5	92
Grand Total	201	72	30	1559	327	7	2196

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Religion and Belief

30% of applicants and 31.5% of successful candidates declared that they did not have a religion or belief. We have seen a reduction in the number of applicants who have chosen not to declare whether they have a religion or belief, 462 compared to 636 in the previous reporting period. This could potentially reflect a change in society where individuals are comfortable to declare that they do not identify with or subscribe to a religion or belief¹⁴. It might also be that our approach in recruitment, which makes it clear within our job adverts that we are actively seeking representation from all sections of our society, has played a part. This approach might have also contributed to attracting applicants from diverse religions and beliefs.

Number of applicants by religion and or belief:

Religion or Belief	Appointed	Candidate withdrew	Offer withdrawn	Unsuccessful after application	Unsuccessful after interview	Vacancy withdrawn	Grand Total
Agnostic	22	5	5	161	34	0	227
Any other religion or belief	6	<5	<5	43	<5	0	60
Atheist	22	5	<5	107	27	0	163
Buddhist	5	0	0	18	<5	0	26
Christian	35	15	5	296	53	2	406
Hindu	<5	<5	0	42	0	0	46
Islam - Sunni	0	<5	0	8	<5	0	12
Jewish	<5	0	0	7	0	0	8
Muslim	0	<5	<5	31	5	0	39
No religion	63	18	8	478	98	<5	668
Sikh	0	<5	0	<5	0	0	5
Spiritual	10	<5	0	56	6	0	74
Not known	34	19	5	308	94	<5	462
Grand Total	201	72	30	1559	327	7	2196

Leavers

During the 22/23 and 2023/24 academic years, 99 salaried members of staff left the Conservatoire, with 64 leavers being women. A small number of leavers (9) identified as BPOC, 6 identified as either having a disability or learning difficulty. Twelve identify as either lesbian or gay, with 5 identifying as bisexual. Fifty leavers are between 20-39 years of age, with 32 being in the 39-59 age range.

¹⁴www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021

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Gender	No
Female	64
Male	35
Grand Total	99

Ethnicity	No
Asian	<5
Black	<5
Not known	8
Other	<5
White	82
Grand Total	99

Disability Status	No
Disabled	<5
Not disabled	70
Not known	23
Specific learning disability (e.g. dyslexia or dyspraxia)	<5
Grand Total	99

Sexual Orientation	No
Bisexual	5
Gay man	7
Gay woman/lesbian	<5
Heterosexual	58
Not known	21
Other	<5
Grand Total	99

Religion or Belief	No
Agnostic	<5
Atheist	<5
Buddhist	<5
Christian - Church of Scotland	<5
Christian - Other Denomination	5
Christian - Roman Catholic	7
No religion	54
Not known	19
Spiritual	<5
Grand Total	99

Age	No
20 -29	20
30 -39	30
40 - 49	20
50 - 59	12
60+	17
Grand Total	99

Not all leavers who resigned shared their reason for leaving, but of those who did, the highest number were leaving to take up a post elsewhere, moving out of the area or retirement.

There was no evidence in the exit questionnaire data of an equality related issue contributing to the reason for leaving of any ex-member of staff.

We have changed our exit process with the intention of gathering more information for analysis in future years.

Employee Relations

Another important area to review in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion implications relates to routine employee relations matters, specifically in terms of Grievances and Disciplinary processes, where issues of discrimination and unfair practices can potentially be identified:

- **Grievances:** During this period there were less than 5 grievances raised. These grievances related to a number of factors including inappropriate behaviour and alleged failures to follow appropriate procedures. The grievances were all raised by white members of staff and were dealt with under the formal grievance resolution procedure.

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- **Disciplinary:** During this period there were 6 disciplinary procedures initiated. The majority of these involved white, male members of staff. These cases related to a mixture of inappropriate behaviour and unacceptable work practices but none of them involved protected characteristics

4.3 Pay Gaps – Gender, Ethnicity and Disability

As reported in our Equal Pay Review 20-25, the gender pay gap for our salaried staff has reduced from 9% in 2023 to 5.10%. This below the 5.7% pay gap in the 2021 reporting cycle. The ethnicity pay gap for has also reduced from 17% in 2023 to 12.48%. Additionally, the disability pay gap continues on a positive trajectory – a further reduction from 0% in 2023 to -3.86% in 2025.

Overall, this is a positive development and suggests a major move towards parity between the key protected characteristics of gender, disability and ethnicity. However, as outlined in our Equal Pay Review 2025, we are mindful that non-disclosure could have impacted on this figure. For instance, it should be noted that there was a significant number of staff who have chosen not to provide information on their ethnicity and disability status. We will continue to assess, monitor and review any obstacles to achieving a neutral pay gap.

4.4 Professional Development and Training

The Conservatoire continues to provide support and encouragement to our workforce to participate in activities that help them to acquire and improve their skills, knowledge and competencies throughout their professional lifecycle. We believe that doing so, will enhance performance, career advancement, job satisfaction and mental health and wellbeing. During the reporting period we have significantly developed the range of training available to staff, both internally delivered and externally.

- Our baseline training for all permanent and fixed term employees, which revolves around the **Advance HE Introduction to Race Equality** training package, is still ongoing. The training was first rolled out in academic year 2023-24, and all new employees are required to complete these as part of their induction programme.
- In addition, we have designed and delivered various training workshops for our staff. The training sessions are bespoke to the Conservatoire and responds to specific needs of pedagogy, practice and professional development:
 - Our **‘Embedding an Anti-racism Practice’** training is tailored to cater for the specific programme needs of performing and production arts, filmmaking, traditional music, and the Junior Conservatoire.
 - **‘Diversity Recruitment and Action Planning’** training workshop is aimed at both academic and professional services staff. The training explores the barriers to diversity recruitment, legal aspects of recruiting, including the difference between positive action and discrimination, unconscious bias in the recruitment process, and techniques that drive diversity and inclusivity in recruitment.

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- **‘Creating ‘Respect’ and an Inclusive Culture’** training is to promote dignity and anti-discriminatory attitudes, behaviours and practices in the workplace.
- Our **‘Intercultural Communication Competence’** training provides skills-based intercultural communication competence training for both staff and students. The workshop is aimed at improving staff and students’ cultural competence in their interactions with people from racially and culturally diverse backgrounds. We are committed to increasing opportunities for people from Scotland’s most marginalised areas and under-represented groups including applicants from SIMD20 postcode, low progression schools, the Conservatoire’s Transitions and Fair Access programmes and care experienced backgrounds. We select students based on individual potential to study and succeed at the Conservatoire, which is done through an audition and/or interview process.

Our EDI team has therefore updated the audition training of panel members to include considerations of disability and contextualised admissions, in addition to other protected characteristics and intersectionality/ies. This is to enhance panel members’ understanding of the importance of contextual information in offering admission places to our programmes in a way that ensures marginalised students with talent and potential are not disadvantaged and are treated fairly in accessing Higher Education.

- We sought external expertise to inform the development of training on neurodiversity at the Conservatoire. This resulted in an informal partnership with the BBC, specifically with the BBC’s ENIGMA project Leads. Colleagues from the BBC ENIGMA project joined our annual Learning and Teaching Conference in September 2024 and delivered sessions for staff on ‘How to effectively support neurodiverse students, establishing safe learning environments for neurodivergent learners’.
- A member of the teaching staff in the **Musical Theatre** programme has joined the Antiracist Education Network (AREN), which is a Scottish University forum discussion group. The Network organised regular professional development activities for members to share emerging themes on discriminatory and inclusive practice, as well as a reading group to discuss academic research and responses to changing protocols and procedures of relevance to EDI. The staff member has also participated in other professional development networks aimed at advancing EDI practices:
 - Campaign for Trauma Informed Policy and Practice (CTIPP), an organisation created to amplify and educate/advocate trauma-informed advances,
 - Culture First Book Club,
 - Institute for Black Leadership,
 - Good Law Project, and
 - All Out, which is an equality champion funder.

Additionally, other members of the Musical Theatre teaching staff have participated in:

- An 'Introduction to BSL' training package with Deaf Action Scotland Nov-Dev 2024.

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- Panel discussions with the Musical Theatre Network on trans and queer identity, and inclusivity in neurodiversity.
- Mental Health Awareness Training in 2023.
- Staff in the **Modern Ballet** programme have participated in two training activities on inclusive practices, namely, inclusion in pre-vocational dance training, and inclusion for neuro-diverse students in dance classes. The pre-vocational dance training was with Scottish Ballet, which culminated in staff at Scottish Ballet providing workshops on inclusion to junior students in the Conservatoire.
- Our **Front of House** (FoH) staff have recently attended *Sighted Guidance* training, provided by the **Guide Dog for the Blind Association**. The training included awareness of sight loss, and practical exercises on helping someone with sight loss.